

Shiners Property

Project Narrative

May 2023

Project Site

The Shiners Property consists of approximately 234 acres located adjacent to the northeastern boundary of the City of Davis. Although the property is no longer owned by the Shiners, the project, for the time being, is maintaining that name for historical reference. The property is generally rectangular, with dimensions roughly 1/2 mile across and 3/4 of a mile long. The site consists of APN 071-130-007-000. The property is located north of East Covell Boulevard and Mace Ranch. Southeast of the property is the Frances Harper Junior High School. West of the property is the Wildhorse community, their agricultural buffer and trail system, and the Wildhorse golf course. Ongoing agricultural operations occur north and east of the site. The property is directly one mile north of Interstate 80 and one mile from the Mace Boulevard exit.



Source: Google Earth

Setting

The Yolo County General Plan and Zoning designations for the property are Agricultural (AG) and Agricultural Intensive (A-N). The topography is generally flat and sloping to the north, and the property is currently utilized for agriculture. Dirt roads bisect the site in several locations and also loop around

the property. A tributary to Willow Creek, Channel A, bisects the northern portion of the property, continuing through the Wildhorse Golf Course. In the northwest quadrant, an existing road crossing allows farming operations to continue from Channel A to the northern boundary. Existing trees on the property are located adjacent to East Covell Boulevard and along both sides of Channel A. Northeast of the property, the City recently secured a public trail easement on the Gill Orchard property, with plans to ultimately connect that trail to the Wildhorse system. There is an existing grade separated crossing of East Covell Boulevard in the southwestern corner of the project, the site for which was previously provided to the City by the property's ownership group, creating safe pedestrian access to the bikeway and trail systems on both sides of that street.

Project Objectives

1. Provide a significant quantity of critically needed housing for the City, accommodated in a balanced and wide variety of densities, products and price points.
2. Provide 20% of the total residential units for the construction of "Capital A" affordable housing for low, very low and extremely low-income households.
3. Provide another 10% of the total residential units for single family homes priced at an average of 70% of the Davis median home price.
4. Prioritize the use of high and medium density housing for the missing middle and young families who are currently unable to find or afford housing in Davis.
5. Create the type of housing that will encourage young families to buy and live in Davis, increasing the number of children attending DJUSD schools.
6. Encourage people living outside Davis and commuting to live in Davis, thereby reducing vehicle miles traveled and their associated environmental impacts.
7. Respect existing agricultural uses by providing buffers that create a transitional space and encourage residents to appreciate the value of both uses coexisting together.
8. Provide a vibrant community park with badly needed active ballfields, inclusive play areas, and an indoor gymnasium, proximate to existing residents as well as new homeowners. The community park will also provide a transit station.
9. Create outdoor educational opportunities for various age groups and abilities, which encourage exploration and complement existing programs within the City.
10. Expand the City's existing bikeway and pedestrian trail system and provide important connections to new off-site bikeways.
11. Support existing retailers by avoiding the construction of brick-and-mortar retail, instead providing an eclectic retail and entertainment area where we are exploring opportunities to incorporate a Competitive Integrated Employment (CIE) program for persons living with Intellectual or Developmental Disabilities (I/DD).

Illustrative Land Use Plan



Project Components

The project proposes residential uses in a wide variety of products and densities, from high density attached product to traditional single family homes. Additionally, the project includes a community park, transit station, eclectic retail/entertainment area, agricultural buffers, greenways, and a passive nature area.

Land Use Summary		
Land Use Designation	Acres	Units
Low Density Residential	44.7	250
Medium Density Residential	66.3	518
High Density Residential	22.7	432
Overall Residential Density = 9.0 du/ac	<i>Subtotal</i>	133.7 1,200
Passive Nature Area/ Greenways/ Ag Buffers	52.2	
Transit Station/ Eclectic Retail/ Entertainment Area	2.0	
Community Park	17.2	
	<i>Subtotal</i>	71.4
Major Streets/ Landscape Corridors	29.2	
Total	234.3	1,200

Residential Land Uses



The project proposes Low, Medium and High Density Residential land uses totaling 1,200 dwelling units, with an overall residential density of 9.0 dwelling units per acre.

The Low Density Residential (LDR) land use designation supports a range of single family detached homes. 250 dwelling units (21% of the total) are designated for LDR product types. These units will fall within the General Plan density range of 3.00-5.99 dwelling units per acre (averaging approximately 5.6 units per acre), where a variety of larger detached single family housing types are possible. The project includes four LDR sites.

