

APPENDIX B

**PLACER COUNTY
RURAL DESIGN GUIDELINES**



PLACER COUNTY

RURAL

DESIGN

GUIDELINES

Adopted 8/16/94



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BEFORE THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF PLACER, STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Resol. No: 94-240

In the matter of: A RESOLUTION ADOPTING
THE PLACER COUNTY RURAL DESIGN GUIDELINES

First Reading: _____

The following Resolution was duly passed by the Board of Supervisors of the County of Placer at a regular meeting held August 16, 1994, by the following vote on roll call:

Ayes: Ozenick, Lichau, Uhler, Bloomfield, Ferreira

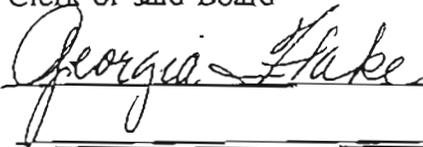
Noes: None

Absent: None

Signed and approved by me after its passage.


Chairman, Board of Supervisors

Attest:
Clerk of said Board



THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE COUNTY OF PLACER, STATE OF CALIFORNIA DOES HEREBY RESOLVE:

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission of the County of Placer, State of California, held public hearings on January 27, 1994, and March 10, 1994, in the time and manner prescribed by law to consider and make a recommendation to the Board of Supervisors on the Rural Design Guidelines; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Supervisors of the County of Placer, State of California, held a public hearing on June 7, 1994, July 19, 1994, and August 16, 1994, in the time and manner prescribed by law to consider the adoption of the Rural Design Guidelines; and

Resolution Adopting the Placer County Rural Design Guidelines
Page Two

WHEREAS, the Board of Supervisors has considered the recommendations of the Placer County Planning Commission, County staff, local community groups, other public agencies, oral evidence of all individuals wishing to testify; and

WHEREAS, an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) was prepared and certified for the HB/PCP which originally included the Rural Design Guidelines; and

WHEREAS, The Board of Supervisors finds that the Placer County Rural Design Guidelines will be implemented during the review and approval process for residential subdivisions where permissible density is one dwelling unit per acre or less, and will advance the County's objectives through the creation of a consistent, high quality character of development without compromising the integrity of the Community's pastoral and scenic character.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Placer County Rural Design Guidelines are hereby adopted as shown in Exhibit 1 attached hereto.

Further, these guidelines shall apply only to the HB/PCP area until such time as the Board of Supervisors has considered additional input from the County's Municipal Advisory Councils and an additional action is taken by the Board to approve their applicability county-wide.

FOREWORD

The goals of these Rural Design Guidelines are to (1) identify and document the rural characteristics of the plan area, and (2) establish the guidelines, for any future development, which will (3) serve to preserve and protect the unique rural qualities of the plan area for future generations.

These Design Guidelines will be implemented during the review and approval process for residential subdivisions where permissible density is one dwelling unit per acre or less. Application of these Rural Design Guidelines (primarily for rural and residential uses), in addition to the Placer County Design Guidelines and Landscape Guidelines (primarily for commercial, office, and multi-family residential uses), will advance the Plan's objectives through the creation of a consistent, high quality character of development without compromising the integrity of the Community's pastoral and scenic character.

Much of what follows is based on the American Planning Association's report entitled, "*Preserving Rural Character*," (report #429) by Fred Heyer, AICP (available at the Planning Department).

As noted in the Report from the California Senate Urban Growth Policy Project, (Senate Resolution 39 of 1988) "The State Statutes on planning and zoning enact a number of policies to govern development decisions. Among them are the following:

- Discouragement of urban sprawl and encouragement of efficient development patterns;
- Use of land as an exhaustible resource, not just a commodity, . . . essential to the economy, environment and general well-being of the people of California;
- Preservation of agriculture and open-space lands.

One of the values of life in a "rural" area is that there are generally fewer restrictions than there are in more urbanized areas. While rural design guidelines admittedly recommend that some limits be placed on what can be done with ones property, guidelines are crucial for maintaining the rural character of this plan area. Guidelines serve to document rural values and features so they can be protected and preserved.

Pressures for development can be hard to resist, and as more people move in, the ideals and benefits of rural life become threatened. There are pressures to change, to become more urban. Rural design guidelines provide a template with which development proposals can be measured. Rural design guidelines can also be a resource for developers to become accustomed to the qualities and characteristics consistent with rural lifestyles.

We must understand that we are both owners and caretakers of our property. Some folks seem to be able to place a house in the middle of a forest without touching the surrounding trees, soil and water. Others have to force their housing project onto the land without consideration of the long term damage. Trees, wetlands, stream beds and the like are part of the natural resources that must be saved to the maximum extent possible.

RURAL

Definition and Local Interpretation

From Webster's Dictionary, "Rural is derived from the Latin word ruralis for open land, more of room; of or relating to country, country people. . ." Webster also provides many synonyms and contrasts rural to urban features.

Rural is also a state of mind, a feeling. Rural is natural, not structured. Rural is open space, trees, orchards, farms and ranches on a small to large scale. This compares to an urban area where homes are relatively close together, orderly, carefully manicured and there is little open space or room to roam before encroaching on your neighbor. Rural could be a hobby farm. Rural is being able to see the Milky Way without interference of street lights on your neighbor's porch light. Rural is wild animals on your property as compared to dogs and cats in the back yard of an urban home. Rural is being able to hear the birds, geese, frogs and crickets over the sounds of highways and modern life.

Living in a rural environment means taking more risks. In a rural area, you are farther away from the police, medical and fire services of a larger city. Stores, the library and other conveniences are also farther away. Rural roads may be more dangerous because they may be narrower and animals may unexpectedly cross the road; but for those same reasons, rural roads are more attractive and scenic than a highway. Rural may include other risks such as a dry well or backed-up septic tank, but this is part of the rural experience.

Part of the decision to live in a rural area is to weigh the benefits against the risks. Many people have made the decision and prefer to live in a rural area and want to preserve those rural values.

Those who desire a more manicured and ordered environment may seek a suburban or even urban existence. Those who have chosen the rural existence have the responsibility of maintaining its character and beauty.

