PLANNING COMMISSION **DECEMBER 18, 2025**
STAFF REPORT- GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT **GP_2024-0001**

PROJECT PLANNER CONTACT
Russ Ford
860 N Bush St
Ukiah, CA 95482
Phone: 707-234-6650
fordr@mendocinocounty.gov

PROJECT SUMMARY

APPLICANT:	Redwood Valley Municipal Advisory Council (RVMAC) 8650 East Road Redwood Valley, CA 95470
AGENT:	Dolly Riley 8650 East Road Redwood Valley, CA 95470
REQUEST:	General Plan Amendment to incorporate recommendations from the Redwood Valley Community Action Plan into the Community Specific Policies Element of the Mendocino County General Plan.
LOCATION:	Within the unincorporated community of Redwood Valley
GENERAL PLAN:	Chapter 6 – Community Specific Policies
ZONING:	N/A
SUPERVISORIAL DISTRICT:	District 1 (Cline)
ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION:	Addendum to Previously Adopted EIR for the Mendocino County General Plan
RECOMMENDATION:	Adopt the Resolution providing a report and recommendation to the Mendocino County Board of Supervisors regarding proposed amendments to Chapter 6 of the Mendocino County General Plan and the Addendum to the General Plan Final Environmental Impact Report related thereto.

PROJECT BACKGROUND & INFORMATION

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The Redwood Valley Municipal Advisory Council (RVMAC) has completed a Community Action Plan (CAP) for the community of Redwood Valley, attached to this Staff Report as Attachment A. The task of updating the CAP for Redwood Valley was included as one of the RVMAC duties in the Board of Supervisors Resolution No. 16-057 which established the RVMAC. The CAP includes a number of recommended goals, policies and action items approved by the community during a series of stakeholder meetings. This request is to formally incorporate some of those recommendations into the Community Specific Policies Element (Chapter 6) of the Mendocino County General Plan. In 2017, the RVMAC began work on a comprehensive update to the community's action plan, which had existed since 2004. Between 2017 and 2023, the RVMAC hosted a series of stakeholder meetings in order to solicit input on issues important to the community and transform that input into policies and goals intended to guide future development in Redwood Valley.

A draft version of the CAP was submitted to the Department in 2024 in order to begin the process of incorporating the recommendations of the CAP into the County's General Plan. Wherever possible, staff has taken recommendations from the CAP and included them as goals, policies, or action items in the Redwood Valley section of the Community Specific Policies of the General Plan. Background information on development of the CAP and additional guidelines not recommended for addition to the General Plan, including a section on Design Guidelines for future development, will remain in the CAP as non-binding guidance to the public conducting development projects in Redwood Valley and for the RVMAC in their recommendations regarding development within Redwood Valley.

SITE CHARACTERISTICS: The community of Redwood Valley is located approximately 7.5 miles north of Ukiah, about halfway between Willits and Ukiah on US 101. The valley has two primary entrances along its southern end; West Road (CR 237) via US 101 and East Road (CR 230) via State Route 20 (SR 20). There is also a portion of the community outside of the valley itself on the southwest side of US 101. The community is predominantly residential and agricultural in nature with historic uses consisting largely of vineyards and ranching. Permitted cultivation of cannabis has also increased in recent years in conjunction with regulatory changes.

Public Services:
Access: US 101 and SR 20
Water District: Redwood Valley Water District (in part)
Sewer District: None
Fire District: Redwood Valley-Calpella Fire Department and CAL FIRE

AGENCY COMMENTS: On October 29, 2025 project referrals were sent to the following responsible or trustee agencies with jurisdiction over the Project. Their submitted recommended conditions are discussed in this staff report and contained in Conditions of Approval. A summary of the submitted agency comments are listed below.

TABLE 1: Referral Agency Responses

REFERRAL AGENCIES	COMMENT
Mendocino County Department of Transportation	No Response
Mendocino County Division of Environmental Health	No Response
Mendocino County Farm Advisor	No Response
Mendocino County Farm Bureau	No Response
Mendocino County Agricultural Commissioner	No Response
Mendocino County Air Quality Management District	No Response
CAL FIRE	No Response
California Department of Fish and Wildlife	No Response
Cloverdale Rancheria	No Response
Cahto Tribe	No Response

Redwood Valley Rancheria	No Response
Sherwood Valley Band of Pomo Indians	No Response
Round Valley Tribe	No Response
Redwood Valley Water District	No Response
Redwood Valley-Calpella Fire District	No Response

PROJECT ANALYSIS

GENERAL PLAN AND CONSISTENCY: Government Code Section 65300 et. seq. mandates that each planning agency shall prepare a comprehensive General Plan to regulate physical development within its jurisdiction. The General Plan should provide an integrated and internally consistent statement of goals and policies for the agency. Implementation of this mandate may be done in a way that is consistent with state law but takes into account the diversity of communities throughout the state. Section 65302 provides a list of elements required within any general plan, but also allows agencies the discretion to include optional elements that may be relevant to their jurisdiction. The County of Mendocino has chosen to include an optional element discussing Community Specific Polices, which has been incorporated in the County's General Plan as Chapter 6. This element provides goals and policies to help regulate development within the eight unincorporated communities in Mendocino County. Consistent with state law, the County may update or amend its General Plan as needed, and the proposed amendment would add or modify 10 items in the *Redwood Valley Community Area Policies* section of Chapter 6. Because the policies provide general guidance and are not directly tied to implementation, no update to the zoning code is required in conjunction with this amendment. The proposed changes are discussed below and shown in redline on Exhibit A of the Planning Commission Resolution.

1. Proposed Policy CP-RV-5: *The County encourages redevelopment of the old Redwood Valley Middle School for use as a recreation and community center.*

This current wording of this policy refers to redevelopment of "*..the northwest corner of East Road and School Way … with a mixed retail commercial/residential project*". The site in question, APN 163-131-16, was developed with mini-warehouses for storage in 2021 (BU_2021-0232, -0233, -0234), so the policy is no longer relevant. Staff recommends rewording this policy to apply to redevelopment of the currently defunct Redwood Valley Middle School, located at 750 School Way, APN 163-060-15. The site is still owned by the Ukiah Unified School District, but the school was officially closed for use in 2010 and the property is in disrepair. There is currently a small, community-led organization trying to develop the property into a community center. Modifying this policy would put Board support behind that goal and is consistent with other policies in the General Plan, including DE-35: *"Encourage compact development patterns, infill, redevelopment, and reuse in community areas to protect natural resources and maximize the efficient use of infrastructure and services."*

2. Proposed Action Item CP-RV-6.1: *Work to develop and implement a plan to provide pedestrian improvements in the core downtown area along School Way and East Road.*

This addition is recommended as an Action Item to supplement Policy CP-RV-6, which encourages streetscape improvements to the East Road street frontage to improve appearance and aesthetics. Addition of this Action Item would provide focused direction that may help the community in achieving the associated policy. The Development Element includes eight additional polices related to promoting and developing pedestrian and bicycle access throughout the county.

3. Proposed Policy CP-RV-10: *The County supports the development of agro- and eco- tourism in conjunction with existing and proposed agricultural operations within agricultural zones.*

In 2022, farms and ranches throughout the United States generated $1.26 billion in income from agritourism

services.[1] Addition of this policy recognizes the advantages of diversification of income streams while maintaining agricultural compatibility. Agricultural operators may require supplemental income to sustain their operations during years with poor harvest or sales, and agro-tourism is an expanding market in many areas of California with similar rural agricultural settings. The Resource Management Element of the General Plan discusses policies related to preservation and use of agricultural resources, among others. At the time that element was updated, agrotourism ideas weren't as prominent within the industry as they are today so that topic is not discussed within the existing policies. However there are no existing policies that would conflict with this supplemental use and several that support it, including RM-104: "*The County supports policies and programs to maintain and enhance the viability of agricultural operations and retention of agricultural land*", and RM-107: "*Support the diversification and expansion of the agricultural economic base.*"

4. Proposed Policy CP-RV-11: *Landscaping on new development shall encourage the use of locally "native" species and the targeted removal of "invasive" species as defined by the California Invasive Plant Council (Cal-IPC).*

This language is consistent with recommendations from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) regarding landscaping and mitigation of invasive species in conjunction with new discretionary development. Action Item DE-78.1 encourages the development of community design guidelines, including consideration of such factors as native and drought tolerant plants used for landscaping. Policy RM-86 states *"In rural areas, promote vegetation and landscape management programs that protect wildlife and livestock habitat, discourage pest species and non-native species, reduce wildfire risk, and conserve water resources."*

5. Proposed Policy CP-RV-12: *Encourage the use of dwelling groups and/or cluster development that would provide for the protection and long-term viability of agricultural lands while allowing development of additional housing units.*

Much like the rest of California, Mendocino County is suffering from a critical lack of affordable housing. Mendocino County code currently allows the development of dwelling groups or cluster development, which allows a property owner to capture the potential development density that would be available should the land be subdivided, but without physically fragmenting the land. Dwellings should be clustered to lessen the impacts of development, and in an agricultural or rangeland zone dwelling groups may also require open space easements in order to protect the balance of the property for agricultural uses. Inclusion of this policy highlights an infrequently used provision in the zoning code that may provide additional opportunities for housing development on parcels appropriately sized and zoned for such increased density. This policy is consistent with existing General Plan policy DE-23: *"The County encourages clustering, density transfers, and density bonuses or incentives to achieve General Plan, environmental and housing objectives."*

6. Proposed Policy CP-RV-13: *Commercial cannabis cultivation shall prioritize protection of existing residential uses. To preserve the existing agricultural character of the community, outdoor, sun-grown cannabis cultivation is more desirable than mixed-light cultivation.*

Since commercial cannabis became permissible in 2018, many farmers took the opportunity to develop operations under the new regulations, but some residents objected to the perceived increase in nuisance issues such as dust, odor, and traffic. In 2021, an application to establish a Cannabis Prohibition (CP) combining district (R_2021-0002) was submitted by a collective of property owners but was ultimately denied by the Board of Supervisors. Remediation of properties with dilapidated hoop houses and disintegrating plastic has raised concerns within the community of pollution and visual blight. Inclusion of the proposed policy will provide guidance to staff and decision-makers when reviewing discretionary permits associated with cannabis cultivation. As the current General Plan was adopted prior to legalization of cannabis, there are no current goals or policies that deal with the subject.

