

3.0 Goals for the Dry Creek Preserve

3.1 The Dry Creek Preserve Vision -- Major Plan Concepts

1. Use an array of land use policies, design standards, mitigation concepts and permissible use descriptions to enable and guide appropriate land use transitions, while preserving the DCP overall neighborhood character and key open space values.
2. Develop and provide a Master Annexation Agreement format which is generally acceptable to landowners and the City, to facilitate DCP land annexation as needs arise.
3. Preserve the opportunity for the City to pursue the Open Space Legacy Program, by preserving open space, encouraging DCP landowners to offer the City a “fair market value” opportunity to purchase lands that are otherwise offered for sale, and by outlining an administrative structure which the City may utilize to secure supporting grants or other supplemental funds for these open space land purchases.
4. Allow for linear open space corridors and trails to connect across the DCP landscape; initially utilizing street rights of way, but later including additional; trails and connections across public acquired sites or easements.
5. Provide clear and workable guidelines for development of infrastructure and public works projects, with design standards to assure that developed features are visually consistent with the rural landscape and area character.
6. Provide funding mechanisms to offset City and County costs associated with reduced land development revenue, and to finance public acquisitions made under the Open Space Legacy Program.

The DCP will continue to be a rural appearing, less intensively developed neighborhood, with evident viable agriculture, equestrian and other livestock use, long views, and other rural attributes. It will continue to have a Rural Residential or other similar land use designation, which allows single family residences to be placed on very large parcels of at least one acre, and preferably two acres or more in size. It will thus provide a residential housing option wherein people who desire to have larger yards or other connected land area; either for gardening, privacy, play areas for children, workshops, livestock, other kinds of outbuildings or just open space surroundings can enjoy those lifestyles. A “Right to farm” policy is included here (Section 4.5.2.2) to establish expectations and protect continuation of DCP area agricultural operations.

As this Plan is implemented, the DCP will become a prominent open space feature of the City of Clovis. As the urban area develops on all sides of the DCP, the open space resources within the area will be increasingly valuable to the urban residents. Already, Clovis residents are routinely attracted to the area. Individuals and families are seen walking, bicycling and parking along the less intimidating DCP streets and roads, interacting with livestock or just relaxing in this less urban-appearing area. Recreational uses will increase, as the DCP's identity as a "community open space resource" is deliberately expanded within the Clovis community. Over time, off-road trail alignments, and public recreation sites may be acquired and developed; financed by grant, bond, or other supplemental moneys. Any such acquisitions would be administered by the City of Clovis, under the Dry Creek Preserve Open Space Legacy Program (Appendix D.).

To help foster community appreciation of the DCP as a unique recreational area, roads crossing the DCP will be of unique design. Drivers will be made aware that they have entered a unique, recreation-focused area. High-volume, faster traffic will be encouraged to utilize other alternate routes around the area which will be more efficient and which will enable the streets within the DCP to be slower, quieter and more relaxing; both for drivers and for residents and/or passive recreationists on the area roadways. Traffic speeds will be controlled by speed limits, and by traffic features such as roundabouts at major intersections. Streets will keep their rural appearance and be marked by signage with a distinctive DCP logo. Major entry points to the area will have substantial delineations or sign-monuments. Major through streets will have continuous left turn lanes, to enable safer access in and out of the numerous residential driveways. Traffic management is envisioned to be similar to the current slower traffic management within the Old Town Clovis district.

Currently, a wide variety of owner uses exists within the DCP. The MAA will provide for that diversity to continue over time, as existing lots are built out and the area population gradually increases. The MAA, along with modified regulations pursuant to this Specific Plan, will permit the broadest reasonable set of owner activities and uses. At minimum all pre-existing uses will continue to be allowed. The area will continue to be characterized by very low density residential uses, primarily owing to limitations of the area's reliance on individual well and septic facilities.

The DCP area will likely continue to have low-intensity commercial uses, such as the agriculture, landscape companies, nurseries and veterinary clinics which currently exist there. Other commercial uses may be present in the future; particularly along major travel corridors. These will also be low-intensity businesses. They might include small boutique wineries, bed and breakfast establishments, senior living facilities, community gardening opportunities, or other open-space-compatible uses. New commercial development will be restricted to types of business which either: i) directly contribute to, or at least do not detract from, the DCP's rural visual setting or ii) directly serve or support better public use, appreciation and enjoyment of the open space values of the area. Strip malls, banks, super markets, "big box" stores, hardware stores, liquor stores, bars, convenience markets, car washes, and other primarily urban-focused commercial uses that are not

related to the planned rural open space theme for the area or which would detract from the rural character and visual appearance of the DCP will be prohibited.

3.2 Preserving Community Character and Open Space Values



Fig. 26. Typical DCP street view with mixed-use residential agriculture under Rural Residential designation

Near-urban open space will be difficult and expensive to recover or recreate, if the existing rural farms, roadways and open spaces become more intensively (i.e., structurally) developed. The economic benefits to Clovis by having and promoting a near-urban open space preserve must, therefore, be upheld as a primary emphasis in DCP-related land use or other decisions. As such, future developments within the DCP need to adhere to the land use designations, policies and standards provided in this Plan, in order to avoid adversely affecting the area's long-term, landscape-level open space benefits to the Clovis community.

In order to be successful, the Dry Creek Preserve Open Space Legacy Program must become a visible, landmark City and community objective. Landowners and the general public must perceive the DCP as an intentional, legitimate, long-term attribute that is valued in its own right; rather than be perceived as a "holding area" of land which is simply undeveloped and eventually expected to undergo future annexation and typical urban structural development.