Greenbelts, Open Spaces, Native Vegetation, Habitat and Wildlife Protection

A. Goals:

1. To set aside interconnected greenbelts and open spaces as a resource to be maintained in a natural state for the protection of native vegetation and wildlife, as well as for community enjoyment.
2. To retain in their natural condition all stream influence areas, including flood plains and riparian vegetation areas, while allowing for limited stream crossings for public roads, trails and utilities.

3. Identify a series of corridors for the free movement and habitat of wildlife.
4. Conserve the natural water purification capabilities of watersheds and wetlands in order to protect the quality of both the natural and domestic water resources.
5. Conservation of the natural landscape, including minimizing disturbance to natural terrain and vegetation, shall be an overriding consideration in the design of any project, paying particular attention to its protection and the preservation of existing native vegetation. (Granite Bay Community Plan, Conservation, Policy 3)

B. Implementation Techniques:

1. Open space should be maintained a minimum of 100 feet from the center line of any permanent streams, and a minimum of 50 feet from intermittent streams to (a) reduce, by natural filtering, the possibility of contamination of the stream from fertilizers and other manmade compounds, and (b) to provide a corridor for wildlife to live and move in relative safety.
2. Those areas rich in wildlife or of a fragile ecological nature, e.g. areas of rare or endangered species of plants, riparian areas, etc., shall be avoided in land development. Where necessary, in order to preserve these areas, they should be publicly acquired (or given via an irrevocable offer of Trust) to ensure protection. (Granite Bay Community Plan, Conservation, Policy 6)
3. For all projects, the purpose of the open space should be determined and specified on maps and/or project conditions as to its purpose.
4. A natural preserve should not be focused on one parcel, but should be an integral part of adjacent parcels to form a connected corridor of open space.
5. Open space land used to preserve a natural feature should be deeded to the County, a homeowners' association, or to a suitable non-profit land trust to ensure the original intent of open space is preserved for future generations.
6. If the land is designated as a natural preserve or similar protective easement, then no substantial disturbance is allowed, except for the benefit of fish, wildlife, water quality and regeneration of trees, fire protection and the like. Maintenance in a stream zone should be to remove material only if a hazard may result. Removing standing or down dead trees and vegetation is often unnecessary as it forms part of the natural food chain and may damage the natural habitat. Maintenance of paths is restricted to the path itself.
7. Pedestrian and equestrian trails and pathways may be established in natural preserves when appropriate. Trails should be constructed and maintained as

naturally as possible. At least two public access points from a public roadway should be included in open space design.

8. Conversion of agricultural land back to native trees and plants is encouraged when agricultural activities are discontinued.
9. Every effort should be made by the use of deed restrictions, CC&R's, and educational materials to notify landowners of the purpose of the open spaces and easements and the responsibilities which they have to protect and preserve these areas for the purposes set forth in the conditions of project approval.
10. Where sensitive natural resources are to be protected, management plans should be required. The sensitive features should be identified in the management plan. The management plan should outline the measures to be implemented for the protection and enhancement of the sensitive area, and should also identify areas on adjacent properties which could be linked or connected to result in open space corridors and greenbelts such as those described in the following section related to trees (the management plan may be the same as a Mitigation Monitoring Program).
11. The Placer County Tree Ordinance should be supported as a means to limit removal of the natural setting, and to further education on the methods for preserving oak tree populations. Even though one is allowed to remove up to 50% of the trees on one's property, every effort must be made to minimize the removal of trees to preserve property values.
12. During the review of new development projects, the County's Tree Preservation Policies should be consulted for additional guidance (See Appendix A).

C. Discussion:

One predominant factor that differentiates an urban area from a rural area is open space. Open Space is often set aside for the protection and preservation of the following natural features:

1. meandering drainage or stream bed areas;
2. riparian/wetland areas;
3. watersheds;
4. common lot areas;
5. oak woodlands, Savanna and Chaparral zones;
6. historical, agricultural, cultural, and archeological resources;
7. endangered/threatened plant/wildlife habitat.

A natural corridor is one preferred method to provide open space for both regeneration of trees and shrubs, and for wildlife habitat. Preservation of natural vegetation in riparian and wetland areas prevents erosion.

One of the major qualities that exemplify a rural setting is a grove of majestic oak trees. Native oaks have been part of the area long before the first European settlers arrived. The connection of oak woodlands and riparian areas as natural corridors are important in order to provide safe migration paths for wild animals. Corridors and open spaces are used to protect whole wooded areas which provide a habitat for regeneration of new trees and protection of existing trees.

Planned Residential Developments (PDs)
(Formerly known as Planned Unit Developments (PUDs))

A. Goals:

1. To preserve natural resources such as riparian habitats, natural waterways and other environmentally sensitive areas.
2. To preserve cultural or historically sensitive areas.
3. To provide on-site public and/or private recreational opportunities.

B. Implementation Techniques:

1. Varied lot sizes within Planned Residential Developments (PDs) allow flexibility to create site sensitive projects in order to meet or exceed the goals and policies of a community plan.
2. The layout of the lots, roadways and open space is site specific and must be based on constraint mapping that depicts geologic, hydraulic, topographic vegetative and other natural, cultural or historic features.
3. It must be recognized that the maximum density permitted by the zoning may not be achieved due to the above constraints. The size and number of parcels within the remaining developable area is dependent upon compatibility with surrounding properties and the goals and policies of the community plan, including the intent of the land use district(s) in which the project is located.
4. PDs should be used only if there is an overriding benefit to the community. For example, protection of a stream bed, wildlife corridor or grove of oak trees. Any protected areas should be held under common ownership of the homeowners association or deeded to the County or a suitable non-profit trust and not as easements within individual residential lots. The overriding benefit of a PD would not be to add more home sites to a parcel of land.
5. PDs also provide a buffer between sensitive environmental areas such as groves of trees and steep slopes.

6. Common open space areas should maintain and complement the natural environment by utilizing native drought-tolerant plant species in landscape design and minimize extensive use of planted turf areas.