7. Proposed Policy CP-RV-14: *New commercial development is encouraged to incorporate green and*

[1] usda.gov

renewable energy sources in their design and construction, including solar arrays and EV charging stations.

This language is consistent with recent legislative updates to the California Building Code (CBC) requiring photovoltaic (PV) solar arrays on most new residential development. Policy DE-274 states *"The County shall revise the zoning ordinance to allow installation of renewable energy as a permitted use by right in all zoning districts"*, which it currently is. Changes in State law including AB 970 (2021) have mandated permit streamlining for renewable energy infrastructure such as electric vehicle (EV) chargers. Additionally, the County's zoning ordinance provides incentives for the installation of EV charging stations by allowing each station to count toward 2 of the parking spaces needed for any use requiring off-street parking.[2]

8. Proposed Policy CP-RV-15: *The County will encourage and support locally owned businesses seeking public and private sources of funding.*

Securing funding for local businesses will remain the responsibility of business owners and operators, but the County may be able to provide assistance with elements of these projects such as grant information, planning and zoning review, and letters of support.

9. Proposed Policy CP-RV-16: *The County encourages job creation and economic development through local sustainable, non-polluting light industries.*

Redwood Valley has only a single, 4.5± acre area that's currently zoned for industrial uses, located at 960 School Way. Industrial uses provide opportunities for local employment and industry, but must be of a form and fashion compatible with the surrounding environment. This policy recognizes the need for industrial spaces within the community and the desire to maintain compatibility between existing uses. This is consistent with Policy DE-59: *"Promote a diversified industrial sector."*

10. Proposed Policy CP-RV-17: *The County will work cooperatively with the Redwood Valley community to plan open spaces, parks, and public gardens.*

Similar to item 8 above, the County may be able to provide support in the form of planning and zoning review or site plan evaluation for the development of new public spaces.

As shown by the discussion above, the recommended policy additions are internally consistent with existing goals and policies of the General Plan, and will help provide guidance supported by and specific to the Redwood Valley community. In addition to the policy modifications listed, staff is recommending a number of insubstantial minor changes throughout the document including renumbering of pages, inclusion of additional images and graphics, and updates to terminology.

ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION: Addendum to a Previously Adopted Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the Mendocino County General Plan. Pursuant to Section 15162(a)(1) of the CEQA guidelines, if the local agency determines that changes to the project or project conditions have been made to such an extent that the project may result in substantial changes in physical conditions that are considered significant under CEQA. As discussed in the sections above, the project consists solely of incorporation of policy recommendations to the General Plan and would not result in additional development, or development that has not already been analyzed under the Mendocino County General Plan EIR. No changes to the physical environment will occur and no significant alteration of the 'project' will occur as a result of approval. An Addendum to the Previously Adopted EIR has been prepared by staff, which fully analyzes these findings consistent with CEQA requirements and is included as Exhibit B to the Planning Commission Resolution.

[2] MCC §20.180.020(F)(3)

December 2, 2025

DATE

Russ Ford

RUSS FORD
SENIOR PLANNER

Appeal Period: 10 Days
Appeal Fee: $2,354.00

ATTACHMENTS:

A. Redwood Valley Community Action Plan
B. Redwood Valley Community Design Guidelines
C. Redwood Valley MAC Boundary

RESOLUTION AND EXHIBITS:

EXHIBIT A – CHAPTER 6 REDLINE
EXHIBIT B – CEQA ADDENDUM

Redwood Valley Community Action Plan

February 2025

The Redwood Valley Community Action Plan was made possible by the Mendocino County Board of Supervisors who sponsor the existence of the RVMAC. Thanks to RVMAC members who organized community meetings, and community volunteers, and hundreds of Redwood Valley residents who helped to bring this work to fruition. The RVMAC is grateful for the provision of a $10,000 Planning grant from PG&E, as well as a $1,000 grant from the Mendocino Community Foundation. These funds were instrumental in completing this project. Thanks to the Redwood Valley Grange and its members who generously gave their space for community meetings.

Redwood Valley Community Action Plan (CAP) Update

Prepared by and for the Community of Redwood Valley and the Redwood Valley Municipal Advisory Council (RVMAC)
redwoodvalleymac.com
February 2025

Table of Contents

PART I. History, Process, Community Input, and Community Goals.

1. Purpose

2. Background and Process

3. Topic Areas for Community Action

   A. Agriculture
   B. Public Safety and Security
   C. Environment
   D. Economic Development and Housing
   E. Public Facilities and Infrastructure

4. Top Priority Goals, Objectives, Policies, Actions

5. "Parking Lot" of Other Community Interests

6. Next Steps

7. Acknowledgements

PART II. Design Guidelines and Standards for Development in Redwood Valley.

1. Introduction and Purpose

2. Design Goals and Objectives
   A. Introduction
   B. Overall Guiding Principals
   C. Design Goals
   D. Design Objectives
      - 1. Compatibility
      - 2. Infill Development
      - 3. Circulation
      - 4. Commercial Development
      - 5. Industrial Development
      - 6. Residential Development

3. Applicability of Design Guidelines
   A. Development Subject to Design Guidelines
   B. Exemptions from Review

4. Commercial Design Criteria/Guidelines
   A. General Principles for all Commercial Development
      - 1. Desirable Elements
      - 2. Undesirable Elements
      - 3. Height
      - 4. Bulk
      - 5. Scale
      - 6. Color
   B. Architectural Design Guidelines
      - 1. Exterior Walls
      - 2. Roofs
      - 3. Awnings
   C. Site Planning
      - 1. General Design Principles
      - 2. Setback Standards
      - 3. Open Space
      - 4. Lighting
      - 5. Site Grading
      - 6. Parking Area Design
      - 7. Fences
      - 8. Energy Efficiency
      - 9. Signs
      - 10. Landscaping

PART III Appendices

1. Jurisdictional Map of Redwood Valley Municipal Advisory Council

PART I.

1. Purpose

The purpose of the Redwood Valley (RV) Community Action Plan (CAP) is to establish a path for creating Redwood Valley's future. In this Plan, we intend to capture the community's values based on its history, current events, and vision for the future. It is a document created with hope, intent, and participation. Through the Plan, the community intends to take a stronger role in determining if and how RV will be developed, the types of land use that will be encouraged or prevented, and the character of how the community will look and function. The new CAP endeavors to set forth a vision for the next 10-20 years.

The CAP update was initiated in 2017 by the RVMAC, which was formed in 2016 in large part due to community concerns about development in Redwood Valley, and its commensurate impact on the community, namely the threat of development of corporate box store retail that threatened to eliminate locally owned businesses.

The RVMAC is comprised of seven volunteer members and two alternates. In the process of establishing the RVMAC in 2016 and determining its goals, the 2004 CAP was rediscovered. The RVMAC determined that it was time to update the CAP and embarked on a public outreach process to do so. The process consisted of four dedicated public stakeholder meetings, with 50-100 persons per meeting. All residents of RV received notice by means of post cards of the initial meeting. The first meeting, for which refreshments were provided by the RVMAC, had about 100 attendees. All meetings were facilitated by local attorney and experienced community planning facilitator, Cliff Paulin, and by RVMAC members. Mr. Paulin used a "World Cafe" method, which is a standard approach for gaining group input and consensus. Work paused after the initial meeting in 2017 due to the catastrophic 2017 wildfire that devastated Redwood Valley. Additional work was re-commenced in 2018 by RVMAC members, and has continued in regular RVMAC meetings. The documents were approved by the Mendocino County Board of Supervisors for further review on February 6, 2024, and the Action Items were given better definition and returned to Planning and Building Dept for further approval on February 20, 2025. This document is the product of those efforts.

Through the process, it was determined that the CAP update should consist of three major components, each of which serve distinct but overlapping goals. The first component (Part I) is the **Community Action Plan**, which includes the history, purpose, and process for community planning. The **Community Action Plan** includes a section on *Objectives*, *Policies, and Action Steps*, which are based on community input and outlined in fairly general form. Part II of the CAP is a series of **Design Guidelines**, which serve to direct future commercial, industrial, and multi-family housing developments in Redwood Valley in a way that is consistent with the current and desired future "community character." Both the Community Action Plan and the Design Guidelines were derived from the public meetings, as well as research into neighboring communities and other towns/counties that have implemented successful community plans. The RVMAC intends that both these sections of the plan be presented to the Mendocino County Board of Supervisors, via the Planning and Building Services Department, for adoption and implementation into updates to the County General Plan and Zoning Ordinance. Part III of the

CAP is the **Appendices**, and includes materials and references that are necessary for the timely and detailed maintenance of the CAP. For example, a jurisdictional map of Redwood Valley is contained in the Appendices, and it may include reference to State and Federal regulations affecting building. The Appendices are informational and are designed to be reviewed and updated regularly under the oversight of the RV MAC, with ongoing public input, and will be available digitally on the RV MAC website.

A community plan should be both visionary and strategic, setting forth a future vision that is aspirational, yet achievable. Most importantly for Redwood Valley, it must enable actual implementation through the County by means of both the advisory role of the RVMAC, as well as by establishment of legal status. The 2004 CAP was, apparently by an oversight, never adopted by the County, nor were its key findings incorporated into the General Plan.

