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1 Introduction

1.1 Scope and Legal Authority for the Specific Plan

Under California Law (Governmental Code Section 65450-65457) a specific plan is a planning tool that allows a county/community to articulate a vision for a defined area and apply guidelines and regulations to implement that vision.

The Dana Reserve Specific Plan (DRSP) provides a vision and guides development of “The Dana Reserve” (project) by defining land uses and development standards, circulation, parks and trails, and infrastructure for the future residential, commercial, and open space uses. The DRSP also provides a phasing/implementation plan and public facility financing options to accommodate this future development.

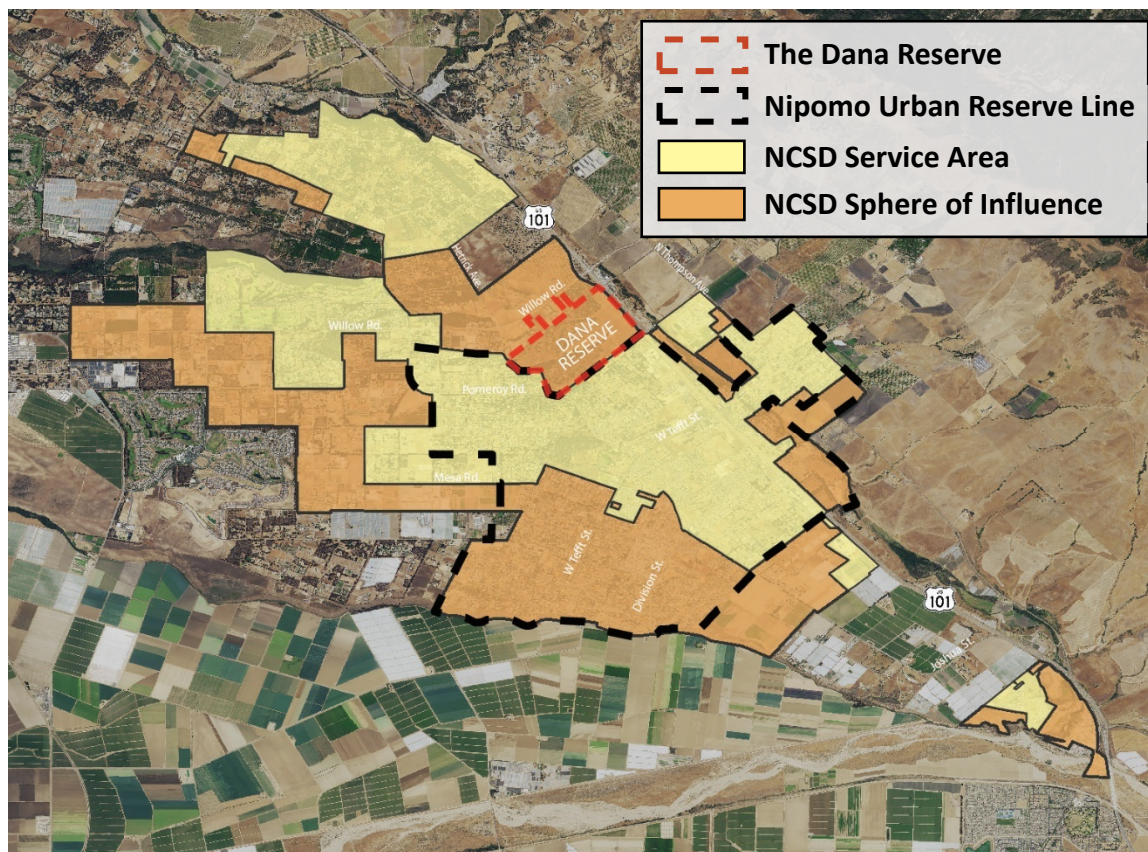
1.2 Location and Setting

The DRSP is located in the southern portion of San Luis Obispo County, California (see Exhibit 1-1). This property is located immediately north of the Urban Reserve Line of the Nipomo community. It is bounded by Willow Road and Cherokee Place to the north, existing residential large lots and ranchettes to the south and west, and U.S. Highway 101 to the east (see Exhibit 1-2). The property is less than a mile north of the Tefft Street corridor, a primary commercial corridor servicing the community, and is within 1,500 feet of the prominent Nipomo Regional Park from the property’s southwest corner.