The Medium Density Residential (MDR) land use designation accommodates single family detached as well as attached residential units. 518 dwelling units (43% of the total) are designated for MDR product types. These units will fall within the General Plan density range of 6.00-13.99 dwelling units per acre (averaging approximately 7.8 units per acre), where housing types such as small single family, alley-loaded, greencourt, duplex, and townhomes are possible. The project includes fourteen MDR sites.



The High Density Residential (HDR) land use designation primarily accommodates attached residential units. 432 dwelling units (36% of the total) are designated for HDR product types. These units will fall within the General Plan density range of 14.00-25.00 dwelling units per acre (averaging approximately 19.0 units per acre), where housing types such as apartments, both affordable and market rate, townhomes, condominiums, or stacked flats are possible. These housing types may be for sale or rental units. The project includes three HDR sites.



Affordable housing is a critical component of the HDR land use. The project is partnering with Mutual Housing for the development of 240 “Capital A” affordable units for low, very-low and extremely low income households. This constitutes 20% of the project’s total units, exceeding the City’s 15% requirement. The project is providing for the early delivery of the affordable site(s) to Mutual Housing in advance of construction of any market rate residential units.



The project also proposes to provide Attainable By Design housing. An additional 10% of the project’s total unit count will be devoted to the development of market rate homes that are priced at an average of 70% of the Davis median home price. Additionally, the project seeks to partner with a non-profit home builder such as Habitat for Humanity to construct a sweat equity micro neighborhood.

High Density Residential land uses have been thoughtfully designed near the planned transit station and the existing grade separated crossing of East Covell Boulevard, placing the highest density housing a short walk away from the community park and other neighborhood amenities.

Greenways

The project is surrounded by greenways, providing residents the opportunity to circumnavigate the entire area on a system of shared-use pathways. The greenway loop consists of the existing Wildhorse agricultural buffer on the west, passive nature area and agricultural buffer on the north, and the agricultural buffer on the east.

The project's agricultural buffers have been designed to transition from an urban environment to an agricultural one. The meandering design of these buffers creates a more natural appearance, with tree groves and native plantings that provide a natural separation between uses. Water treatment, disguised in naturally occurring forms, will also provide visual interest and create additional variation along the edge. These agricultural buffers are not designed as the backside of the community, but instead invite residents to appreciate the value of both uses coexisting together.



Not only do greenways surround the project, but they also bisect it in two directions. This design creates four quadrants, each with convenient access to the trail system from anywhere in the neighborhood.

The North Central Greenway links the community park on the south to the passive nature area on the north. Two nodes along the way allow residents to find shade, a bench or exercise with individual workout stations. Neighborhood design adjacent to the North Central Greenway incorporates street systems that loop or touch the greenways with open ended cul-de-sacs, providing convenient access to the greenway from within each individual neighborhood.

The West Central Greenway links the agricultural buffer on the east to Duchamp Park in Wildhorse on the west. This greenway is an important community element, providing the primary east-west street connection, and highlighting a number of unique housing types within the community. Incorporation of alley-loaded or courtyard product will remove the driveways from this street and create an entirely pedestrian experience, where the greenway passes along the front yards of these showcase homes.