The County General Plan, updated in August of 2009, mentions Redwood Valley specifically as a Planning Area only on pages 6-38 and 6-39. Those pages mention: "Maintain a transition buffer between the existing commercial, industrial, and residential uses;" "supports and promotes 'Smart Growth';" "establishing a consistent architectural theme;" "Parking to be located off of the East Road frontage… including landscaping, pedestrian access…."; and even: "The County encourages redevelopment of the northwest corner of East Road and School Way, such as with a mixed retail commercial/residential project." A large storage unit facility was built on this corner. It is the hope and expectation of the Redwood Valley community that such significant development is subject to public review and comment so that local residents can voice opinion and provide an exchange of ideas which could lead to innovative solutions. It is our intention that these General Plan intentions will be realized by the additional clarity of the CAP and Design Guidelines. The RVMAC, as supported by the Redwood Valley Community, intends that development in Redwood Valley be conducive to aesthetics and a strategic vision. The chief interests of virtually every Redwood Valley participant in the CAP public meetings is the maintenance of a sustainable rural lifestyle in Redwood Valley.

The development of the first **Design Guidelines** (Part II of this CAP document) for Redwood Valley is intended to govern future development, to reflect the vision of our community. Since the RVMAC is an advisory group, the County retains governance over development in the unincorporated areas (such as Redwood Valley). Insofar as the Design Guidelines represent the intended vision for Redwood Valley, they are somewhat prescriptive, and therefore require adoption into the General Plan and Zoning Ordinance in order to fully take effect.

2. Background and Process

The CAP update process has consisted of four public meetings held at the Redwood Valley Grange. These meetings were held on June 14, 2017; May 31, 2018; May 14 and December 4, 2019. The intention was to host ongoing meetings throughout 2017 and finalize the CAP in 2018, but the Redwood Complex Fire of 2017 delayed this process. That federally declared disaster, which killed 9 Redwood Valley residents, destroyed 402 households, and burned 36,523 acres, underscored how crucial it is to revisit plans regularly in order to respond to new

information. Certainly, the more recent iterations of the draft CAP documents contain additional materials related to emergency preparedness and response.

The first community meeting (June 2017), attended by approximately 100 Redwood Valley residents, utilized a "World Café" format, where participants attended a series of roundtable discussions focused around a variety of topics. These topics were: A) Agriculture; B) Public Safety and Security; C) Environment; D) Economic Development and Housing; and E) Public Facilities and Infrastructure. Participants were able to comment at three different topic areas during the evening and voice their thoughts and concerns in these different areas. RVMAC members, acting as topic facilitators and scribes, solicited and captured these comments for development into Goals and Objectives for the RVMAC and the community at large. A full digest of these table notes is in the RVMAC archives.

The second meeting (May 2018), attended by approximately 50 residents, was aimed at prioritizing the Goals and Objectives offered at the first meeting, and beginning to define a greater sense of the "community character" of Redwood Valley in order to create Design Guidelines. The process consisted of the RVMAC and the facilitator narrowing possible Goals and Objectives for consideration based upon public interest at the first meeting, priorities in the 2004 CAP, and other input from the community. Five Goals for each topic area were selected and participants were able to offer their opinion on each Goal based upon the perceived "Impact" and "Achievability" of each Goal. In doing so, clusters of interest were identified which will allow the RVMAC to prioritize Goals to pursue through future efforts.

The second portion of the May, 2018 meeting invited participants to offer their sense of "community character" of Redwood Valley in five different land use areas: Residential, Commercial, Community Spaces, Agricultural, and Natural Spaces. Each of these land use areas was "seeded" with ideas gleaned from the June 2017 public meeting, which provided multiple ideas as to planning with regards to the community character of Redwood Valley, in response to requests from the Mendocino County Planning and Building Department. Participants added

their own thoughts in each topic area, which inform the recommendations provided for Design Guidelines in this CAP. A final description of community character is summarized in this document as the first paragraph of Part II Design Guidelines. The intention is that these Design Guidelines will shape future planning decisions for the County of Mendocino within the RVMAC jurisdiction. The Design Guidelines are also based on researching successful guidance documents in other jurisdictions. The final two community meetings added more clarity to these goals, and included additional focus on public safety.

The RVMAC, reflecting the views of Redwood Valley residents, wants development of parcels to be implemented in a planned manner, consistent with the vision of community character, which was developed from considerable input by numerous local members of the public from 2017-2019 (as stated earlier). Therefore, the Design Guidelines are precise and clear. However, with proposed development subject to public input and the RVMAC, it is intended that some flexibility be incorporated into the process when required. As stated in the Design Guidelines, implementation may be "less stringent" when appropriately indicated. The precision written into the Design Guidelines can serve to assist developers and property owners by providing a "road map" for how to plan and design buildings, removing some of the guesswork. The Design Guidelines will act as a short-cut to guide development in the following ways. First, the exterior appearance and design of the proposed work is in harmony with the exterior appearance and design of existing structures within the community, and with that of the existing subject structure. In addition, the appearance of the proposed work will not detract from the appearance of other property within the community.

3. Topic Areas for Community Action Goals and Objectives

A. Agriculture

Redwood Valley has a long and proud history as an agricultural region. Native American peoples and early European settlers introduced the gathering and cultivation of a wide variety of crops, including acorns and sedge grasses, orchards and vineyards, and participated in animal husbandry. More recently the area was the birthplace of the wine grape industry in Mendocino County, and still has extensive wine grape production. In addition, the area has become a hotbed of organic and sustainable farming practices in the wine world, featuring the United States' first organic and biodynamic winery.

Participants in the June 14, 2017 meeting highlighted this unique history as a point of pride and voiced strong support for continuing and building upon this heritage. Defining the niche of Redwood Valley agriculture as an example of organic and non-GMO production, and preserving the sustainability of agriculture in the valley, were identified as top priorities. In addition, encouraging the preservation of agricultural lands through conservation easements, restrictive zoning, and the limiting of subdivision were noted.

Other agriculturally related issues also were emphasized, including providing support for ancillary agricultural activities such as cottage food production, a meat processing facility, fiber manufacturing, dairy facilities, cold storage, commercial kitchens, equipment-sharing banks, seed banks, farmers cooperatives, and compost production.

Concerns related to agriculture mentioned were the availability of water both from the Redwood Valley Water district and private wells, the impact of pesticide and herbicide use in the valley, waste from agricultural production, and the need to protect native habitat.

Finally, any conversation in Redwood Valley related to agriculture would not be complete if the topic of cannabis cultivation was not addressed. Participants expressed concern about the cultivation of cannabis on small parcels, large scale indoor or outdoor grows, the impacts of those growers who remain in the underground economy, and the impacts on neighbors of new legal grows. Specifically, cannabis cultivation in the Redwood Valley area shall be restricted to parcels of 5 acres or larger.

B. Public Safety/Security

Public Safety and security are important to all communities, but in particular rural communities like Redwood Valley, which are often "underserved" and face greater challenges in these areas. Redwood Valley is served by the Mendocino County Sheriff's Department for law enforcement as well as the California Highway Patrol, and agents serving the Coyote Valley Tribe. Fire service is provided by the Redwood Valley Calpella Fire Department, a primarily Volunteer department, which has mutual aid agreements with other local and state fire agencies.

The Redwood Valley Calpella Fire District station is centrally located, and staffed primarily by many local volunteers.

Concerns in the public safety area included traffic, crime, fire preparedness, mental health, and the impacts of drugs and alcohol on the community. Participants raised concern about vehicular traffic, including speeding on local roads. Lowering speed limits and requesting more patrols from local agencies were voiced as possible remedies. Crime, particularly in the form of home invasions related to the cannabis industry, was raised, as well as the impact of transients along local rail lines and the river. Participants also voiced that a Sheriff's Department satellite station in RV would be a beneficial remedy for many security issues.

Wildfire preparedness was a top issue, and a prescient topic given subsequent events. Concerns were raised over homes in the wildland urban interface (WUI), the low number of volunteers at the local fire department, and the presence of locked gates that make access difficult for fire fighters. It was strongly felt that the County should be more restrictive about development in wildland and heavily wooded areas. In addition, there was community desire to implement more Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT) and Fire Safe Councils to address wildfire and other natural disaster impacts.

C. Environment

Redwood Valley residents care deeply about the quality of their natural environment and have long worked to be good stewards of these resources. This impulse is evident in the level of organic and sustainable agriculture, the preservation of oak woodland ecosystems, and the presence of the Redwood Valley Outdoor Education Project.

Participants at the June 2017 meeting expressed concern about a number of environmental issues. Key concerns included the availability of water, or lack thereof, for humans and non-humans due to draws (both legal and illegal) from local creeks and the river, as well as the impacts of the reliance on ground water. The preservation of wildlife habitat in the form of oak woodlands and riparian corridors was also highlighted. Echoing sentiments in the 2004 CAP, participants noted the impacts of not having centralized waste water facilities in terms of lack of municipal grey water availability, and potential fresh water contamination from individual septic systems. Air quality issues surrounding Highway 101, and subsequently from the pellet mill in Calpella, were raised and often come up in monthly RVMAC meetings.

Participants in the Environment discussions addressed many issues surrounding residential and commercial development in Redwood Valley. A strong preference for slow growth and a total limit to growth were expressed by many residents at all the public meetings, as well as a preference enabling accessory dwelling ("in-law") units on existing parcels. Redwood Valley residents were aware that growth is inevitable and would like to be involved in guiding that development through the implementation of the Design Guidelines.

D. Economic Development and Housing

In an area with limited economic growth opportunities and limited housing opportunities, participants saw the need to promote development in line with community values. Participants stated preferences for locally owned small businesses, particularly those that meet local needs not currently satisfied in the area (i.e. pharmacy, coffee shop, hardware store, feed store, etc.). Maintaining the character of Redwood Valley through the enforcement of the Mendocino County Community Character Combining District ordinance (2017), which requires a review of "formula/chain stores," was stressed as important. Also identified was limiting the impacts of tourism on the area character, while still attracting more visitors who might be drawn to Redwood Valley's scenic beauty and rural environment. As of this writing, our State Senator actively supports converting the Northwest Pacific Railroad track to the Great Redwood Trail for walking, hiking, and biking.

