



The Community Plan Areas boundaries were determined by a combination of factors including topography, roads, size of the areas, presence of existing developed subdivisions, gateway corridor issues, location of existing utilities to serve the area, and the use of Townships and Range Section lines.



## **Location and Community Description**

The Copperopolis Community Plan Area encompasses approximately 39 square miles and is located north of and adjacent to Lake Tulloch with O'Byrnes Ferry Road and Highway 4 serving as the primary transportation routes. The Community Plan Area extends from the Diamond XX Subdivision north of Highway 4, south to the Stanislaus River and the Tuolumne County Line. The Planning Area is located 12 miles south of the City of Angels (Angels Camp) along Highway 4, separated by Bear Mountain, Copperopolis Mountain, Lightner Peak, and numerous ridges with elevations ranging from 1,100 feet to 1,800 feet.

Major water bodies include Lake Tulloch and the Stanislaus River that flows from the dam for New Melones Reservoir. Minor water bodies include Sawmill Lake and Flowers Lake. The Community Plan Area also has several creeks including Black Creek, Loucks Creek, Campbell Creek, Copper Creek, Littlejohns Creek, and Sawmill Creek.

Copperopolis was historically agricultural land primarily used for cattle grazing and certain mining activities prior to the 1950s, when numerous subdivisions near and/or adjacent to Lake Tulloch were approved. The region is classified as the Sierra Foothills ecological region. Class I and II Prime Farmland is scarce, with less than 5% of the County containing prime soils. (Prime soils are defined as those suitable to maintain extended production of sustainable crop yields over a prolonged period). Weathered rock is primarily present, with a thin soil mantle of less than 6 inches covering much of the Planning Area. The Copperopolis Community Plan Area was historically mined for copper in the 1860s with gold and silver mines also established during the Gold Rush. Tailing piles, remnant mineshafts, and other structures are present within the area.

## **Physical Description of the Planning Area**

The map for the Copperopolis Community Plan Area adopted as part of the County's 2019 General Plan identifies Historic Copperopolis, near the intersection of Main Street (O'Byrnes Ferry Road) and Highway 4, and existing and proposed residential subdivisions. These subdivisions include Sawmill Lake, Copper Valley Ranch (amended to 88 lots), Copper Valley, Copper Cove, Oak Canyon Ranch (dedicated as permanent open space), the Copperopolis Town Square, Sanguinetti, Diamond XX, Calypso Bay, Tuscany Hills, Bridlewood Estates, Black Creek, Poker Flats, Connor Estates, and Peninsula Estates.

## **History**

During the late prehistoric period, the Copperopolis Community Plan Area was situated within the territory claimed by the Central Sierra Mi-Wuks. Much of the population relocated seasonally to collect foods and economically important resources, which were then stored. The central food staple of the Mi-Wuks subsistence was the acorn, supplemented by a wide variety of other plant

and animal foods. Mi-Wuk villages were typically located near water sources, within easy reach of bedrock outcrops where milling stations could be established. Such grinding rock artifacts remain in the Planning Area.

Early European settlers were drawn to the Copperopolis area in response to the discovery of gold in 1849. The discovery of copper in 1860 and the growing demand for copper provided the impetus for the community to grow to more than 2,000 inhabitants, making Copperopolis the principal copper producing community in the Western United States in the 1860s. Copper mined in the area came from several mines including the Union, Empire, and Keystone, as well as smaller mines such as the Table Mountain Top, Scorpion, Kentucky, Index, Inimitable, and Harlem mines.

Reeds Turnpike, a private toll road, was an important feature in the development of Copperopolis since it was considered one of the best roads in the state, and there were good watering places located along its route. During the rainy season, it received practically all the Stockton travel. Teams from Stockton bound for Chinese Camp, Sonora, and Columbia came through Copperopolis by this route, then went on to cross the Stanislaus River on the O'Byrnes Ferry Bridge. On the return route, wagon trains of ore were hauled by oxen and mule teams to Stockton for loading onto riverboats, then taken to San Francisco where the ore was reloaded and sent by sailing ship around the Horn to Atlantic ports and to Swansea, Wales, to be smelted and refined where much of it was used in the manufacture of paint.

