

## A view from the top (and bottom) of McCaffrey's Tesoro Viejo



# REAL ESTATE

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Posted by BoNhia Lee on September 25, 2014

The big stars and stripes barn on Highway 41 is a landmark that welcomes motorists traveling into Madera County from Fresno.

The barn and the 200 acres it sits on at Avenue 12 is owned by homebuilder [McCaffrey Homes](#). There are no plans yet to develop that property.

But travel a little further north to Avenue 14 and you'll hit the start of Tesoro Viejo, the builder's gigantic master-planned community in the heart of Madera's Rio Mesa growth area. A groundbreaking is planned for late 2016.

The Madera County Planning Commission approved the tentative map for the first phase of the project two and a half weeks ago. Now, the builder is working on detailed plans which will bring more than 850 homes to what Bob McCaffrey, the company's chief executive officer, calls "the most romantic piece of land" he's ever seen.

Tesoro Viejo — which will eventually have 5,190 homes on 1,600 acres — will follow the natural ebbs and flows of the land which includes rock formations, high and low elevations and a river that flows along the northern edge of the property.

Water still trickled through the riverbed in mid-September when more than a handful of us from The Bee got a tour of the property.

From the road, the land looks flat with a wine grape vineyard where a PG&E substation and water treatment plant is planned. But beyond the grapes are blueberry bushes, a tree farm with 10,000 trees and wheat fields. A lone ranch house sits at the top of the hill with wraparound balcony overlooking the vista.

In addition to homes, the project includes a K-8 school and a town center along Highway 41. A big component of the development will be recreational areas and a trail system that links together the different villages or neighborhoods throughout the community.

Plans are to keep more than 400 acres as open space which is an area equivalent to the size of Harlan Ranch in Clovis.

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