Perceived barriers to economic development included limited water availability, a lack of affordable housing, Redwood Valley's continued prevalence as a bedroom community, lack of public transportation, and a limited local availability of post-high school educational opportunities.

Legal cannabis cultivation and associated industries were also noted as a potential economic development opportunity, albeit not without controversy among Redwood Valley residents.

E. Public Facilities and Infrastructure

The limited number of locations at which the Redwood Valley community can currently gather and utilize was an overall theme of the sessions. The relatively recent closing of the Redwood Valley School was noted as both a challenge and an opportunity for the community.

The Redwood Valley Grange is a community organization dedicated to public service, and is a social center for many public and private events.

With a well-equipped children's playground, ball field, covered meeting area, and site of seasonal Farmer's Market, Lion's Club Park is very busy. It is also the site of a memorial to the victims of the 2017 wildfire.

Other topics of concern included the utilization of Lion's Park, both in its capacity as the venue for the RV Farmers Market and for events. Also noted as lacking was a public health clinic, which necessitates RV residents traveling to Ukiah or other locations for basic healthcare needs. Participants felt the need for a more cohesive "Town Square" in RV, and interest in creating such a forum was expressed. The RV Grange, the site for the RVMAC and other meetings, was noted as a vital community resource and one in need of additional attention. The desire for the Grange to offer additional programing was expressed, as were the financial and physical needs of the Grange for maintenance and improvement.

RV Farmer's Market is open seasonally and offers produce and meat.

Eagle Peak Middle School, located on West Road.

Finally, the public spaces of roads, sidewalks, and potential bike and pedestrian trails was raised as a top priority, allowing for increased ability for both residents and visitors to utilize non-motorized transportation. Maintaining "dark skies" in RV was a strongly stated value that residents want to preserve.

4. Top Priority Goals and Objectives

At the May 31, 2018, meeting residents prioritized potential projects for the MAC and the community to engage in. The following is a list of priorities based upon input from those members present and work undertaken by the RVMAC Subcommittee, and reflects revisions completed February 20, 2025.

Public Safety and Security

1.Objective: Promote a Disaster Prepared Community that includes local Fire Safe Councils, personnel trained in Emergency Response and disaster preparedness, while coordinating with government entities in safety planning that includes active fire preparedness.
Policy: The Mendocino County Office of Emergency Services (OES) has prepared an Emergency Operations Plan (EOP), a comprehensive strategy for disaster management as a

platform for planning and response to all hazards in compliance with State law and FEMA, to cover earthquake, fire, flood, terrorism, tsunami, severe storm and public health emergencies. It was created to meet the actual needs of the community, engage the community, and strengthen what works well in the community.
Action: The community will support Redwood Valley Calpella Fire Department (RVCFD), Mendocino County Sheriff Department, and County Emergency Response Team (CERT) in efforts to respond in emergencies and notify citizens of evacuation processes. Notification will be by text and media alerts, sirens, and Ham radio. Support local Fire Safe Councils in which neighbor-to-neighbor outreach and media exposure results in set meetings in which contact information is shared, tasks are assigned, and group is registered with County Fire Safe Council. Support homeowner involvement in Firewise USA Program. Encourage interested citizens to participate in CERT and Emergency Response training using support of RVCFD, Redwood Valley Grange, Redwood Valley Municipal Advisory Council (RV MAC) and seek sponsorship and assistance through such local entities that may also include churches and Behavioral Health Center for location of training. Support an operations center in Redwood Valley as needs are determined in a disaster or emergency. United Disaster Relief of Northern California (UDRNC) will provide assistance from preparedness and support through recovery, as a regional service who sponsors and accesses support resources.

2.Objective: Promote Enhanced Traffic Safety Programs with increased visibility of posted speed limits, improved road surface traffic markings, improved lighting at major road junctions, and create bike and pedestrian lanes.
Policy: Traffic calming techniques improve safety for motorists, bicyclists, pedestrians, and others.
Action: Continue communication between citizen groups such as the RV MAC and local business groups with County Department of Transportation, Mendocino Council of Governments (MCOG), and CalTrans to further create improvements in roadways. As development occurs, reserve road frontage for future pedestrian and bicycle ways in the case immediate installation of such is not feasible.

3.Objective: Support Law Enforcement Efforts for Crime Prevention and Response, including support for Mendocino County Sheriff to utilize the Redwood Valley Behavioral Health Center as a sheriff substation.
Policy: Work with law enforcement agencies, the local community, and other groups to prevent illegal activity.
Action: Continue to invite Mendocino County Sheriff and First District Supervisor to speak with community members monthly at the RV MAC to examine local issues and seek solutions.

4.Objective: Ensure Secondary Egress or equivalent for all new development and encourage knowledge of neighborhood safe zones and alternative egress options for existing developments.
Policy: New development and renovations will comply with CalTrans, Redwood Valley Calpella Fire Department (RVCFD), and Mendocino County requirements to identify evacuation routes consistent with the Mendocino County Evacuation Plan.
Action: Evacuation routes, alternate ingress/egress routes, and safe zones will be identified by Sheriff's Department, CalTrans, OES and Fire Department. Such information will be communicated to neighborhoods and at Firesafe Council meetings, and conveyed to local

citizens at times of evacuation through text message and media notification, with siren alerts to awaken citizens to check these communicators.

Economic Development and Housing

1.Objective: Maintain and encourage locally-owned non-polluting business, including commercial sites, home and internet businesses. Encourage availability of broadband services.
Policy: Work with local groups and businesses to identify concerns relative to long-term business viability. Assist the retention and expansion of existing businesses. To encourage non-polluting practices, the Air Quality Control District, and California Department of Fish and Game (water) may be consulted. The County supports the extension of broadband internet access.
Action: Encourage and support local businesses to affiliate with local non-profit and volunteer groups to use community media to promote businesses, which may include a local business directory. Support installation of solar panels and battery storage. Encourage non-polluting practices. Encourage open-air markets that may include portable sanitation facilities. Continue to work with County and State representatives to extend broadband internet access.

2.Objective: Maintain affordable spaces for light industry.
Policy: The integrity of local industrial zones is important to the community, and priority shall be given to programs and applications that support development of local industry in these areas.
Action: Residents will strive to support local landowners for environmentally-friendly industrial uses in areas so zoned. Support expansion of markets in agro- and eco- tourism to maintain and prolong sustainable agriculture and local culture, such as visitors participating in education and appreciation of local food products, bringing more sustainability to local light industry.

3.Objective: Promote affordable, safe housing that includes new building technologies and alternative types of home construction.
Policy: Revise development standards for residential densities to accommodate the development of affordable housing consistent with the County Housing Element. Encourage a range of housing types to address the housing needs of the community.
Action: Support new housing technologies such as Class K, accessory structures (in-law units), Polecraft Solutions (using harvested small trees as structural homebuilding material), permitted Tiny Homes, and intergenerational home “campus” compounds.

Environment

1.Objective: Protect and enhance the native upland and riparian habitats by removing invasive species and encouraging use of native species in new landscaping. Preserve and protect native plant habitats and oak woodlands.
Policy: Conserve and enhance riparian vegetation through development design and standards. Property owners will work to engage in and facilitate the removal of invasive weeds and flammable plants and trees such as gorse, French broom, eucalyptus, etc. Promote conservation and use of native species and drought-tolerant, fire-resistive, and noninvasive vegetation in private property and along main travel corridors. Conserve and replant oak woodlands, and comply with the Oak Woodlands Preservation Act.

Action: Stewards of new and existing landscaping will work to encourage the use of drought-tolerant and native species including oak woodlands, and when possible, remove invasive and flammable vegetation. Community members may engage in beautification projects.

2.Objective: Encourage resiliency and sustainable practices in all development.
Policy: Promote sustainable practices in development that minimize environmental impacts, considers water supply, water use, and water protection, and promote sustainable forest management practices, within any housing or development.
Action: Any development or construction planning will consider and be mindful of water supply and environmental protection, including monitoring and discouraging the use of harmful pesticides and fertilizers, and promoting sustainable forest management practices.

3.Objective: Promote local heritage, historical continuity and the preservation of rural character and indigenous cultures in the Redwood Valley community, which includes adoption of the Community Action Plan and Design Guidelines, preservation of the Redwood Valley Grange and its historical records, and pursuit of Public Land Trust opportunities to preserve lands.
Policy: The County will consider the Redwood Valley Community Action Plan (CAP) and Design Guidelines to be the preferred plan. The community supports the Redwood Valley Grange (RV Grange) activities such Pancake Breakfasts because the RV Grange supports the community through scholarships and more. Community members will work with agencies, land trusts, and willing property owners to explore recreational opportunities for residents.
Action: The Redwood Valley Municipal Advisory Council CAP Subcommittee will continue to work with Mendocino County agencies and Supervisors to ensure the CAP becomes part of the County General Plan, and is included in zoning regulations. Provide support for local research that preserves historical documentation. Participate in strengthening local community efforts such as the work of the RV Grange. The Redwood Valley Recreation Center (RVRC) working group will continue to address the Ukiah Unified School District to rehabilitate the unused Redwood Valley School for use as a recreation and community center. The community will pursue any Public Land Trust opportunities to utilize and preserve land areas for the benefit of the community and County.