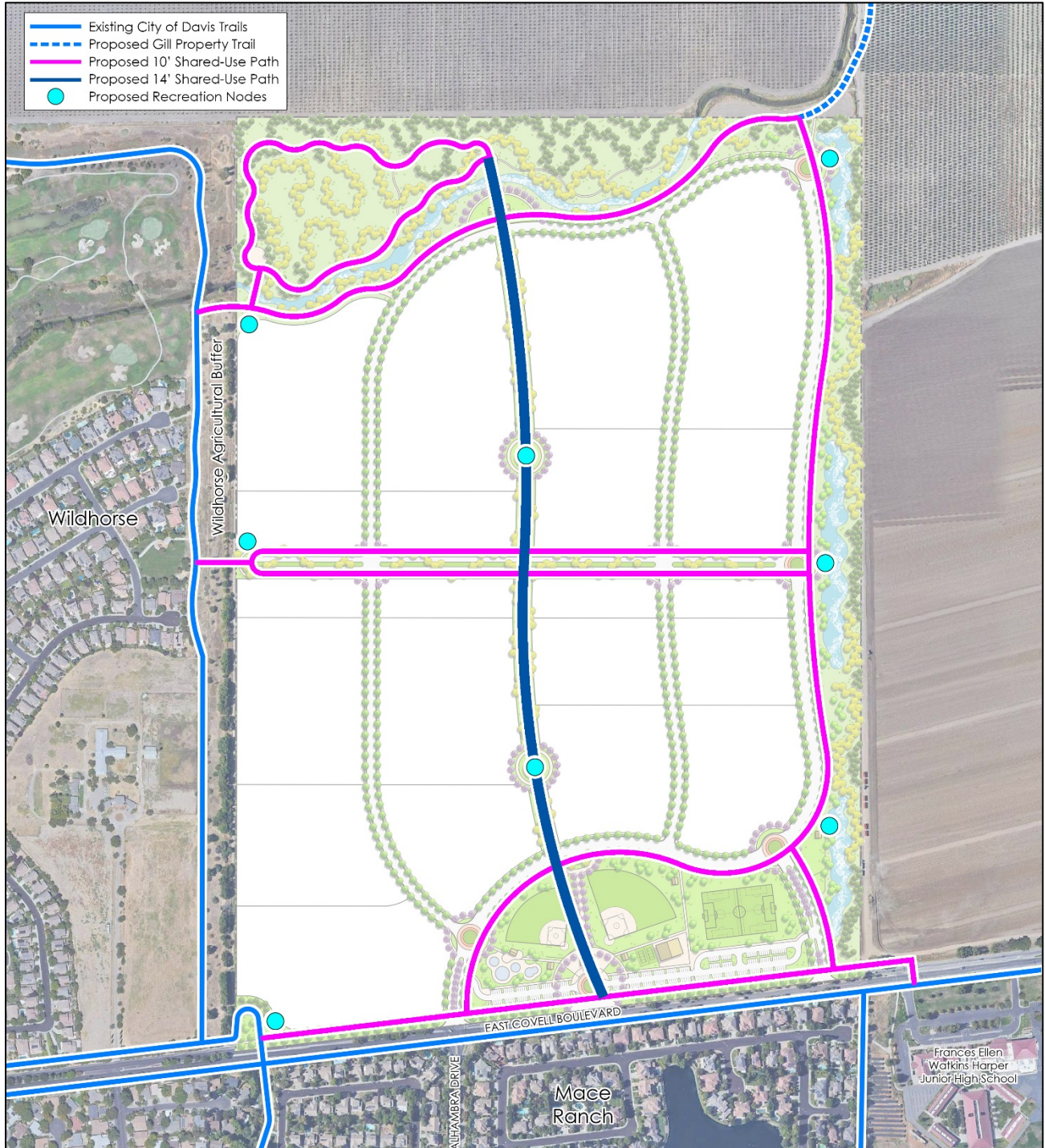


Connections from the project to off-site locations are also provided north to the Gill Property trail, west to the Wildhorse trails, and south via the existing undercrossing at East Covell Boulevard. Additionally, an eastern connection is being explored to safely connect students to the signalized intersection at



Frances Harper Junior High School. The project is uniquely situated to take advantage of bike connectivity to other destinations within the City, including recreation, shopping, employment and schools. By bike, the project is less than 10 minutes to Nugget Market, Target, and Grocery Outlet and less than 20 minutes from UC Davis, Sutter Davis, and Davis Research Park. Over three miles of shared-use trails are proposed within the project, adding to the City's already robust bikeway trail system.

Trails Plan



Greenway Plan



Community Park

Both entries into the neighborhood focus on the 17 acre community park site. This park provides amenities for both existing and future residents of Davis. At the core of the park is a transit station located midway along the project frontage. This station is a critical connection point for non-vehicular travel and emphasizes the project's commitment to alternative forms of transportation. A traffic calming roundabout allows transit users to safely access the park facilities from the station.

An eclectic retail/entertainment area is located directly north of the transit station. This space is highlighted by a small coffee shop in an innovative, modular-style structure that will provide food and beverage service during sporting events, as well as the remainder of the week to neighborhood residents. Large deciduous trees encircle the space and provide ample shade for outdoor dining. The courtyard has been designed large enough to accommodate other uses such as community events and opportunities for public art. Restrooms are located between the small retail area and the playground to the west.

Community Park Concept



Vehicular circulation and parking is situated adjacent to East Covell Boulevard. Parking is located 50' from the street and buffered with lush landscaping which extends the entire length of the project frontage. Parking is purposefully situated near East Covell Boulevard so that residents from outside the neighborhood can easily access the park facilities without having to navigate through the internal portions of the neighborhood. This encourages residents within the neighborhood to walk to the park and reduces vehicle miles traveled from residents outside the neighborhood attending sporting events or visiting the park.