The Copperopolis Armory, located at 695 Main Street, was built in 1861. Of brick construction, huge iron doors and barred windows, it survived the 1867 fire. During the Civil War, it was used by the Union Guard as their meeting place for enlisting and training troops. In 1864, the property was sold to the Copperopolis Armory Hall Association and was used during the 1860s and 1870s for Congregational and Methodist Church services, as well as for public meetings, balls, and rallies. In 1874, the property was purchased by the Mineral Lodge, Independent Order of Odd Fellows (IOOF), and used as their lodge until 1903, when they moved to the Congregational Church which they purchased. In 1939, they merged with Campo Seco Lodge of Jenny Lind, and the following year (1940) sold the hall to the Copperopolis Community Center, which has used it since. The armory was added to the National Register of Historic Places on December 30, 1997.

Other historic structures in Copperopolis include the Gothic Revival Congregational Church, St. Ignatius Catholic Church, the Honigsberger and Reed buildings, and the Old Corner Saloon. On the corner of Main Street (O'Byrnes Ferry Road) and Reeds Turnpike is the Old Corner Saloon. Built in 1862, this establishment boasts of being the second oldest saloon (in continuous operation) in California. Surviving through 142 years of fires, feast, and famine, this popular Copperopolis "watering hole" still offers a thirsty traveler a friendly place to stop and enjoy a cool drink.

After the closure of the copper mines, the development of Copperopolis was greatly influenced by the creation of Lake Tulloch, which has continued to be an important catalyst for bringing newcomers to the area.

## **Lake Tulloch**

Lake Tulloch was constructed in the late 1950s and began operation in 1958. Lake Tulloch is a reservoir which is bounded by both Calaveras and Tuolumne counties that has a normal maximum water surface elevation of 510 feet, a surface area of 1,260 acres at full pool, and has gross storage capacity of 66,968 acre-feet. The reservoir has approximately 55 miles of shoreline. Lake Tulloch is subject to fluctuating water levels that occur on a daily and seasonal basis. Reservoir levels are controlled by the United States Bureau of Reclamation and are subject to fluctuation within the limitations of an agreement required by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC). The Tulloch Project is a multi-purpose project that stores approximately 66,968 acre-feet of water, and annually generates about 93,000,000 kw/h of electricity. The Oakdale Irrigation District (OID) and the South San Joaquin Irrigation District (SSJID), cooperatively operating as the Tri-DAM Project, are the current owners and operators of the Tulloch Project.





## Table Mountain

Table Mountain is a series of flat-topped hills visible from Lake Tulloch that roughly parallels the modern Stanislaus River. These hills are capped by lava which flowed down from the crest of the Sierra Nevada 10.4 million years ago and hardened into a rock (latite) that is relatively resistant to erosion. The top of Table Mountain is composed of Table Mountain Latite, which formed from potassium-rich lavas erupted from a center of volcanism near modern-day Sonora Pass around 10.4 million years ago.



## Community Vision

Copperopolis will retain its **rural** community identity, preserve its natural beauty, and protect its vast recreational opportunities while embracing diverse housing, commercial, recreational and employment opportunities integrated with the natural resources and open space elements of the community. Lake Tulloch will flourish as a community attraction.

Revitalization efforts have turned , “historic” Copperopolis into a vibrant, , attractive town center and tourist destination with community events, and neighborhood and tourist-serving opportunities. The Copperopolis Town Square located off Hodson Road, has turned into an

attractive tourist destination with a hotel, retail shops, restaurants, and housing, and is hosting community events and providing opportunities to serve residents and tourists.

Copperopolis will remain a nice, prosperous community with long-term residents who care, and new residents who embrace the lifestyle and culture of the area. Copperopolis will also continue to enrich the next generation through participation in groups like 4-H and Future Farmers of America.