Agriculture

1.Objective: Work to preserve agricultural lands.
Policy: Work with agencies to protect agriculture and natural landscapes by restricting conversion and fragmentation of timberlands, oak woodlands, stream corridors, and farmlands. Protect open space areas from unintended conversion to urban uses. Maintain agricultural land areas and limit incompatible uses. Actively encourage conservation easements, especially where they provide for expansion of extant and future agriculture production.
Action: Discourage residential or commercial development that would cause fragmentation of larger parcels either currently utilized for agriculture or with agricultural potential.

2.Objective: Support the creation of local, value-added agricultural products.
Policy: Develop vertical integration opportunities for adding value to natural resources, including local agricultural and timber processing facilities.

Action: Assist in providing incentives and marketing opportunities for market gardens, ranches, farms, fiber producers, and dairies geared toward local consumption of agricultural produce and value-added agricultural products such as cheese, yogurt, meats, eggs, fibers, etc. Support development of community commercial kitchens (e.g. Redwood Valley Grange).

3.Objective: Encourage Shared Community Resources.
Policy: Emphasize improvement and shared use of existing facilities.
Action: Develop a Redwood Valley equipment library for big expense items such as chippers, grading equipment, brush clearing gear. Utilize resources such as Fire Safe Council's "chipper days" program, Redwood Valley Fire Department's free rainy season sandbags, and intermittently offered free "go bags" for fire evacuation.

4.Objective: Encourage the creation of community gardens and shared use of land for agricultural purposes.
Policy: Encourage the creation of community gardening spaces near new and existing residential areas.
Action: Support neighborhoods that wish to start and maintain community gardens. Explore resources for sharing of agricultural land such as the Farmlink program which helps farmers and ranchers to access affordable financing, create business resilience, and secure land.

5.Objective: Encourage diverse and local food security.
Policy: Develop partnerships with community-based organizations, school districts, and health providers to reduce food disparity and increase food security and equity. Promote storage of grains and frozen foods for times of community need. Support commercial food production and organic farming methods.
Action: Work with churches, local tribes, Redwood Valley Grange, and local agencies to create a plan for community refrigerated and frozen storage of meats, grains, and other food items. Encourage commercial produce operations. Promote organic farming methods. Utilize free locally-adapted seeds available at Redwood Valley Grange and local libraries for home food gardens.

6.Objective: Continue to work with the cannabis community and the County to ensure cannabis cultivation is properly zoned and regulated.
Policy: Regulations governing licensed cannabis farms are fluid and merit participation from growers and neighbors alike. The community discourages cannabis cultivation adjacent to housing, schools, and other sensitive populations. Non-permitted cannabis farms are encouraged to come into licensure compliance. Non-permitted cannabis growers with 6 plants or less that do not possess a medical identification card have not been considered within the law.
Action: Community groups will continue to work with County Supervisors and the General Government Committee to determine better cannabis regulations that work for neighbors who are troubled by strong smells, dust, noise, added traffic, unshaded grower hoop- and green houses that stay brightly lit past 10 pm, excessive water use, and unsightly fences and structures; and work to create harmony with licensed cannabis growers. Policy updates will include consideration of natural sun-grown cannabis sites, with all sites located a defined distance from housing, schools, parks, places of worship, and other sensitive populations to avoid offensive issues. Fencing setback ordinances and other legal requirements will be clearly defined and

ordinances will be observed. Research and bring forth policy ideas that are similar to medical cannabis setbacks and rules, to allow for household cannabis growers who grow 6 plants or less, do not have a medical license, and use product non-commercially, to be within the law.

Public Facilities and Infrastructure

1.Objective: Encourage Development of Community Facilities such as youth facilities and parks, increase safe uses for Lions Park, and promote positive community uses for the closed Redwood Valley School.
Policy: Work with other agencies to provide safe and attractive places for recreational physical activities for all residents. Actively seek opportunities to provide new parks and recreational facilities on unused land. The County shall assume the primary responsibility for acquisition and development of neighborhood and community parks. Such parks may be provided by cities, schools, and other special district, incorporating agreements for use and maintenance. Emphasize improvement and shared use of existing facilities. Encourage restoration and reuse of buildings and spaces, especially those with community significance, over new construction. The County and other agencies should design, restore, reuse, and maintain public buildings and facilities in a manner that enhances community character.
Action: Promote sports and recreation usage of Lions Park which is managed by County General Services. The Redwood Valley Recreation Center (RVRC) working group will continue to work with Ukiah Unified School District to obtain a lease for the closed Redwood Valley School buildings and property for use as a recreation and community center. Continue to maintain the Redwood Valley Outdoor Education Project to allow the community to experience nature first hand. Promote the responsibility of absentee owners to safeguard the safety and security of unused buildings from nuisance, danger, and degradation.

2.Objective: Promote a Pedestrian and Bicycle friendly Community.
Policy: Create pedestrian connectivity between land uses, including residential, school, commercial, job centers, parks, community centers, and open space. Work with trail groups to promote and construct more trails for walking, bicycling, and pedestrian use. Concentrate pedestrian improvement along school and transit routes, in areas of established pedestrian activity, and adjacent to sites serving senior citizens and/or persons with disabilities.
Action: Create walking and biking trails, such as a trail between West and East Roads for children and families to arrive at Lions Park or Eagle Peak school without driving. Create bicycle parking facilities at destinations that receive bicyclists. Assemble a community-based trail planning committee that includes balanced representation to assist the State and County in planning trail routes, route acquisition, and trail use. Work to facilitate the Redwood Valley segment of the Great Redwood Trail, which may require bridge improvement and trail restoration for safe passage over the Russian River and other waterways.

3.Objective: Explore the potential of centralized wastewater treatment.
Policy: Support funding applications to improve and expand water and sewer service capabilities in areas planned for future growth or resolve existing deficiencies.
Action: Develop a community engagement plan and funding strategies for a wastewater treatment system when such a project would be appropriate, with timelines, assigned responsibilities, monitoring plan, and evaluation system.

4.Objective: Promote the development of energy self-sufficiency in the community.
Policy: Support the installation of solar and other renewable energy systems to adequately address year-round need. The County shall update the Mendocino County Code to incentivize the installation of renewable backup energy in homes and commercial buildings.
Action: Encourage the use of solar and other renewable energy sources. Assist the community in acquiring financing for solar and other renewable energy equipment. Promote the use of passive solar design. Encourage neighborhood micro grids. Support the installation of renewable backup energy in homes and commercial buildings. Encourage the expansion and creation of new EV charging stations in the community. Promote activities that will reduce the carbon footprint within the community.

5.Objective: Support public transit, traffic improvement, and carpool potential.
Policy: Increase the attractiveness and use of energy-efficient forms of transportation such as public transit through various means, including promoting transit-oriented development and the use of transit by visitors to the area. Link pedestrian, bicycle, and trail routes with other transportation modes.
Action: Ensure bus routes are posted in public areas and available online. Consider usefulness and support for roundabouts and other traffic solutions at local major intersections. Increase safety measures at public transit waiting areas such as solar panels for night lighting atop covered bus stop waiting areas. Encourage networking of shared travel such as carpooling.

5. "Parking Lot" of Other Community Interests

The conversations at the community forums were lively and wide ranging. It is a testament to the engaged nature of the community that so many people took time out of their busy schedules to offer their suggestion for improving their community. By necessity, this process required narrowing and prioritizing suggestions; however, the RVMAC is committed to capturing the ideas offered up by the community for future action. These items are been memorialized here in a "Parking Lot" for later consideration.

Environment – In the era after the October 2017 Redwood Valley Complex fires, which were ignited by wind-downed power lines, a strong case has been made for supporting RV residents to become energy self-sufficient through the adoption of renewable energy technologies.

Economic Development - The utilization of redevelopment funding to aid in the post-fire recovery could be leveraged into long term economic development for RV. Finding creative ways to repurpose the old RV school into an artist community, youth center, or other use could address economic development issues as well as other topic areas discussed by the RVMAC.

Public Facilities – Creating a RVMAC-sponsored forum about the future of the RV school was identified as a way of engaging the community about an important local resource. An additional concept is connecting the old RV school with Lions Park to create a "campus" for summer and school year activities for RV youth.

Public Safety – Addressing the concern around a single route of egress for many areas in cases of wildfires has been raised. In addition, there has been concern about emergency notification systems in RV, with particular attention paid to the utilization of fire sirens and the reverse 911 system.

Agriculture – The proposed "Great Redwood Trail," which would wind from the San Francisco Bay Area to Humboldt County, would pass through RV. This would provide a prime opportunity to expand the agricultural tourism industry in RV. Cannabis regulations need to better clarified, fair to growers and neighbors, and utilize public input.

6. Next Steps

The community planning process, begun by the CAP update, is an ongoing project that will continue to engage RV residents into the future. It is the expectation of the RVMAC that the CAP will serve as the guide for their work in the coming years. Following the publication of this document, the RVMAC will be working with Mendocino County Planning and Building Department to encourage adoption of the Plan and Design Guidelines through the Board of Supervisors into the General Plan, and any other necessary implementation legislation that will allow for more local oversight of proposed future development. The RVMAC will also be working with local community groups and individuals to achieve the project goals outlined herein. Once adopted, the CAP and Design Guidelines will need to be digitally made available for dissemination throughout the County via the RV MAC website. A Development Review Subcommittee was formed and is maintained under the RVMAC to address and discuss project and permit proposals.

7. Acknowledgements

Hundreds of Redwood Valley residents provided input to the Redwood Valley Plan process, donating thousands of hours of their time and attention. Instrumental in gathering together the process and the documentation was Cliff Paulin, a Mendocino County resident. Cliff's planning expertise, facilitation skills, and diligence were crucial factors in developing the final documents.

The Redwood Valley Community Action Plan was made possible by the Mendocino County Board of Supervisors who sponsor the existence of the RVMAC. Thanks to RVMAC members who organized community meetings, and with community volunteers brought this work to fruition. The RVMAC is grateful for the provision of a $10,000 Planning grant from PG&E, as well as a $1,000 grant from the Mendocino Community Foundation. These funds were instrumental in completing this project.