Exhibit 1-1: Regional Location



Exhibit 1-2: Community Location



The DRSP consists of three parcels totaling approximately 288 acres and is undeveloped. It includes the 275-acre western portion of the property formerly referred to as Cañada Ranch (APN 091-301-073) as well as two additional 6.5-acre properties to the north that will provide access to Willow Road (APN 091-301-029 and 091-301-031).

The DRSP is located ~~directly adjacent to~~within the Nipomo Urban Reserve Line (URL) and is ~~identified in the~~located in the Nipomo Community Services District (NCS D) ~~Sphere of Influence Boundary Service area, which identifies areas wherefor~~ water and wastewater services ~~are planned to be extended in the future~~. As part of the DRSP, these properties ~~will be~~were brought into the URL and the NCS D service area through the County and Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) processes.

1.3 Planning Area Character

1.3.1 Historic Setting

The community of Nipomo has a rich history in agriculture and a strong connection to the Dana Family and Dana Adobe. The Dana Reserve property was once part of the Dana Rancho Nipomo and was owned by the Cañada family beginning in 1912. The property has mainly been used for seasonal grazing for the last 100 years. There are no structures or other improvements on the site. No formal roads exist on the property, although informal unpaved ranch roads traverse portions of the property.

1.3.2 Cultural Setting

The project has been designed to protect and avoid identified cultural resources, as further discussed in Chapter 3.

1.3.3 Natural Setting

The property has three primary natural features. These include open grasslands in level areas, oak savannahs on gently rolling hills and oak woodlands and forest along several steeper slopes, and small clusters of native plants. Each of these features will be incorporated into the design of the project or mitigated off-site. There are no creeks, wetlands, or riparian habitats present on the property. The soil types are Class III and IV non-prime.

Exhibit 1-3: Aerial Photograph of the Dana Reserve Property (as of 2018)



1.3.4 Existing Setting

Portions of the DRSP property can be viewed from U.S. Highway 101, as shown below. The property also borders Pomeroy Road at the southwest, Hetrick Avenue to the west, and Cherokee Place to the north.

Exhibit 1-4: View from U.S. Highway 101 Looking Southwest (Source: Google Earth 2018)



1.4 Specific Plan Vision and Goals

1.4.1 Vision

The DRSP is a master-planned neighborhood that is envisioned to capture the essence of the central coast lifestyle – where living and working locally, celebrating family, and recreating are combined.

The DRSP will provide extensions of existing public roadway networks through the property in order to enhance access to Willow Road and the broader community roadway network.

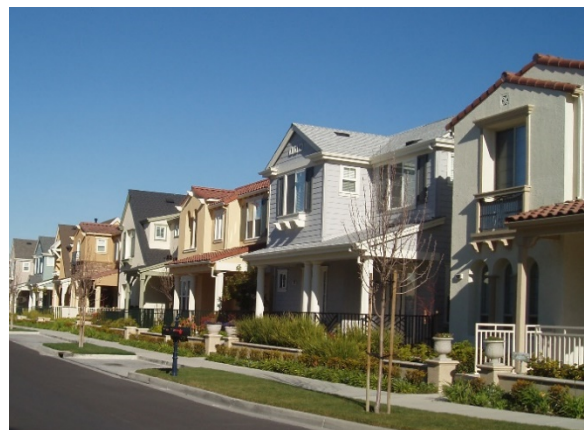
Overall design and building architecture of the DRSP is intended to reflect the rural history of the property, while a diversity of housing types have been included to create new opportunities for home ownership or apartments.

To generate new employment opportunities and provide access to day-to-day goods and services, a village commercial center and flex commercial area have been included. These provide opportunities for businesses, a hotel, small daycare center, and an educational campus for life-long learning and job training.

By integrating a network of walking, bicycling, and equestrian facilities within the DRSP area, both the existing community as well as future residents will find new avenues for embracing a healthy lifestyle.



Architecture connects to the area history, while providing indoor/outdoor community spaces.



A variety of residential home types/sizes creates expanded opportunities for home ownership and apartments.



Pedestrian and bicycle lanes connect residents to parks and open space areas.

1.4.2 Specific Plan Goals and Objectives

The following goals and objectives have guided the design, layout, and configuration of the DRSP:

Goal 1: Provide a mix of land uses that offers a range of amenities accessible to residents and community members.