C. Discussion:

PD designs that result in clustered lots which give a conventional, uniform appearance (i.e. tract homes, urban subdivisions) are not considered to be consistent with a rural environment. Protection of site sensitive areas and adherence to the community plan will take precedence over the maximum number of lots allowed by the zoning.

Lighting

A. Goal:

1. To provide a minimum of artificial lighting on residences, other structures, and along roadways to limit the amount of light pollution.

B. Implementation Techniques:

1. While street lights may be useful at particularly busy intersections and streets, their use should be discouraged on other more rural streets and lanes.
2. Street lights should be minimized along county roads and within subdivisions while following Placer County road standards. Street lights may be appropriate for large subdivisions entering on roads with a high posted speed limit.
3. If a street light or an area light is required, it should be of the type specified above to protect neighbors from direct rays. Area lighting should be shielded such that direct rays do not pass property lines. Low pressure sodium lamps are encouraged while halogen type lights are discouraged.
4. Where required, the street lamp should be:
 - a. of the high pressure sodium type and of a "cobra head with flat bottom" style or fully shielded such that light is directed only downward.
 - b. mounted on a wood pole at a height and wattage recommended by PG&E.
5. Parking lot lamps should be mounted on the top of the sign and point downward without direct rays extending past the sign.
6. Lights on billboards should be mounted on the top of the sign and point downward without direct rays extending past the sign.

C. Discussion:

The proliferation of outdoor lights is considered "light pollution." There are instances, in urban development, that street lights are desirable, but generally not so in a rural community. In the day, one gets a feeling of rural by being able to see open space. In the evening, the rural feeling is created by the absence of outdoor lights which allows for the enjoyment of the night sky without interference.

The possible hazards of dark roadways should be balanced with preserving a rural environment. There is concern about street lights and their ability to prevent accidents by warning drivers of an intersection. While this may be true, only a portion of collisions occur at intersections and it is unknown if the lack or presence of a street light would have prevented a collision.

Other collision factors to be considered that are not related to street lighting are: driver attentiveness, alcohol, familiarity with the area, or various roadway hazards. The absence of street lighting allows the motor vehicle operator to maintain night vision, and avoids the false sense of security that a street light will prevent a collision.

Natural wood poles blend into the background much better than a steel pole, thus preserving a rural appearance during the day.

Halogen lights are not desirable because the light is very obtrusive, can be seen from great distances and are difficult to shield.

Lot Design

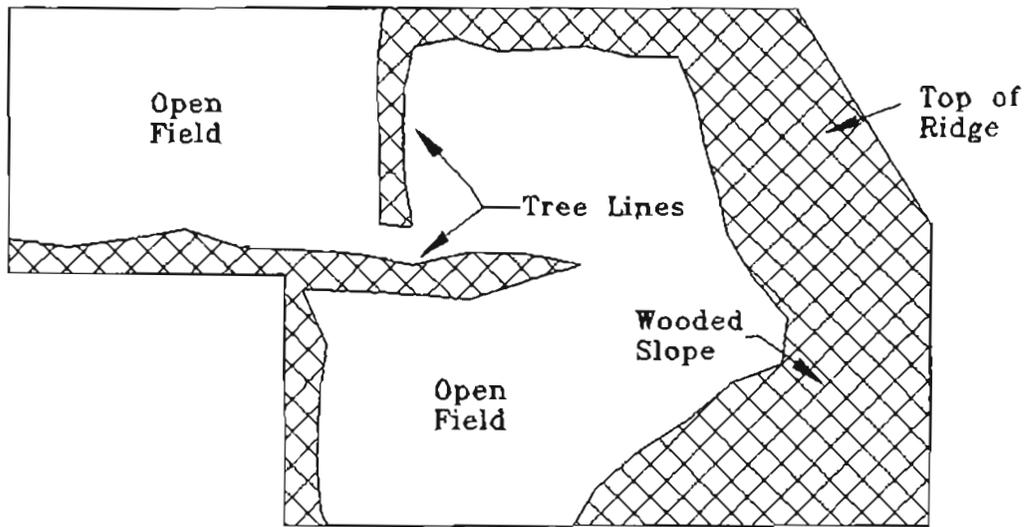
A. Goals:

1. To encourage lot designs which are attractive and functional.
2. To assist in designing home locations on lots to preserve the local rural character.
3. The design of lots that depend on its own resources for water supply and sewerage disposal are encouraged to be self-supporting for the life of the structure.

B. Implementation Techniques:

1. The American Planning Association's report entitled, "*Preserving Rural Character*," (report #429) is recommended for use as a guide for designing lots which preserve rural character and help to abate environmental concerns (available at the Planning Department).

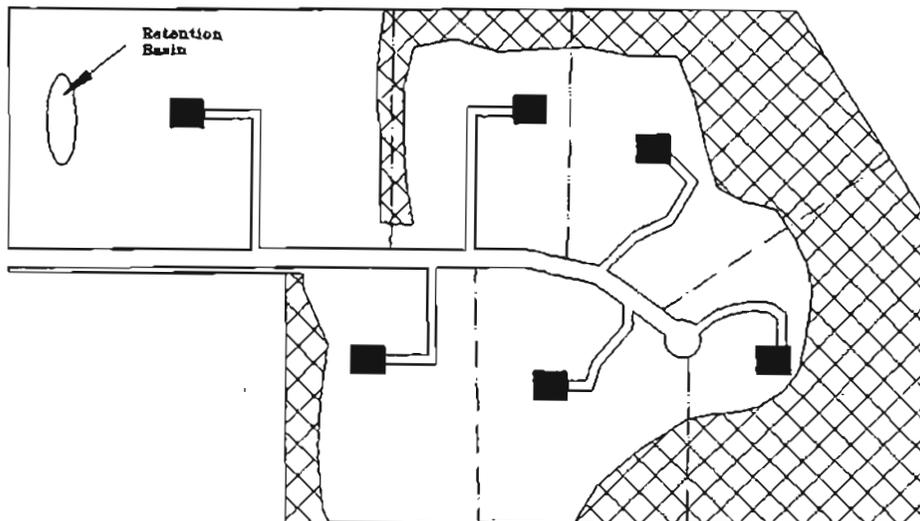
Existing Site Conditions



Physical features:

Oak Woodlands	15 Acres
Open Fields	Zoning: 2.3 Acres
Steep Slopes	Lui. 0.44

Site Plan I - Conventional Development (6-2.3 Acre Lots)



Advantages:

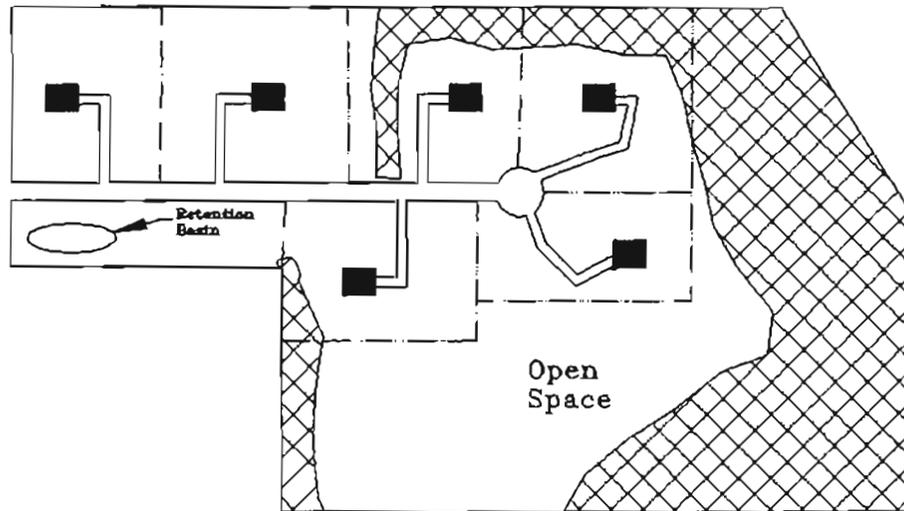
- * Large rural estate lots
- * Maximum spacing between homes
- * Greater compatibility with adjoining land uses (ie. lot size)

Disadvantages:

- * Extensive tree removal
- * Grading and disturbance on steeper slopes
- * Long single entry road
- * Maximum paving
- * No common open space

Site Plan II - Cluster Development (PUD)

(6-1 Acre lots plus ± 8 Acres common open space)



Advantages:

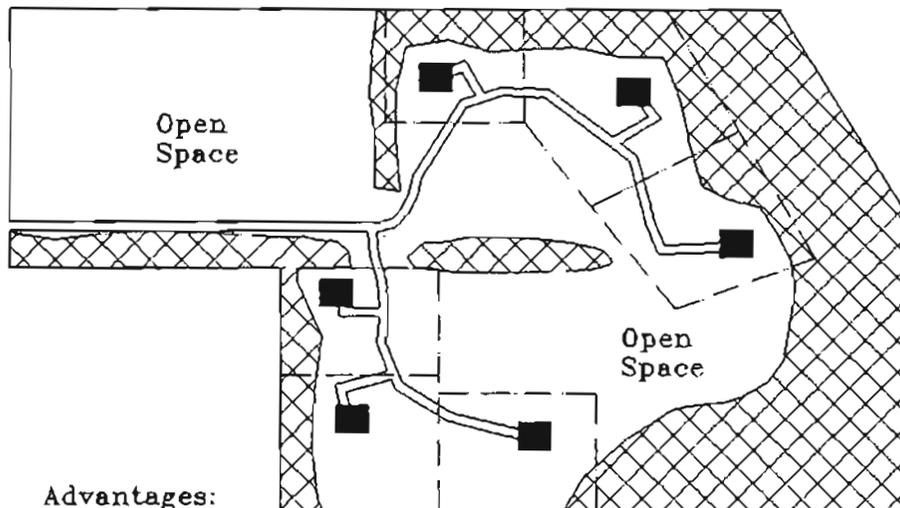
- * Expansive open space
- * Shorter roadway-less paving
- * Preserved wooded slope
- * Maximum tree protection

Disadvantages:

- * Limited accessibility for project residents to common open space
- * Incompatible with adjoining properties impacted by smaller lots
- * Denser residential building area (ie. less spacing between homes)

Site Plan III - Alternative Cluster Development (PUD)

(6-1 Acre lots plus : 8 Acres of common open space)



Advantages:

- * All lots provided direct access to common open space
- * All homes adjacent to woodlands
- * Maximum tree preservation
- * Expansive open space
- * Preserved wooded slope
- * Greater spacing between homes
- * Greater likelihood of being compatible with adjoining lot sizes

Disadvantages:

- * Longer roadway with more paving
- * Shared roadways crossing private lots

2. There should be no restrictions on land used for orchards or other agricultural type activities.
3. The distance between a structure and any road should vary from lot to lot which gives a more random appearance rather than a series of structures in a line.
4. The use of native, or native-appearing drought-tolerant landscaping is preferred over water-intensive ornamentals.
5. Buildable portions of lots should be designed to protect natural resources/features by incorporating trees, wetlands, streams, rock outcroppings, etc. into the overall project for long term preservation. It is not always necessary to completely avoid these resources, they can often be incorporated into a project design. Residences should be located on the edges of topographical changes and vegetation areas (i.e. wooded areas), or just below ridge lines.
6. Maintain a 4:1 length to width ratio to avoid creation of irregular parcels and inappropriate flag lots.
7. Any design with an on-site sewer and water supply must not rely on future improvements in the area to solve any problems with these utilities.

C. Discussion:

Lots averaging one acre or larger are encouraged to allow greater buildable areas for such improvements as buildings, decks, pools, and accessory structures. Smaller lots usually take on the appearance of conventional suburban subdivisions with homes located the same distance from the street and from each other, with uniform driveway treatments and building orientation.

Thus, the opportunities to develop the random look and feel of a rural area is lost. Larger lot designs inherently preserve the area's rural flavor and offer the most flexibility in designing a new home site.

Preservation of Scenic Areas

A. Goal:

1. To avoid predominant landmarks which impose on the landscape and the natural skyline in ways that cause the contiguous rural landscape to be interrupted.
2. To protect Folsom Lake (and other large bodies of water) view shed (as viewed from the lake area), and public view corridors along major County roadways and Interstate 80 from actions which degrade their scenic quality.