In addition, the RVMAC would like to express its deep gratitude to the RV Grange and all its members for the continued use of their space, and all their help in orchestrating the community meetings. Finally, many thanks to the dedicated elected officials and staff of Mendocino County for supporting these efforts, and the creation of the RVMAC initially. Former 1st District Supervisor Carre Brown has been a truly valuable mentor, and was succeeded by Supervisor Glenn McGourty, who continued in the spirit of valuable guidance in this project.

Part II: Design Guidelines [SEPARATE DOCUMENT]

PART III: APPENDICES

1. Jurisdictional Map of RVMAC

PART II: DESIGN GUIDELINES AND STANDARDS

1. INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

The Community Character of Redwood Valley is defined by multi-generational families, beginning with historical First People like the Pomo tribes, farming and wine grape homesteaders, hard-working people in local trades, a rich cultural contribution from local Latino people, and more recently, people coming from other regions of California and other states looking for a peaceful, quiet, rural place to live complete with dark skies at night and full star-gazing potential.

Redwood Valley is a place that creates economic opportunities for non-polluting and locally-owned businesses, as well as businesses that adapt and respond to the emerging needs of climate change and our community. Examples include the food and beverage and tourism sectors that build on the natural landscape, maintain and enhance the rural village character, build community, and recognize the evolving challenges to community resilience. The village center hosts a locally owned food market where the owners know their customers by first name and respond to their requests for locally sourced goods, an active Grange, a seasonal Sunday Farmer's Market, fire house, post office, café, vintage roadside tavern, a bank, and the new County Behavioral Health Training Center. Annual events include the fire department barbeque fundraiser, and almost world-famous 4th of July Black Bart parade. The community crossroads is surrounded by miles of beautiful scenic roads, oak woodlands, myriad opportunities to enjoy the outdoors including a lake, trails for hiking, biking, horseback riding, and now, the promise of the Great Redwood Trail.

New development can have a substantial impact on the character of the area in which it is located. Some harmful effects of one land use upon another can be prevented through zoning, subdivision controls, and housing and building codes.

Design Guidelines are becoming increasingly common in California, as many cities and counties find they are an excellent way to coordinate individual buildings or projects--often constructed at different times--into a harmonious whole while streamlining the development process. Redwood Valley is facing development pressures which will either act cohesively to enhance the physical environment or create disjointed and deleterious development.

Areas similar to Redwood Valley which have adopted design guidelines and a design review process often see direct benefits in the form of pleasant environments for living and working, the preservation and maintenance of property values and, thus, increased tax revenues and prevention and mitigation of blight. Design guidelines can also have indirect results in the form of increased dollar volume of commercial activity. The goals and policies in previous area plans for Redwood Valley (2004) and other unincorporated communities in Mendocino County served as an initial vision. It is the intent of the Redwood Valley Municipal Advisory Council to have the County recognize and adopt this Community Action Plan in its entirety, including the Design Guidelines and Standards, as a mechanism to guide the vision therein.

The Redwood Valley Municipal Advisory Council (RVMAC) finds that excessive similarity or dissimilarity, or poor quality of design in the exterior appearance of buildings, adversely affects the desirability of the community for residential and business purposes. Poor design impairs the benefits of occupancy of existing property, hinders appropriate development, and results in deterioration of property while simultaneously adversely impacting the proper relationship between the taxable value of real property and the cost of municipal services provided thereto. It is the purpose of the Design Guidelines prevent these and other harmful effects of such development, and thus, to promote and protect the health, safety, comfort and general welfare of the community, to promote public convenience and prosperity, to conserve the value of buildings, and to promote an energy efficient community.

The establishment of Design Guidelines is a useful tool by which a community can support development that is harmonious with the character and quality of the environment that the community wishes to foster. These guidelines are intended to coordinate with county zoning regulations in order to enhance the visual and functional nature of development in Redwood Valley.

2. DESIGN GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

A. INTRODUCTION

Many times, Goals and Objectives are confused. The following is offered for gaining insight into building what is known as a “policy framework.”

- Goals are broad statements that define the community’s hope for the future. They are general in nature and do not indicate when and how these goals are to be accomplished.

- Objectives are statements of intent that generally guide future decisions in specific topic areas.

B. OVERALL GUIDING PRICIPLE

We therefore designate the Overall Guiding Principal for this CAP and Design Guidelines to promote the functionality and aesthetics of environments in Redwood Valley which serve the needs of the community and reflect community heritage, historical continuity, the preservation of rural character, and protection of the natural environment.

C. DESIGN GOALS

- To promote architectural continuity within an overall sense of context consistent with quality development.
- To maintain and enhance the existing rural or village character of Redwood Valley.
- To safeguard and preserve the natural waterways, riparian habitat native plant and animal species, dark skies, open lands, views, and wildlife habitat.
- To improve the pockets of commercial zones (along Highway 101) to emphasize compatibility with the particular community in which it is located versus the 'generic' highway commercial architecture so common along major highways.
- To diminish the deleterious effects that new commercial/industrial development may have on the integrity of the surrounding rural-residential areas.
- To encourage significant and appropriate landscape corridors along major community arterials which enhance the rural or village lifestyle.
- To focus the attention of these Design Guidelines on the commercial areas, industrial areas, and multi-family residential subdivisions, impact on vehicular arteries throughout the Redwood Valley community.
- To encourage well designed retail and service uses which would attract local patrons.
- To create a pedestrian "village" scaled environment with high levels of amenity for workers, shoppers, and visitors and particular attention to pedestrian circulation.
- To encourage and provide for traffic movement without compromising the rural or semi-rural environment.
- To take advantage of the best available energy technology by maximizing the energy efficiency of all buildings and structures.
- To identify and enhance natural site characteristics.
- To encourage new development to reflect best practices for safety in terms of fireproof materials, escape route options, density of traffic, water conservation, and environmental impact.

D. DESIGN OBJECTIVES

1. Compatibility - The organization and placement of buildings, access, parking areas, open space and the like, should be based upon an analysis of a site's characteristics and influences. Buildings should be located to take best advantage of the site's natural topography, drainage, existing vegetation, orientation with regard to maximizing passive solar heating and cooling and related natural features whenever possible and in consideration of adjoining sites needs and context.

2. Infill Development - The compatibility of proposed "infill" (new development situated between older, existing structures) development should relate to the site's existing surroundings with regard to proportion, mass, scale, texture and color.

3. Circulation - Site design should minimize automobile and pedestrian conflicts and create parking areas that are as unobtrusive as possible. Efficient vehicular ingress, egress and through circulation is important for all development.

4. Commercial Development - Promote new development which provide quality business environments with adequate provisions for privacy, landscaping, signs, and compatible architectural solutions. The development should not detract from the character of the community in which it is located. Promote quality neighborhood commercial developments which address local critical design issues such as signs, architecture, parking and landscaping consistent with guidelines contained herein.

5. Industrial Development – Promote quality industrial development within the community's industrial areas with considerations for screening landscaping, signs, architecture, parking, lighting, and grading.

6. Residential Development – Support multi-family planned developments which avoid a sterile, monotonous environment while:

- maintaining a consistent internal design image;
- providing a maximum amount of open space;
- enhancing the landscaping of vehicular corridors by exceeding minimum landscape standards;
- being compatible with the context of existing, well designed, residential development.
- including passive solar orientation to maximize energy efficiency.

3. USE OF DESIGN GUIDELINES

A. APPLICABILITY

The Design Guidelines apply to all commercial, industrial (new and rehabilitation), and new multi-unit residential development located within the jurisdiction of the Redwood Valley Municipal Advisory Council (RVMAC) with the intent of informing the RVMAC and therefore the public. RVMAC will provide a space for non-binding public comment for neighbors to opine on neighborhood development issues.

Design Guidelines apply to all of the following:

- Grading and drainage (see Grading Ordinance for specific standards).
- Lighting.
- Parking and circulation areas.
- Signs (New and Copy changes).
- Exterior building alterations.
- Painting.
- Fences and walls.
- Landscaping.
- Energy Efficiency.

B. EXEMPTIONS FROM DESIGN GUIDELINES

- Demolition.
- All interior changes, alterations, and construction.
- Single family residences.
- Replacing materials and colors already approved in design review, including but not limited to: painting, siding, roofing materials, fencing, and landscaping.
- Federal, State, and County buildings.

4. COMMERCIAL DESIGN CRITERIA/GUIDELINES

A. GENERAL PRINCIPALS FOR ALL COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT

The following section provides numerous design suggestions related to the basic quality of commercial building architecture, color, and scale. This portion of the manual addresses each of these elements in general terms and establishes the basic principles and "paints the overall picture" for the design principles felt to be important in Redwood Valley. They should not be viewed as standing alone, but rather in concert with the more specific guidelines found in the subsequent sections of this document. Each guideline should be considered for how it applies to a given project.

1. Desirable Elements:

- richness of surface and texture
- significant wall articulation (insets, canopies, wing walls, dormers, etc.) multi-planed, pitched roofs
- roof overhangs regular or traditional window rhythm
- articulated mass and bulk
- interesting and articulated wall surfaces

2. Undesirable Elements:

- highly reflective surfaces
- large black, unarticulated wall surfaces
- unpainted concrete precision block walls
- reflective glass
- plastic siding
- irregular, modernistic window shapes and rhythm
- square "boxlike" buildings
- mix of unrelated styles (e.g. rustic wood shingles and polished chrome)

3. Height

Building heights should relate to open spaces to allow maximum sun and ventilation, protection from prevailing winds, enhance public views of surrounding rural hillsides and minimize obstruction of view from adjoining structures.

Height and scale of new development should be compatible with that of surrounding development. New development height should "transition" from the height of adjacent development to the maximum height of the proposed building.