Goal 2: Respect Old Town Nipomo, the small, neighborhood-oriented village commercial area has been designed to complement, rather than compete with, Old Town Nipomo.

Goal 3: Provide a neighborhood park and pocket parks and open space areas within each residential neighborhood, linking the neighborhoods together through a network of trails and open spaces.

Goal 4: Incorporate the rural history of the community through architectural design, as guided by Appendix A – Objective Design Standards and Design Guidelines.

Goal 5: Provide a diversity of housing types and opportunities for home ownership and rental, including affordable homes consistent with the goals and policies of the Housing Element of the General Plan and regional housing needs.

Goal 6: Create new employment and job training opportunities for the community and the broader south San Luis Obispo County area.

Goal 7: Enhance circulation within the Specific Plan area and existing community by continuing the existing public roadway network through the DRSP property to connect to Willow Road, providing a new Park and Ride lot to encourage carpooling, and creating new public transportation points of connection to facilitate public transit use and reduce single-occupant automobile use.

Goal 8: Integrate a network of walking, bicycling, and equestrian facilities to connect on-site residential neighborhoods and the broader community.

Goal 9: Maintain the large, centrally located oak forest area as a site feature and minimize impacts to special-status plants and animals on-site.

Goal 10: Meet the State law requirements for energy efficiencies, State law and Nipomo Community Services District (NCSD) policies and ordinances relating to water conservation, and County Building Code requirements for energy efficiencies and water savings.

Goal 11: Reduce uncertainty in planning for and securing the orderly development of the Specific Plan area.

Goal 12: Provide effective and efficient development of public facilities, infrastructure, and services appropriate for the Specific Plan area.

Goal 13: Meet or exceed the requirements of the NCSD District Code and Annexation Policy to ensure that the DRSP funds or constructs the water and wastewater infrastructure necessary to serve the project without adverse impacts on the NCSD's ability to serve existing and future users.

1.5 Specific Plan Format

The DRSP is under the County of San Luis Obispo (County) jurisdiction. The property is designated as an expansion area under the South County Area Plan (SCAP) Section 4.5 and 4.8 as well as the San Luis Obispo County Code – Title 22, Land Use Ordinance (LUO) Section 22.98.072. ~~The General Plan requires that a specific plan for this site be adopted prior to adjusting the URL of the Community of Nipomo. This process will also include the request for annexation to the NCSD. As required by the General Plan, a specific plan was adopted for this site and the URL of the Community of Nipomo was adjusted to include the DRSP.~~

The DRSP provides a guide for future private and public development in conformance with the requirements set forth in California Government Code §65450 through §65457. The DRSP provides a bridge between the County’s General Plan and detailed plans such as development plans and subdivisions. It directs all facets of future development within the DRSP area and includes the following chapters and appendices:

- *Chapter 1 – Project introduction and background;*
- *Chapter 2 – Designation of land uses and development standards;*
- *Chapter 3 – Overview of open space, recreation, and conservation;*
- *Chapter 4 – Designation of circulation elements;*
- *Chapter 5 – Location and sizing of infrastructure;*
- *Chapter 6 – Ensuring adequate public facilities;*
- *Chapter 7 – Options for development and financing methods for public improvements;*
- *Chapter 8 – Financing Public Infrastructure;*
- *Appendix A – Objective Design Standards and Design Guidelines;*
- *Appendix B – Phasing and Public Improvements Implementation Matrix; and*
- *Appendix C - Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program.*

1.6 General Plan and Land Use Ordinance Guidance for Cañada Ranch

The SCAP description and policies applicable to the Cañada Ranch (now known as Dana Reserve) were adopted in 1994, almost 30 years ago. At the time, the objectives of the SCAP were aimed at job creation opportunities as well as addressing the jobs housing balance in Nipomo. Although the SCAP described the broad objective for job creation, it did not identify specific requirements for the type, size, or scale of these expected uses. The SCAP also indicates that housing should be provided on the Cañada Ranch site, again without identifying the type, size, or scale of the residential development.