B. Implementation Techniques:

1. Homes and accessory structures should blend into the environment and not be taller than the tree tops.
2. Where possible, structures should be tucked along tree lines or along other topographical changes in contour.
3. On lots located along ridge tops, houses and accessory structures should be built just below the ridge line where there are no existing trees to prevent the structures from becoming the predominant feature on the rural landscape. Otherwise, such development should be screened by new plantings of sufficient height and bulk at maturity to minimize visual encroachment to the greatest extent possible.
4. One method of ensuring that structures do not emerge above the tree tops involves the use of a helium balloon on a string. The helium balloon is allowed to rise until it begins to emerge above the tree tops. The length of string used to elevate the balloon to the level just below the tree tops is used to determine the height of structures in that specific area.
5. Whenever possible, buffers of natural vegetation and wooded areas should be situated between roadways and structures. The affect of this is to tuck structures away, creating the illusion of a continuous rural landscape and to avoid the appearance of imposing structures on the landscape.

C. Discussion:

Maintenance of the natural landscape as the dominant visual feature is probably one of the most important rural issues. Structures that dominate the landscape interrupt the rural continuity of the area.

Fences

A. Goals:

1. To maintain continuity of an open rural environment with necessary fencing to be as visually permeable as possible.
2. To identify land which has been designated as environmentally sensitive from being used for other than its intended purpose, to be a permanent reminder for property owners that a sensitive area exists; and to allow for the free movement of wildlife in the area.

B. Implementation Techniques:

The implementation techniques are organized in the following categories:

PROJECT BOUNDARIES/BOUNDARIES OF PRIVATE LOTS:

1. When open iron fencing is proposed, encourage the use of top caps rather than spikes and spires that could potentially harm migrating wildlife.
2. Fencing should not exceed a six foot height.
3. The following fencing types are recommended:
 - a. Solid wood, untreated and unpainted cedar or redwood (natural stain is acceptable)
 - b. Dark colored chain link
 - c. Stone or masonry walls less than 3 feet high
4. Barbed wire is discouraged, except where necessary for agricultural operations.

ALONG ROADWAYS:

5. The use of hedges, trellised vines, or berry bushes are encouraged to satisfy privacy needs.
6. Fencing along roadways should not significantly restrict the visual landscape or inhibit the perception of rural open space.
7. Sound walls and solid fencing along roadways are to be discouraged due to their detracting to the rural nature of the area. Options other than sound walls are to be considered where noise is a problem. These include earthen berms with trees or increasing the distance between a structure and the noise source.
8. Fences should be set back from roadways a distance sufficient to abate traffic safety concerns (usually adequately addressed in planning setback ordinances), and to avoid creating the appearance of a "tunnel" effect.
9. Plans for fencing along roadways should be carefully reviewed to ensure that they do not create a physical or visual hazard.



- Split Rail - Preferred for Sensitive Areas



- Rail Fences: Good Examples of Rural Fencing



- Spike Tipped Wrought Iron - Dangerous to Wildlife



- Solid Wall - Urban type

ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE AND OPEN SPACE AREAS:

10. An open rail type fence around any area designated as environmentally sensitive is recommended. As an alternative, three wire fencing on wood or "T" bar posts is acceptable if the bottom two wires are not barbed. Areas to be fenced include riparian/wetlands, tree preservation areas and the like. The above type fences are specified in order to allow the free movement of wildlife in the area, and are less visually obtrusive and are in keeping with a rural setting. Fencing need not be required along property lines where a similar environmentally sensitive feature exists.

OTHERS:

11. Fences around or along canals, ponds and lakes may be necessary to prevent the dumping of materials in the water and to prevent children from falling into the canals or ponds.

C. Discussion:

Open rail fencing is encouraged as it is most conducive to the free passage of wildlife. Open rail fencing is also considered to be the least visually invasive fencing structure in a rural landscape.

Iron fences with spikes on the top can be a safety hazard because leaping deer and other wildlife may be impaled on the spikes.

It may be necessary to restrict access of children to canals, landscape ponds, detention ponds and lakes. However, fences should be used only after other alternatives have been considered (i.e. shoreline treatment, thorny vegetation). The guidelines noted above should be used wherever fencing in these areas is necessary.

Subdivision Entrance Features

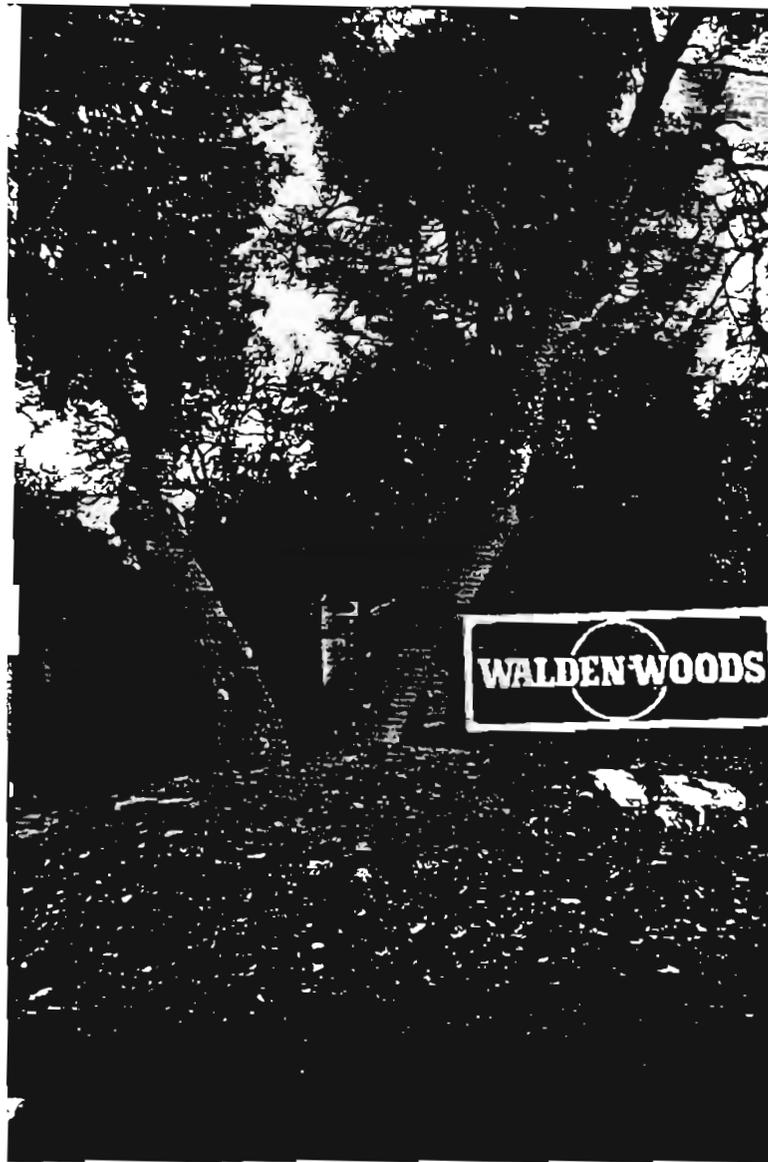
A. Goal:

1. To minimize the visual impact of man-made structures on a rural landscape, and to ensure the community-wide continuity of a rural appearance.

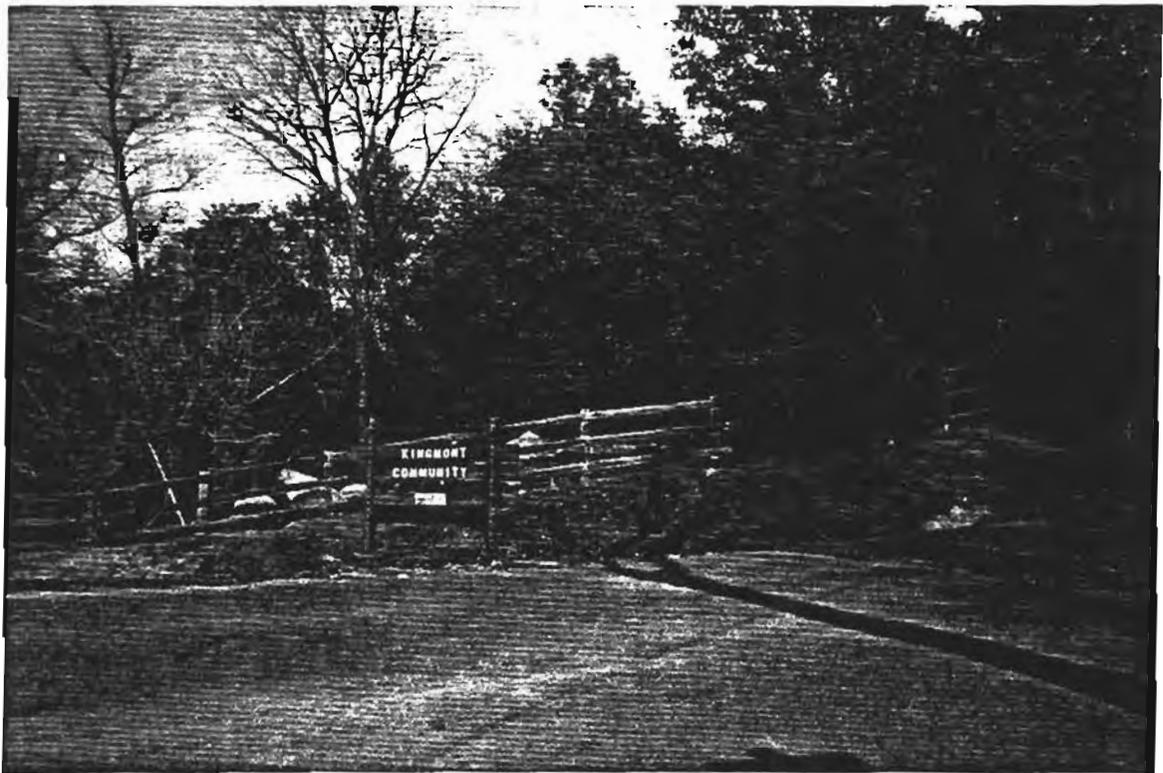
B. Implementation Techniques:

1. Permanent advertising or sales signs are not appropriate and should not be allowed. Signs with the subdivision name alone should meet the following criteria:

2. Where signs/marques are deemed appropriate, a building envelope should be designated for such purpose.
3. Where signs/marques are deemed appropriate, they shall not be greater than a maximum of 50 square feet.
4. Structural entrance features should satisfy zoning ordinance setback requirements and DPW sight-clearance standards.
5. The use of indigenous natural materials are encouraged.
6. Existing natural vegetation and wooded areas should be incorporated into the entrance design.
7. The entrance may be further enhanced with the use of imported native vegetation.
8. Non-native and "formal" type landscape design and vegetation are discouraged.
9. Lighting of entrances should be restricted to the parameters set forth under the rural lighting standards.
10. If the subdivision intersections are illuminated, further entrance lighting is not necessary and should be discouraged.
11. The use of entrance lighting should be limited, but if allowed for safety reasons, entrance feature lighting should be restricted to identification purposes with only directed and shielded lighting on the identifying portion of the entrance feature.
12. Extensive use of lawn is discouraged due to its urban/suburban ornamental appearance which is contrary to the rural landscape.
13. Setback and natural landscape buffers should be used to provide a subtle screen for the privacy of the subdivision's residents and to reduce the urban appearance on the rural landscape. The use of existing wooded areas and vegetation is encouraged.
14. When visible from public areas, structures such as culverts, headwalls, bridges, etc. should be faced or adorned with materials which will blend with the adjacent landscape. The use of native, natural materials is encouraged. Where the use of native, natural materials is not feasible, conventional materials like concrete should be dyed and textured to blend with the natural landscape.