1. 3.3 Major DCP Land Use Goals and Policies

The following Goals communicate the planned future neighborhood appearance, character and development characteristics within the Dry Creek Preserve for the next 20 years and beyond. They outline the area's near-term and long-term vision and purposes, including its intended contributions to the Clovis community. These goals and objectives will guide the implementation of this Specific Plan's features; including land use designation, zoning, standards for development and construction, infrastructure design, open space preservation, public recreation, and protection of existing residential and agricultural uses and values.

The process of developing these goals and objectives was undertaken by DCP area residents, in response to an invitation from the City Planning Department to identify residents' preferred land uses and development standards for the DCP area. (The process used is presented in more detail in Appendix A.) A large fraction of the participating landowners stated a clear desire to maintain the

DCP's existing open, rural neighborhood character and appearance. Most also recognized the needs or desires of a few of their neighbors to generate income from, or further develop their respective properties. They advanced this Specific Plan and its accompanying Master Annexation Agreement to clarify policies, objectives, land uses and development design standards to assure that any future land development does not adversely affect the DCP's overall neighborhood character/appearance, thus reducing its long-term value as an open space and recreation asset/resource.

The Dry Creek Preserve Neighborhood Committee worked with the City of Clovis, Fresno County, LAFCO, and DCP area residents to develop the following goals to protect the DCP's valuable land, water, open space and recreational assets.

DCP LAND USE GOALS:

1. Design, develop and maintain a well-organized, high quality, predictable and functional community which meets the needs of the DCP areas' diverse population.
2. Maintain a high degree of neighborhood familiarity and a sense of "place" and "neighborhood", while articulating well with the surrounding developed area of Clovis.
3. Create a unique living environment which preserves the existing softer open space character, rural appearance and quietness of the area, and which provides for continuing agriculture, agro-tourism, keeping of farm animals, land use individuality, residential variety, and which preserves all pre-existing permissible uses.
4. Enable reasonable passage of rural-appearing, but efficient infrastructure across the DCP area, and provide for DCP residents to reasonably connect with and utilize those facilities in the future, if and when need arises.
5. Maintain a rural appearance and unique DCP identity, which promotes awareness, appreciation and pride among Clovis residents, and which provides for reasonable public recreational use and enjoyment of the DCP's open space features. Develop a strong public identity, and recognition DCP's "Clovis heritage - western way of life" values.
6. Preserve opportunity for a Legacy Program of long-term acquisitions of public recreational parklands, trails and other recreational sites across the DCP area, as they are offered by willing sellers, as places for the public to safely enjoy the DCP's open space resources.
7. Preserve the opportunity for future public use and enjoyment of the DCP's open space resources by avoiding land use changes which could alter, diminish or degrade the core open space values and character associated with the DCP, or cause increases in traffic volume or intensity which would detract from the quality and safety of recreational experiences.
8. Recognize that agricultural operations are a desirable open space visual attribute within the DCP; therefore, agriculture must continue to be a viable and permissible use. Future residential, light

commercial, or infrastructure development must be sited/ designed to avoid conflicts which restrict agricultural operations or affect the delivery of water to area agricultural sites.

9. Recognize the important relationship between area resident lifestyles and their existing land uses and facilities, and preserve continuing opportunity for that variety of uses to exist.
10. Avoid development intensities which incur excessive associated infrastructure planning, development and/or long-term maintenance costs for the City of Clovis, Fresno County or to DCP property owners.
11. Historical features of the area will be preserved, and properly interpreted to the public.
12. Characterize the DCP to the public as rural and open space resource which is a legitimate and valued part of Clovis, rather than as a “holding” area eventually intended to undergo future dense or intense development/build-out.

3.2.1. Specific Objectives for Implementing Goals/Policies and Maintaining Community Character:

In order for the rural character and open space assets of the DCP to be preserved for future generations, this Specific Plan advances specific objectives and Design Standards for each Plan Element. Those Design Standards need to be followed carefully in order to preserve the character, visuals, wildlife, and other attributes of the DCP. For those rural characteristics to remain intact over time, the following Policies and Objectives will need to be implemented.

- A. DCP development decisions must respect and protect the unique open space and rural characters of the Dry Creek Preserve area, and recognize the immediate and long-term value of its open space and other features to the broader Clovis Community.
- B. To protect the open space values, it is important that all new developments be designed and built in scale with the rural surroundings, with rural residential density levels (not to exceed 1 unit/acre), rural design/appearance, visual and spatial compatibility with public trails, visual buffering, and absent features which are characteristically not present in rural areas, such as block sound-walls, unshrouded street lighting, sidewalks, urban landscaping, or monolithic structures.
- C. Historical features of the DCP area need to be highlighted by interpretive signage and by their inclusion in designs and rights-of-way for trails, park sites, etc.
- D. In order for public interest to develop in the DCP’s trails and bikeways, the public needs to be made aware of available recreational opportunities. They need to be promoted through street design standards, such as: i) signs or monuments at the DCP entrances along major streets, ii) characteristic street designs with associated trails, bikeways or other public recreational rights-of-way. iii) street name signage which has a particular DCP logo, and iv) other interpretive features

which create a unique sense of place, and invite the public to utilize and enjoy trails and public facilities within the area.

- E. Development within the DCP area must recognize the importance of facilitating public recreation in the area. Projects, therefore, will include trails and/or other recreational features and be designed to avoid hazardous traffic patterns, elevated traffic speeds or congestion, excessive noise, or otherwise adversely affecting the safety, comfort and/or enjoyment of families utilizing area bikeways and roadside trails.
- F. Clovis should initially work with DCP resident organizations to seek willing property sales to enable land acquisitions through the Open Space Legacy Program. Acquisition by the City of even a few larger recreation sites will greatly add to quality of Clovis life, and to the public value and interest associated with the DCP neighborhood.
- G. Residential Densities on properties within DCP developments will not exceed pre-existing R-R densities, except as provided in this Plan.