

Outstanding Implementation

South Livermore Valley Specific Plan Livermore, California

Faced with the potential loss of thousands of acres of prime agricultural land in the heart of an active wine-producing region, the City of Livermore created an innovative conservation mechanism to curb sprawl and permanently protect the community's vineyards.

The plan sets forth a vision and regulatory framework for a 1,700-acre area along the city's southern edge that links land development with conservation.¹ For every acre developed, one acre of planted vineyard is preserved in permanent easement; and for every unit developed, another acre of planted vineyard is placed in permanent easement.

The plan has the effect of allowing for economic development, represented by home development; integrating new development with agriculture; and reinforcing the area's character and its viticultural heritage through a planting program. Design guidelines ensure that the new development is compact, and that new home design is consistent with the rural vernacular. The plan has resulted in the development of nearly 1,500 homes in five neighborhoods, preservation of nearly 5,000 acres, increased regional parkland, and substantial new investment in wine country economic development and visitor amenities.



APA 2006
Outstanding
Planning Award
for
Implementation
Plan

About Livermore

Livermore is situated in the Livermore Valley, in eastern Alameda County. Up until the second half of the 20th century, Livermore's economy was predominantly agriculture and natural resource based.

Website

<http://www.ci.livermore.ca.us/CDD/Planning/planning.html>
<http://www.codepublishing.com/ca/Livermore/zoning/lpzc02/lpzc0282.html>

"This plan ensures that land critical to the valley's future as a wine-producing region is placed under permanent conservation easements and planted with vineyards or other intensive agricultural crops at the same time it allows development to continue," said Carol Rhea, AICP, chair of the APA Awards Committee. "The guiding principle is that development in the valley should be directly related to the region's rural heritage and its future as a center of viticulture," she said. ²

¹ American Planning Association, "California Wine Country Plan Receives National Planning Award," 12 January 2006, <<http://www.planning.org/newsreleases/2006/ftp01120610.htm>> (8 August 2007).

² Ibid.