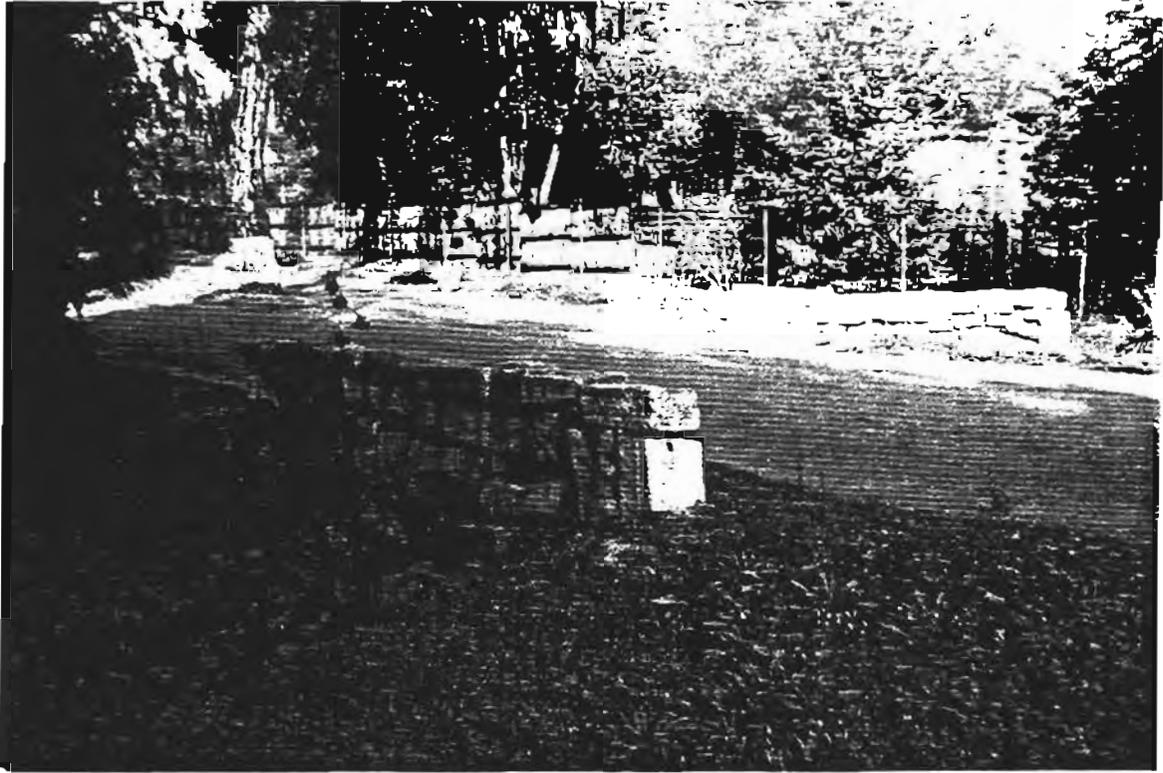
- Appropriate Entrance Feature
Good Use of Natural Vegetation,
and materials



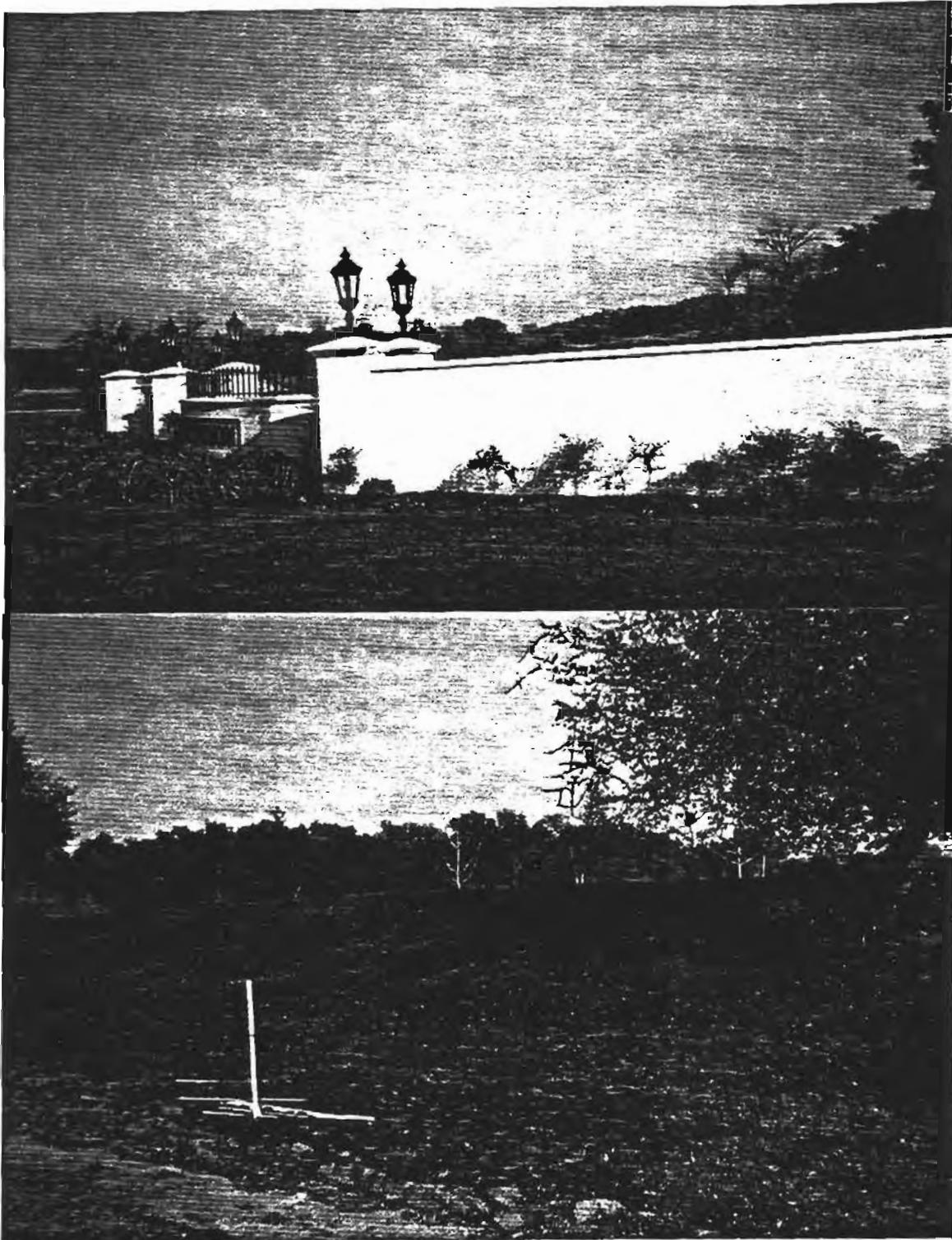
- Appropriate Entrance Features - Good use of Natural Materials and Vegetation