Motorized circulation, and non-motorized circulation where appropriate and with the suitable infrastructure, in parts of Copperopolis will provide safe and attractive access to all areas of the community, and residents, young and old, will take advantage of the community's pedestrian, equestrian, and bicycle pathways that will tie into the community's business centers and recreational amenities.

The Community will continue to enjoy the gold course and beautiful open space, and parks in Copperopolis.

While the Community Plan seeks harmony of land uses, it will respect the Constitutional rights to life, liberty, and property.

The fervent wish of the community is that people who visit Copperopolis leave with the impression that it is a beautiful place and a friendly town where all are welcome.

## **Connection to New Melones.**

### **Community Plan Goals**

- **Economic Development** - Establish, promote, and enhance commercial development designed to complement the character of the appropriate areas of the community.
  - Promote overnight accommodations that will create jobs and economic benefits to the County with additional Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT).
  - Support and promote commercial activity in the Plan area.
  - Create jobs in the recreational sector to attract tourists to the region and create long-term economic benefits to the area.
  - Create opportunities for additional education and job internships for the community's youth.
  - Create a streamline process with the County to approve and construct facilities that will create employment opportunities and economic development opportunities.
  - Invest in education and training programs that will provide residents and young people with the skills and knowledge needed for the jobs of the future. This will help create a more skilled and diverse workforce, which will attract new business and industries to the area.

- Support entrepreneurship by encouraging the development of small business and start-ups. This will help create new jobs and diversify the economy.
- Commercial activity = job growth
- **Aesthetics/Community Character** - Encourage orderly development while retaining a rural mining/ranching town atmosphere with an emphasis on community appearance and character.
  - Encourage high quality, well-designed development that is compatible with surrounding uses and is integrated with the community and the physical environment in which it is located.
  - Ensure that the design of community-oriented public facilities is compatible with community character.
- **Natural Resources** - Achieve a harmonious relationship between the developed environment and its surroundings by preserving open space and agriculture/rangelands, and protecting and enhancing the natural resources of the Planning Area.
  - Promote tourism by leveraging the region's natural resources and cultural heritage to attract visitors, generate revenue, and create sustainable jobs.
  - Provide for the protection of resource production operations and activities and their economic viability.
- **Traffic/Circulation** - Improve traffic circulation and provide safe routes for both vehicular and non-vehicular traffic.
  - Require a balanced circulation system that provides for the safe and efficient movement of people and goods while maintaining the rural and historic character of the community.
  - Promote and foster the enhancement of infrastructure that will support economic growth including roads, water systems, sewer systems, and transportation networks.
  - Where feasible, non-motorized transportation options should be incorporated into transportation and development projects.
  - Encourage the use of public transit, as well as ridesharing, and vanpools.
  - Implement measures to reduce travel speeds within community and neighborhood areas to protect the historic character or unique features of the community and to protect public safety.
- **Historic Preservation**- Restore, preserve, and enhance the historic assets of historic Copperopolis.



- Support the County’s effort to establish a Historic Preservation Ordinance that would protect the area’s historic resources and in turn promote tourism and economic development.
- **Public Safety** - Ensure that public safety is maintained and enhanced through fire protection measures, adequate law enforcement, and emergency services.
  - Consider the location of a satellite sheriff’s station in Copperopolis.
  - Ensure that people, property, economy, and natural resources are safe from the risks of natural and manmade hazards.
- **Public/Community Services** - Support the development of additional Public facilities with respect to the community's growth.
  - Provide recreational activities for children and the elderly and explore the possibility of building a senior center for the elderly.
- **Housing** – Control the use of single-family homes for short-term vacation rentals by improving the required Administrative Use Permit process through the county.
  - Regulate approval of vacation rental units to ensure that they do not adversely affect the lifestyle of the existing and future community and County’s housing stock.