4. Bulk

Large buildings which give the appearance of "square box" buildings are generally unattractive and detract from the overall scale of most buildings in Redwood Valley. There are several possible considerations which may reduce the appearance of excessive bulk in large buildings.

- Vary the planes of the exterior walls in depth and/or direction
- Vary the height of the buildings so that it appears to be divided into distinct massing elements.

- Articulate the different parts of a building's facade by use of color, arrangements of facade elements, or a change in materials

- Use landscaping and architectural detailing at the ground level to lessen the impact of an otherwise bulky building.

- Avoid blank walls at the ground floor level. Utilize windows, wall articulation, change in materials or other features.

5. Scale. For purposes here, Scale is the relationship between building size and the size of adjoining permanent structures. It is also how the proposed building's size relates to the size of a human being. Large scale building elements will appear imposing if they are situated in a visual environment of a smaller scale as is typical in Redwood Valley.
Suggestions for achieving these goals include:

- Building scale be reduced through window patterns, structural bays, roof overhangs, siding, awnings, moldings, fixtures, and details.

- The scale of buildings be carefully related to adjacent pedestrian areas, streets, and buildings.

- Large dominating buildings be broken up by: 1) landscape materials; 2) adding awnings, eaves, windows, or other architectural ornamentation; 3) creating horizontal emphasis; and 4) use of combinations of complementary colors.

- Utilize "infill" structures to create transitions in bulk and scale between large buildings and adjacent smaller buildings.

6. Color. Color can dramatically affect the visual appearance of buildings and must be carefully considered in relation to the overall design intent of the building. Color can also affect the apparent scale and proportion of buildings by highlighting architectural elements such as doors, windows, facades, cornices, lintels, and sills.

Much of the dominant color in Redwood Valley is derived from the primary building's finish materials such as brick, stone, wood, stucco, and terra cotta tile. Also dominant are earth tones which match these natural materials and the surrounding environment.

Suggestions for achieving a harmonious use of color include:

- The dominant color of new buildings relates to the inherent color of the primary building's finish materials.

- Avoid large areas of intense white color. While subdued colors usually work best as a dominant overall color, a bright trim color might be appropriate if it can be shown to enhance the nearby visual environment.

- The color palette chosen for a building should be compatible with the colors of adjacent buildings. An exception is where the colors of adjacent buildings strongly diverge from those included in these design guidelines.

- Where possible, minimize the number of colors appearing on the building exterior. Small commercial buildings should use no more than three colors.

- Excessively bright or neon colors are strongly discouraged as primary wall colors:

Accent Colors - Depending on the overall color scheme, an accent color may be effective in highlighting the dominant color by providing contrast or by harmonizing with the dominant color. Accent colors for trim should be used sparingly and be limited in number for each building. Accent colors on adjacent buildings should be chosen to complement one another.

B. ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN GUIDELINES

1. Exterior Walls

Buildings should be designed to avoid a simple "boxlike" structure. Horizontal or vertical wall articulation should be expressed through the use of full roofs, projecting wing walls, wall offsets, recessed entries, awnings, roof overhangs, second floor setbacks, or covered arcades.

The following materials are strongly discouraged as primary exterior wall materials:

- natural, unfinished concrete
- reflective glass
- plywood (painted or otherwise)
- imitation "rock work" veneers
- corrugated Fiberglass
- asphalt shingles
- illuminated sidings and awnings
- plastic laminate
- un-milled, bare aluminum
- painted white brick
- unpainted concrete block/precision block

Freestanding buildings should exhibit a minimum of a one to one "void to solid" ratio on at least one building façade with the recommendation that the storefront be at least 50% wall to 50% window or door opening, with the remaining wall articulated in some manner.

Strip retail commercial storefront construction should provide a minimum 60% open exposure to the street. This exposure can be achieved through the use of windows, glass doors, or open facades. Storefronts employing more than 40% solid, opaque wall are discouraged.

Unarticulated walls over 60' long are discouraged.

2. Roofs

The roofline at the top of the structure should not run in continuous plane for more than 100' without offsetting or jogging the roof plane. Nearly vertical roofs (A-frames) and piecemeal mansard roofs (used on a portion of the building perimeter only) are discouraged.

All roof top equipment should be screened from public view by screening materials of the same nature as the building's basic materials. Mechanical equipment should be located below the highest vertical element of the building.

The following roof materials are strongly discouraged:

- high contrast or brightly colored glazed tile
- highly reflective surfaces
- illuminated roofing

3. Awnings

General use of awnings along a row of contiguous buildings should be restricted to awnings of the same form and location. Color of the awnings should be consistent and a minimum eight-foot vertical clearance is required.

Signage on awnings is recommended to be painted on the awnings themselves and be attached to the awning's flap (variance) or to the end panels of angles, curved, or box awnings.

Plexiglas, metal, and glossy vinyl awnings are strongly discouraged. Canvas, treated canvas, matte finish vinyl, and fabric awnings are encouraged.

Internally lit awnings are highly discouraged.

C. SITE PLANNING

Placement of buildings should consider the existing built context of the commercial area, the location of incompatible land use, the location of major traffic generators as well as an analysis of a site's characteristics and particular influences.

1. General Design Principle

- Buildings should be sited in a manner that will complement the adjacent buildings. Building sites should be developed in a coordinated manner to provide order and diversity and avoid a jumbled, confused development.

- Whenever possible, new buildings should be clustered. This creates plazas or pedestrian malls and prevents long "barracks-like" rows of buildings. When clustering is impractical, a visual link should be established between buildings. This link can be accomplished through the use of an arcade system, trellis, or other open structure as well as landscaping.

- Locate buildings and on-site circulation systems to minimize pedestrian/vehicle conflicts where possible.

- Service areas should be located to the side or rear of the building. Service areas located in the front of the building are strongly discouraged.

- Service stations/vehicle repair facilities should be designed in the reverse or backup mode (reverse orientation). Reverse or backup mode requires that the service areas of these facilities be shielded from public view by orienting pump stations and service bay openings away from adjacent street(s).

- Recognize the importance of spaces between buildings as "outdoor rooms" on the site. Outdoor spaces should have clear, recognizable shapes that reflect careful planning and are not simply "left over" areas between buildings.

- Freestanding, singular commercial structures should be oriented with their major entry toward the street where access is provided, as well as having their major facade parallel to the street.

- Building and parking areas should be designed to conform with the natural terrain of the land to ensure that the least amount of site disturbance occurs. Parking areas should be located behind or to the side of buildings in order to allow for street facing buildings with direct pedestrian access to businesses.

- The spatial relationship of buildings should provide for and promote pedestrian access.

- New construction should provide for maximum energy efficiency that utilizes the principles of passive solar design, and also consider building orientation for future effective use of solar panels on roofs or other surfaces.

2. Setback Standards

To ensure the functional enhancement of major streets and safety of the traveling public as it pertains to adequate visibility, any building or structure should be located within the designated building setback of a major street as established by zoning, the building code, or road plan lines. Certain setbacks relating to septic tanks, leach fields, and wells can also affect design and should be considered.

Building setback lines are established by the Mendocino County Zoning Ordinance for front, side, and rear yard provisions depending on the particular use and its zoning designation.

3. Open Space

Open space for purposes of these design guidelines is considered the portion of the lot where there are no buildings, parking, or area included in required setbacks. These areas should either be fully landscaped or left to native vegetation.

4. Lighting

Maximum height for building and freestanding lighting should not exceed 14'.

If property is adjacent to a residential area or residentially zoned property, the lighting should be screened from these areas.

Down-lighting should be the acceptable norm and lighting should be directed away from adjacent roadways and should not interfere with traffic or create a safety hazard.

Upward lighting is highly discouraged, as it disrupts views of night skies.

5. Site Grading

Site grading must recognize existing drainage patterns, while functionally solving drainage problems that may exist or result from ground plane alterations during construction. Likewise, site grading should be sympathetic to existing land forms while providing appropriate transition of architectural elements to grade. Site grading should also provide for an uninterrupted flow of vehicular and pedestrian traffic through the development. The plan should direct and provide adequate flow of surface run-off to catch basins while gracefully contouring the land to blend with existing conditions at the boundaries of the site. Existing drainage patterns should not be altered. Abrupt transitions between existing topography and man-made cut/fill slopes are discouraged. The Mendocino County Grading Ordinance should be complied with prior to any on-site grading activities.

6. Parking Area Design

All parking spaces should be clearly and permanently outlined on the surface of the parking facility.

Handicapped parking stalls should be so located that a handicapped person is not compelled to wheel or walk behind parked cars other than their own. Also, the path of travel from the parking area to the building area for handicapped persons should not exceed a maximum slope of 1:12.

Up to thirty percent (30%) of all required parking stalls may be devoted to compact car use. Minimum stall dimensions should be 8’ in width and 16’ in length and marked for compact cars. Compact stalls should not be clustered with more than two stalls together.

Parking lot design should provide for connection to adjacent parcels where uses are compatible and said connection is practical.

Locate parking area to the sides and rear of buildings whenever possible.

Parking facilities should be designed in such a manner that any vehicle on the property will be able to maneuver as necessary so that it may exit from the property traveling in a forward direction.

Off-street parking facilities should be designed for ease of circulation within a project and so that a car within a facility will not have to enter a street to move from one location to any other location within the same parking facility.

Parking areas which accommodate a significant number of vehicles should be divided into a series of connected smaller lots. Landscaping and offsetting portions of the lot are effective in reducing the visual impact of a large amount of parking.

7. Fences

Fencing shall meet all requirements identified in Mendocino County Ordinance 20.152.015E, requiring a building permit for front-facing, view-obstructing fencing higher than 7 feet, and other requirements.

In Redwood Valley, the community benefits from views of the natural environment and habitat. Both businesses and residential property owners/users are strongly encouraged use non-view obstructing fences, or none at all, which is also beneficial to enable free movement of native wildlife. Walled developments are strongly discouraged, as they create sub-communities that do not identify with the larger community.