- Excessive Entrance Features - Guard House,
Wrought Iron with Spikes, Lights,
Masonry Walls over 3'



- Good Use of Indigenous Materials



- Excessive Use of Lawns, & Walls & Lights

C. Discussion:

Large and elaborate entrance features and lighting tend to mar the rural landscape and nightscape and also create a mood both inside and outside of the development which is not conducive to a healthy, homogeneous, interactive community.

Rural Roadways

A. Goals:

1. To preserve the rural flavor and scenic value of the plan area by design and placement of the road system to maintain open space through the use of adequate setbacks from main roads and structures.
2. To provide a safe path for pedestrians, equestrians, and bicycles on major plan area roads by providing separated trails within the highway right-of-way. If possible, the path should be separated by a row of oak or other trees. Any additional right-of-way provided for trails beyond that necessary for roadway requirements should not be deducted from density yields.
3. To avoid the use of standard, cement curb, gutter and sidewalks in the rural environment.
4. To meet CDF and local fire department road standards.
5. Provide a road alignment that works around trees and rock outcroppings as much as possible.

B. Implementation Techniques:

Follow the rural road plate design as appropriate, but keep the roadway as narrow as possible.

1. The design should also take into consideration pedestrian, equestrian and bicycle traffic. A class 1, 2 or 3 bike path and separated equestrian/pedestrian trail is recommended.
2. Roadways are preferred as a boundary between open space and housing instead of a back yard. This would provide a common feeling of ownership of the open space and provide more natural boundaries to homes. Enforcement of open space protection should also be easier if private lots are separated from the common open space by a rural road.
3. Roadways should follow the natural topography of the land, avoiding as much cut and fill as possible. Whenever feasible, existing lanes and rural roads should be incorporated into the subdivision design.



- Good Example of Rural Road
curving around existing rocks



- Example of cement curb and gutter with decomposed granite path
- Recommended for Connector trails through higher density areas

C. Discussion:

Long, straight, wide roads are to be discouraged for a rural area due to the combination of excessive speeds and danger of animal crossings. Consequently, a rural road system should include more bends and scenic curves than more urbanized straight streets. Safety must of course also be considered so that roads are wide enough to be comfortable while driving, and allow for maneuvering room in the event of an emergency, but safety should not be the sole design factor.

Almost every road in the plan area is two lanes which adds to the rural feeling of the area. Good examples of rural roads in the area are the south end of Val Verde Road where the road is built around natural rock outcroppings (see photo), and Horseshoe Bar and Shirland Tract Roads with their natural curves that fit into the terrain. King Road and the new section of Auburn Folsom Road are not good examples of rural roads since they are mainly straight and encourage more traffic, traveling at high speeds. Winding rural roads tend to slow down drivers.

Agriculture

A. Goal:

1. To encourage development for agricultural purposes where the land will support agriculture and not just development solely for homes and business.
2. To protect and encourage farming and ranching operations based on the past, present and future economic value of farming and ranching operations in the plan area.

B. Implementation Techniques:

1. Land "not in production" could be revitalized and put back into production.
2. Where agricultural lands are in production (or previously in production), encourage agricultural pursuits in combination with clustered development designs (i.e. Clos du Lac with its vineyard and olive orchard plans, and Hidden Valley with the open space pasture areas for common use by residents).

C. Discussion:

Agriculture provides jobs, food, fiber and open space. Placer County used to be one of the prime agriculture areas in California, but there has been a decline in agricultural production in the County due to urban sprawl, development, off-shore competition and the inability of younger families to acquire large enough parcels of land to make food production a viable business.



- Existing Rural Features- Barns, Granite Fence Posts



- Existing Rural Features - Barns or Feed Sheds

Agricultural land is being replaced with homes at an ever increasing rate. Even when older orchards are converted to housing, there is still value in some of the land being used for small scale production such as a hobby farm.

Given the fate of the Santa Clara Valley and Orange County which were once prime agricultural lands, but have now been virtually paved over with urban development, care must be taken that a similar fate is not imposed on Placer County.

The main agricultural operations in the plan area include orchard production and livestock breeding and training. (Also refer to Discussion comments under the Recreational Facilities section).

Existing Historical and Cultural Features

A. Goal:

1. To preserve and protect the existing historical, cultural and archeological features which give the plan area its unique rural identity.

B. Implementation Techniques:

1. Existing historical, cultural or archeological features should be incorporated into the subdivision design wherever possible. If possible, include these features in open space lots.
2. Protection of historical, cultural, and archeological resources should be addressed in management plans of the type described in the section on Greenbelts, Open Spaces, Habitat and Wildlife Protection as a condition of project approval.
3. Local historical societies should be consulted with regard to historical or archeological value, proper handling, and academic documentation, before any historical or archeological features are removed or relocated. Cases involving archeological features should require the consultation of proper academic authorities from the local colleges or university.

C. Discussion:

Existing historical, agricultural, cultural and archeological features are often the landmarks which provide the unique identity of a rural community. Examples of these types of features include:

1. the water tower which can be seen from I-80 in Newcastle;
2. the old packing sheds in Newcastle, Penryn, and Loomis;

3. the granite fence posts seen along the rural roads;
4. old barns, feed sheds and pump houses;
5. rock fences and boundary markers;
6. Indian grinding rocks;
7. the mature stand of Palm trees along English Colony, Butler, Del Mar, Sisley, Clark Tunnel, and Newcastle Roads;
8. historic schoolhouses and other historic buildings found throughout the County.

Whenever possible, these resources should be incorporated into development designs.