## **Community Plan Policies**

### Land Use and Housing

- CCP 1.1-      Ensure that all new development is consistent with the goals and policies of the community plan and the County General Plan.
- CCP 1.2-      Provide a varied housing mix to accommodate the needs of future residents in the community.
- CCP 1.3-      Protect and retain the historic assets of the community.
- CCP 1.4-      Ensure that new developments within the plan area provide a mix of uses including a wide range of residential, commercial, visitor-serving and job-generating uses that facilitate their development as independent and economically viable projects.
- CCP 1.5-      Encourage new developments to be designed to be compatible with the natural, scenic, and historic resources of Calaveras County.
- CCP 1.6-      Preserve and enhance existing buildings and other structures of historic and architectural importance, as reflected in state and federal standards for significance, and that contribute to the historic identity of Calaveras County.

- CCP 1.7- Establish and identify entryways for the community – through monuments or other methods.
- CCP 1.8- Provide adequate land for schools and parks.
- CCP 1.9- Preserve the rural character of the area.
- CCP 1.10- Encourage beautification and enhancement of properties.
- CCP 1.11- Maintain and improve commercial districts within historic Copperopolis.
- CCP 1.12- Encourage attraction of new compatible businesses and industries to the plan area.  
HOA acknowledgment.

#### Circulation and Public Facilities

- CCP 2.1- Improve traffic circulation.
- CCP 1.2- Provide a safe intermix of vehicular and non-vehicular traffic.
- CCP 1.3- Improve the safety of O’Byrnes Ferry Road.
- CCP 1.4- Ensure that new development is responsible for all off-site circulation improvements necessary to mitigate a project’s transportation impacts (including safety, pedestrian and bicycle mobility, public transit, and level of service-related impacts).
- CCP 1.5- Increase roadway connectivity to reduce trip lengths, enhance emergency response, and encourage opportunities for trips to be made by walking and bicycling.
- CCP 1.6- Encourage and support a safe, effective, and efficient public transportation service that meets the reasonable needs of Calaveras residents.

#### Housing

- CCP 3.1- New residential construction shall consist of a broad range of new housing types to meet the needs of all residents of Calaveras County.
- CCP 1.2- Develop, construct, and maintain safe, decent, and well-built affordable housing units in the community.

- CCP 1.3- Ensure that all new and existing housing units are equipped with energy-efficient and appropriate weatherization.

#### Conservation & Open Space

- CCP 4.1- Ensure that there is adequate water supply available for existing residents, businesses, and future development in Copperopolis.
- CCP 1.2- Encourage the conservation of natural and historic landscapes and important landmarks as scenic resources important to the County's rural character, scenic beauty and the tourism component of the economy.
- CCP 1.3- Promote and protect a high-quality system of recreational facilities enhancing the quality of life and health of residents and visitors and contributing to the County's economy.
- CCP 1.4- Preserve prehistoric, archaeological, cultural, historical, and paleontological resources.
- CCP 1.5- Identify and protect scenic resources that preserve rural character, quality of life, and tourism-based economic development, while protecting property rights.
- CCP 1.6- Encourage retention of existing mature trees in landscaping for new development, consistent with fire protection needs, to facilitate carbon sequestration.
- CCP 1.7- Encourage preservation of oak woodlands in accordance with local and state law.
- CCP 1.8- Encourage the use of design features in new development to capture stormwater and recharge groundwater.
- CCP 1.9- Preserve agricultural uses.
- CCP 1.10- Conserve existing mining sites for future mineral extractions.

#### Public Safety

- CCP 5.1- Protect people, property, economy, and natural resources from the risks of natural and manmade hazards.
- CCP 1.2- Support established standards designed to protect the community from unreasonable risks of death, injuries, property damage and economic and social dislocation resulting from fires.

CCP 1.3- Support established standards designed to protect the community from unreasonable risks of death, injuries, property damage and economic and social dislocation resulting from the use, transport, treatment and disposal of hazardous materials and wastes.