Property identified as environmentally sensitive, such as riparian/wetland habitat, may need fencing to identify and protect the sensitive areas. Such fencing should not preclude passage for wildlife.

Barbed wire is prohibited except as needed for agricultural operations.

The following fencing types are recommended:

- Hedges, such as hedge rows, trellis vines, berry bushes, and other native plants useful to wildlife. Close planting of certain shrubs and trees, such as pines and junipers, are discouraged due to their high flammability.

- Open, light metal-weave fencing mounted on pressure-treated posts (animal fencing), or open rail fencing.

- Open iron fencing, as long as top spikes are not employed, which can be harmful to migrating wildlife.

- Cedar or redwood, stained or unstained, especially when made non-view-obstructing by the use of hog wire inserts or other open work.

- Earthen berms with native trees and shrubs can act as sound barriers, rather than solid walls.

- Low stone or brick/masonry walls, especially when made non-view-obstructing with lumber or metal inserts.

- Other fencing types may be utilized, as coordinated with the above principles and the architecture of nearby, permitted structures.

- Plans for fencing along road ways should be carefully reviewed to ensure they don’t create a physical or visual hazard; and should be set back from the roadway as far as possible to enhance the open views and safety of pedestrian traffic.

8. Energy Efficiency

Effective January 1, 2020, under the new California Energy Commission requirements, residential builders must take one of two steps: make individual homes available with solar panels, or build a shared solar-power system serving a group of homes. Nonresidential buildings will use about 30 percent less energy due mainly to lighting upgrades.

Buildings should be sited and designed for maximum solar energy potential. Best attempts should be made to orient a pitched roof in a southerly direction with a minimum solar zone proportionate to the size of the building and/or its electrical energy needs.

Likewise, best attempts should be made to incorporate passive solar principles into the design of all new construction. These principles include:

- Orientation of windows and roof overhangs to allow winter sunlight in, and to shade summer sunlight.
- Landscaping, such as appropriately positioned deciduous shade trees and shrubs along southern and western side of buildings that assist in minimizing solar heating of the building.
- Use of "heat sinks" or heat retaining materials in floors and walls exposed to winter sun that also provide passive earth cooling in summer.
- Passive convection ventilation systems that assist cooling during summer months.
- Roof designs and materials that minimize solar gain as well as heat loss.
- Solar roof fans.

9. Signs

Signs are among the most noticeable visual elements of Redwood Valley's village and freeway environment. These signs communicate information about the businesses in the area and the nature and quality of the physical environment. Signs can enhance the aesthetic appearance of the physical community, and create a more powerful, pleasing and beneficial economic and business climate while preserving the scenic and natural beauty of the area. Signs should not create distractions to the vehicular viewer that may contribute to traffic accidents or visual pollution. An overabundance of signs creates a graphic overload which can results in visual confusion and can leave a negative impression about the area.

Well-designed signs contribute to the character of a building's façade while enlivening the streetscape, in addition to communicating information about goods and services of individual businesses.

A sign's direct communication provides business identity, the goods or services provided, and business location as a primary purpose. Indirect communication concerns image, character and quality of a business. A well-designed sign can reinforce the architectural style and historic period of the place of business and inform the reader of the type of business and business orientation.

This section presents general design principles that are intended to supplement Division I of the Mendocino County Code of Ordinances Chapter 20.184. It establishes positive criteria for the design of good signs and may enhance the intent of the existing ordinance by providing supplemental ideas of what can and should be done.

A good sign communicates well, is appropriate in its setting and is properly placed. Characteristics of good signs are incorporated in the following guidelines.

Communication.

The five design criteria to consider in good sign communication listed below should always be in balance to positively reinforce the visual environment and include: Words and Typefaces, Symbols, Proportion and Balance, Color and materials, and Illumination.

a) Words and Typefaces will communicate a sign's basic message, not merely attract attention. Sign messages should be brief and succinct, easy to read, clean and attractive. Each word should be evaluated and contribute directly to the basic message. Off-message words should be deleted, as should vulgar or hateful language. Words should convey primary information only, including identity, location, and goods and services offered. Use of telephone numbers is discouraged. Avoid hard-to-read or intricate typefaces which reduce the sign's ability to communicate. Avoid faddish or bizarre typefaces which in time may indicate a business has become dated and unfashionable.

b) Symbols include logos and pictographs. Well-known logos without accompanying words can identify a business using an initial or graphic symbol. If logos are well-known by the public, they are very effective communicators. Consider the pictograph symbol as a method of identifying goods and services, such as a picture of a key for a lock shop. Symbols transcend language problems but are not appropriate in all cases.

c) Proportion and Balance considers the relation of one element to another in terms of size, such as height to width, in the graphic layout of the sign. Balance considers the aesthetic relation of the design of one element to another. Narrow or oddly shaped signs can restrict the legibility of the message unless it is symbolic. Consider letter size in proportion to overall size. Large letters are not necessarily more legible than smaller ones. Letters should not occupy more than 75% of the sign panel area. Design signs as a harmonious element within the overall building design concept. Consider the area buildings such as a special shopping district, in creation of a sign that relates to the area.

d) Sign Colors and Materials should be selected to contribute to legibility and design integrity. Use significant contrast between the background and letter or symbol colors to create ease in reading. Avoid using too many colors on a sign which can overwhelm the viewer, competing for attention. The sign colors and materials should be planned in conjunction with the building and storefront design scheme. Sign should, where feasible, be made of wood.

e) Where Sign Illumination is required, lighting should be indirect, low key, and restricted to business hours only. The lighting should not create glare or reflection onto adjacent properties or public streets and no sign should be internally illuminated. Flashing or moving signs or lighting creating the effect of movement are discouraged. Illuminated

signs should be constructed that no light bulb, tube, filament or similar source of illumination is visible. Signs making use of stroboscopic light, rotary beacons, chasing or similar types of light to convey the effect of movement are discouraged, as are flashing, intermittent or variable intensity lighting. This does not apply to signs which convey information such as time, temperature, weather, or firehouse announcements. Freestanding signs should either have individually illuminated letters or be externally illuminated. Freestanding signs that are entirely illuminated are strongly discouraged. Use well-lighted store window displays where possible. Often the most effective illuminated signs are viewed in lighted store windows and interiors, which communicate immediately the type of activity, quality and attractiveness of a business. Such displays can reduce the need for additional expensive signs. Design lighted signs should be appropriate to the building on which it is placed, as an integral part of the building façade, appropriate to its nearby visual environment. Signs are an important part of creating the visual concept and attractive image of Redwood Valley.

The Placement of Signs

Sign placement affects how well a sign is read, gives a visual clue as to the business location, and affects the design integrity of an entire building. All on-sight signs should conform to all setback requirements of the zone in which it is located. The relation of the sign to the viewer will affect whether the sign will be seen. If a sign is intended to relate to a person in a moving car, it has different placement criteria than a sign intended to be viewed by a pedestrian. Smaller signs are better oriented to pedestrian viewers and read from a distance of 15 to 20 feet, while a vehicle-oriented sign is viewed from a much greater distance. The closer a sign's viewing distance, the smaller the sign needs to be. A free-standing sign detached from the main building should extend no higher than 15 feet above the adjacent public road.

Billboards

New construction of free-standing billboards is strongly discouraged as expressed by the Redwood Valley community, with the consideration such signs may contribute to visual pollution or create distractions to traffic. Wall signs that are attached or painted onto a building should extend no higher than the building roof line. Signs should be placed at or near the entrance to a building to indicate the most direct pedestrian access. The way signs relate to architectural element has a great impact on the character and image of a building. Avoid offensive or inappropriate signs which tend to dominate the architecture of the buildings they are intended to identify. Signs should be placed in a manner that is consistent to the proportions and scale of the building elements within a façade. In buildings that have a monolithic or plain façade, signs can establish or continue appropriate design rhythm, scale, and proportion, creating interest to the viewer.

10. Landscaping

These Guidelines encourage the development of a cohesive streetscape and a distinctive identity for the Redwood Valley town center. Appropriately placed trees and well-designed landscape features provide a sense of enclosure, promote traffic-calming, and significantly improve the pedestrian experience along East Road and School Way. Landscaping and street trees provide a visual and sound buffer from traffic for buildings located along the street corridor. Additionally, landscaping can provide a natural filtration system for storm water, effectively reducing runoff.

High canopy trees such as oak or redwood are native to the area and highly encouraged on all parcels adjacent to town center.

High canopy trees will provide shade and a sense of enclosure, while allowing clear visibility for adjacent businesses. Trees can be limbed up as they grow to 15 feet above the ground, for fire prevention safety hardening. Vegetation should be maintained and pruned regularly to reduce ladder fuels that have the potential to spread wildfire from the valley floor into the tree canopy. In the town center, street trees should be placed approximately 25 to 35 feet apart, and as close as practical to the roadways. Native and naturalized, low-maintenance, fire-resistant plantings are highly recommended on all parcels adjacent to East Road and School Way in locations that are not appropriate for the placement of street trees. A list of fire-resistant native plants can be found at the California Native Plant List at the following website:
http://firesafesdcounty.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/Comprehensive-Fire-Resistant-Plant-List.pdf

Map produced by the Mendocino County Planning Dept., November 2025
Parcel Data: Mendocino County IT Division, February 2025
Aerial Imagery: ArcGIS Online mosaic
Topographic Data: USGS 7.5 minute quad series
Parcel numbers are for tax purposes only and do not represent legal or salable parcels.

REDWOOD VALLEY MAC BOUNDARY

N W E S

THIS MAP AND DATA ARE PROVIDED WITHOUT WARRANTY OF ANY KIND
DO NOT USE THIS MAP TO DETERMINE LEGAL PROPERTY BOUNDARIES