An inclusive playground lies east of the project entry, designed with sufficient buffer space around it in order to reduce the potential for conflicting uses. Inclusive playgrounds provide a sensory-rich environment that enables individuals to develop physically, socially and emotionally. They are a safe place where people of different abilities, ages, genders, and cultural backgrounds can play together. Play equipment and design engages users with an appropriate level of challenge and the opportunity to succeed.



The design goes beyond minimum accessibility and creates play experiences that meet the needs and interests of as many individuals as possible. The playground design includes a perimeter boundary with a single point of entry, a transition area for warming up and cooling down, an orientation pathway and good line of site to all points, accessible paths with visual cues, variations in the color or texture of surfaces to help with wayfinding and in organizing play areas, cozy spaces for retreat and observation, low level intricate play, undulating play and sensory plantings. Equally important are the support features provided, which include accessible parking, family restrooms, shaded areas, benches and picnic tables, and drinking fountains so families and caregivers have the opportunity to stay and play longer.

East of the small retail area is a shade structure adjacent to two pickleball courts optimally designed in a north-south orientation. Adjacent to the courts is a public gymnasium. This facility will provide a much needed indoor court for community events, basketball games and futsal tournaments. The walkway from this area connects users to a regulation soccer field with overlays for different age groups. An elevated mound north of the soccer field buffers the use from adjacent housing and provides passive bleacher-type seating for families with improved viewing during games.



West of the soccer fields is an adult/ high school sized baseball diamond and a softball/ little league diamond. The fields are oriented with sun exposure in mind in order to optimize the playing experience. Similar to the soccer fields, both diamonds are also flanked by an elevated mound for buffering these uses from adjacent homes and improving viewing opportunities. Shade structures are also provided for both fields. A dog park is located between the agricultural buffer and the easternmost entry.



The dog park is separated into areas for large and small dogs and includes a shade structure and watering facilities. This location ties directly into the looping trail system, providing opportunities for longer walks and connecting dog owners to various parts of the neighborhood.

Passive Nature Area

The project provides over 28 acres devoted to outdoor education. Nestled between the farmland north of the project and the Channel A, an outdoor education area is envisioned, which could provide hands-on activities with the potential for overnight stays. This area would be designed to complement existing outdoor recreation programs in the City. A small meeting space with restrooms on the north end of the project forms the trailhead for the outdoor education area.

Circulation

All of the major streets within the project incorporate gentle curves or enhanced medians that calm traffic and create a more pleasant driving experience. Neighborhood entries are no exception. Access comes from two intersections on East Covell Boulevard, one opposite the existing signal at Alhambra Drive, and the other one approximately 1/4 mile east. Both arc into the site embracing the community park, which acts as a focal point for the neighborhood and adjacent residential communities. Both entries include landscaped medians, separated walks and traffic circles at their intersections, ensuring that driving speeds into the neighborhood and around the park will be reduced.

From there, the circulation system meanders northward and loops back on the south side of Channel A. The curvilinear design adjacent to the eastern agricultural buffer also creates a more natural edge and emphasizes the open space and agricultural uses beyond. Traffic circles have been included at major intersections, which reduce speeds and pause drivers at areas of visual interest.

The primary east-west street, with an enhanced landscape setback and widened landscape median, provides connectivity and opportunities for unique front-on architecture. Internal neighborhood street design will primarily be oriented east-west, creating home orientations that are more energy efficient.

Project History

A Pre-Application for the property was submitted to the City in October 2021. In February 2022, City Staff provided comments on the proposal and the Conceptual Land Use Plan. The applicant and project team held a series of follow-up meetings with City Staff to discuss and clarify items from the initial round of comments. The project team prioritized tasks and made significant revisions to the project based on those meetings. In October 2022, the project team initiated a series of focus group meetings with members of the Davis community. These meetings were most valuable in determining the needs, values, and concerns of the community. The Shiners project proposal and land use design is a direct result of these important interactions. A formal application was submitted to the City in December 2022.

Summary

The Shiners project prioritizes housing for those that need it most, by contributing a responsible and balanced mix of housing for Davis, which includes “Capital A” affordable housing, attainable by design housing, and housing for the missing middle. In addition, the project proposes a robust package of amenities, including a community park, transit station, public gymnasium, eclectic retail, outdoor education area, over 70 acres of greenspace, and three miles of new shared-use pathways. The proposal for the Shiners property doesn’t just meet City standards for new development, but exceeds them in every way. The time for a development proposal of this quality in Davis is now.