Since the adoption of the SCAP, much has changed in the State and in the County. A period of significant economic expansion (housing bubble) and the “great recession” (the housing crash) occurred. As of the writing of this document and into the foreseeable future, California faces significant challenges in providing housing for the State’s population. Prices and rents for existing

housing have increased dramatically and are continuing to increase. For the first time in many years, the State has begun to intervene in local housing policies. During 2018-2022, over 15 housing bills were passed by the State that set standards, incentives, and enforceable requirements for local agencies to meet their housing goals. During the time of preparation and review of the DRSP, California, the nation, and the world experienced a pandemic caused by the COVID-19 virus that has further exacerbated housing challenges.

1.7 Goals and Consistency with the General Plan

The DRSP is located in the County of San Luis Obispo's jurisdiction and is therefore under the jurisdiction and governance of the County's General Plan. The General Plan sets policy direction for allowable land uses for both public and private lands and acts to provide applicable review bodies appropriate guidance and direction for making future land use decisions. There are seven required general plan elements, which include: Land Use, Circulation, Open Space, Conservation, Noise, Housing, and Safety. In addition to these required elements, the County of San Luis Obispo has also adopted five optional elements, which include Agriculture, Offshore Energy, Economic, Master Water and Sewer Plan, and Parks and Recreation. These elements are implemented through County of San Luis Obispo adopted area plans, community plans, and specific plans as well as other codified ordinances.

The DRSP has been designed to meet the goals and objectives established in the County's General Plan by providing a framework for future development of the property. The DRSP is consistent with, and serves as an extension of, the County's General Plan. The policies and standards in the DRSP will take precedence over more general policies and standards during the review of private and public development projects within the DRSP area. In situations where policies or standards relating to an aspect of development have not been provided in the DRSP, the existing policies and standards of the County's General Plan and LUO will apply. Refer to Chapter 7 – Implementation and Administration for more information.

1.8 Land Use and Circulation Elements

The Land Use and Circulation Elements (LUCE) is the over-arching guidance document for the County and addresses the County's land use pattern and circulation system. The LUCE consists of 1) Framework for Planning, 2) South County Area Plan, 3) Community Plan, and 4) Official Maps. It identifies the layout and intensity of land uses, including housing, commercial, industrial, open space, education, public facilities, and other categories of both public and private uses. The LUCE also establishes a balanced circulation network that includes both existing and proposed road network system improvements.

1.8.1.a. Framework for Planning (Inland)

The Framework for Planning (Inland) contains policies and procedures that apply to the unincorporated area outside of the coastal zone, defining how the LUCE is used together with the Land Use Ordinance and other adopted plans. It also explains the criteria used in applying land use categories and combining designations to the land, and the operation of the Resource Management System.

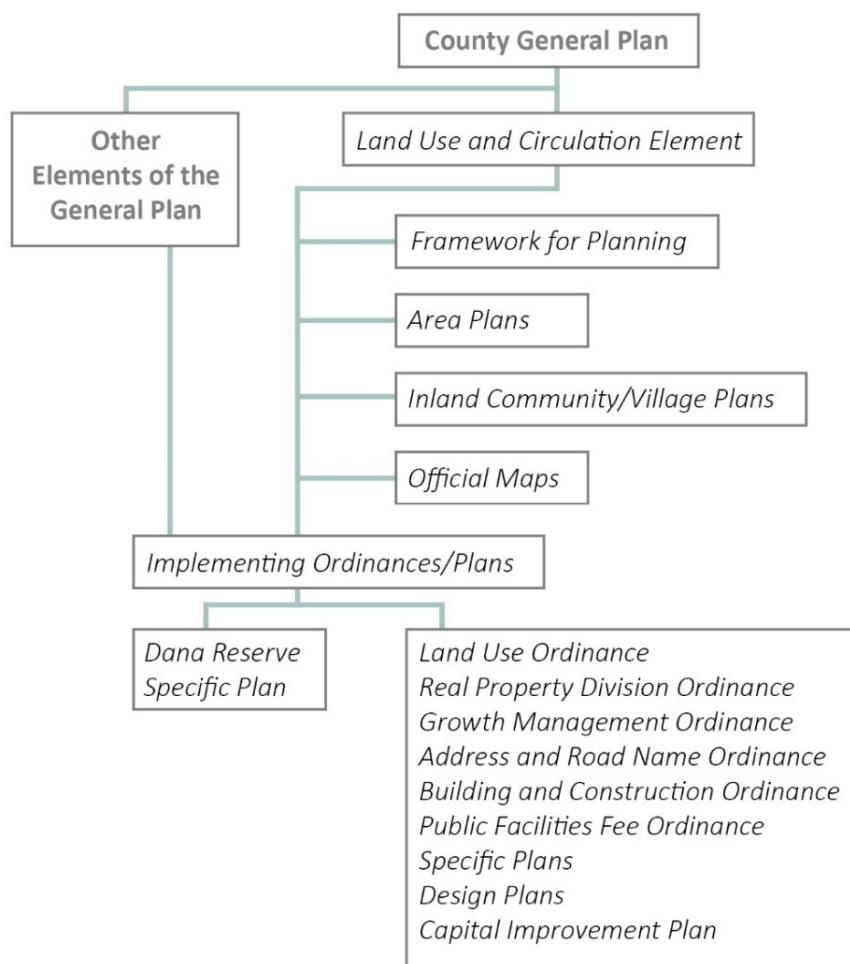
1.8.1.b. South County Area Plan (SCAP)

