



COUNTY OF YOLO

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
December 15, 2010

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Yolo Receives \$139,724 Sustainable Communities Planning Grant

(Woodland, CA) – Yolo County’s application for a \$139,724 Sustainable Communities Planning grant was among those recently approved by the Strategic Growth Council. The grant will be used to implement the policies and actions of the recently adopted Yolo County 2030 Countywide General Plan, specifically the Yolo County Sustainable Zoning Code and Development Standards.

In 2008, Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger signed Senate Bill 732, creating the Strategic Growth Council. The council is a cabinet level committee tasked with coordinating the activities of state agencies to: improve air and water quality; protect natural resource and agriculture lands; increase the availability of affordable housing; improve infrastructure systems; promote public health and assist state and local entities in the planning of sustainable communities and meeting Assembly Bill 32 goals.

The Sustainable Communities Planning grant will allow Yolo County to update the existing zoning code and development standards and create new ordinances that will promote sustainable land use decisions and support the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, in conformance with the Yolo County 2030 Countywide General Plan. Yolo County’s Sustainable Zoning Code and Development Standards will emphasize integrating jobs, shopping and a variety of residential areas within compact, accessible neighborhoods.

Yolo County has the important task of balancing agricultural policies with sustainable land use and development strategies. Agriculture has been at the heart of Yolo County’s identity, character, economy and way of life since the county’s founding in 1850. Ninety-six percent of the unincorporated area has been set aside for farming, grazing and open space. The Sustainable Zoning Code and Development Standards will further implement the county’s long-standing policy to direct the county’s residential growth to designated areas within the cities and within the growth boundaries of existing unincorporated communities, thereby preserving natural resources, agricultural and open space lands.

“These types of smart growth standards have the ability to revitalize downtown areas by encouraging infill development on underutilized or vacant lands,” said Yolo County Planning & Public Works Director John Bencomo. “It will also promote walking, bicycling and public transit use within and between communities, which reduce vehicle trips and foster healthier lifestyles.”

Earlier this year, the updated county General Plan was awarded first place for Comprehensive Planning for a Small Jurisdiction by the Sacramento Valley American Planning Association. More recently, the Yolo County 2030 Countywide General Plan received the SACOG Salutes! Blueprint Excellence award for setting new standards to address the challenges of achieving smart growth in rural areas.

“Our newly adopted General Plan contains over 300 policies and actions directly aimed at reducing greenhouse gasses and/or responding to the impacts of climate change,” said Yolo County Board of Supervisors Chair Helen M. Thomson. “These policies and actions discourage sprawl and encourage density, infill, compact community design and development along transportation corridors.”

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