The South County Area Plan is encompassed within the Land Use and Circulation Elements (LUCE) of the County General Plan. This plan sets land use strategies to balance housing types, economic growth, conserve resources, and integrate a well-balanced land use pattern throughout South County area, including the Nipomo Mesa.

1.8.1.c. Nipomo Community Plan

The Nipomo Community Plan (Community Plan) sets a vision for the future of the community and the proposed land uses and circulation/infrastructure improvements at the community level. The Community Plan is also part of the LUCE of the County General Plan and is intended to be consistent with and implemented by other County plans, policies, and programs.

Exhibit 1-5: Relationship of DRSP to Other Adopted County Documents



1.9 Implementing Ordinances/Plans

Existing implementing ordinances and plans of the County include the Land Use Ordinance, Real Property Division Ordinance, Growth Management Ordinance, Address and Road Name Ordinance, Building and Construction Ordinance, Public Facilities Fee Ordinance, Specific Plans, Design Plans, and Capital Improvement Plans.

The DRSP is the implementing plan for the Dana Reserve property. While there may be instances where a portion(s) of the County's existing ordinances and plans apply to future development in the DRSP, the DRSP will take precedence. Where the DRSP is silent on a topic or matter, the relevant County ordinance or plan will prevail.

1.9.1.a Land Use Ordinance – Inland (Title 22)

The Land Use Ordinance – Inland (Title 22) provides standards for land use regulations and site-specific development that guide and regulate the size, shape, and type of use for development within the non-coastal areas of the County. The DRSP customizes some of the standards and regulations found within Title 22 to implement the DRSP vision. The DRSP document will take precedence and where the DRSP is silent on a topic or matter, the Land Use Ordinance – Inland requirements will prevail.

1.9.1.b Real Property Division Ordinance (Title 21)

The Real Property Division Ordinance (RPDO) regulates division of land in the County to promote the orderly development of real property. Applicant requirements pursuant to the Subdivision Map Act are enacted in this title. Subdivision activity within the DRSP area will be consistent with the relevant RPDO requirements, unless otherwise specified herein.

1.9.1.c San Luis Obispo County Design Guidelines

The San Luis Obispo County Design Guidelines document consists of design objectives, guidelines, and examples that are intended to help retain and enhance the unique character of the unincorporated communities and rural areas of San Luis Obispo County. Since the DRSP will provide its own design direction to inform the design and planning of future development, the County's Design Guidelines document will not be applied in the review of development projects within the DRSP area. Applicants should refer to Appendix A – Objective Design Standards and Design Guidelines for DRSP specific design direction.

1.9.1.d San Luis Obispo County Bikeways Plan

The San Luis Obispo County Bikeways Plan (Bikeways Plan) prioritizes bikeway facilities in the unincorporated areas of the County. It recognizes a variety of facilities, including bicycle lanes, routes, parking, connections with public transportation, educational programs, and funding. The DRSP has taken guidance found in the Bikeways Plan and expanded it to provide an interconnected bikeway system within the DRSP that connects to existing bicycle facilities adjacent to the project area. Since the DRSP provides its own standards to implement and enhance the Bikeways Plan, the Bikeways Plan will not be applied in the review of development projects within the DRSP area.

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