

# **BENNETT VALLEY AREA PLAN**

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## INTRODUCTION

In 1979, the County adopted the Bennett Valley Specific Plan, a planning document prepared under specific requirements of State law and intended to provide an intermediate level of detail between the 1978 General Plan and site development plans submitted to the County for approval. The 1978 General Plan focused on policies of county-wide significance and utilized generalized graphics to illustrate land use, open space and other elements.

In 1989, the County adopted an update of the 1978 General Plan. The General Plan update provided parcel-specific information concerning land use and open space. The General Plan update also included "area policies" in an attempt to focus particular attention on a specific area or parcel. Because of this level of specificity in the general plan update, the Board of Supervisors determined that several of the specific plans, including the Bennett Valley Specific Plan, were either duplicative or conflicted with the updated General Plan. The Board of Supervisors further determined that to the extent the specific plans provided policy guidance beyond that provided by the General Plan update, that such plans should be reviewed and revised to focus on such policies, and readopted as "area plans." The General Plan includes a discussion of these specific plans in Land Use Element Section 2.1.1., under Policy LU-1a.

The document was prepared pursuant to General Plan Policy LU-1a.

In keeping with the above intent, the 1993 revisions of the Bennett Valley Area Plan did not include exhaustive evaluation or reconsideration of the policies or designations contained in this plan. The scope of the revisions was limited to that necessary to achieve General Plan consistency.

In addition, during this process much of the original background language was deleted. This deletion should not be interpreted as diminishing or reducing the significance of the content of the language to the original plan. Should there be any future questions regarding the intent or basis of the policies in the revised plan, the Planning Department shall keep copies of the original plan on file for reference.

## SUMMARY

Located on the southeastern border of the City of Santa Rosa, the 15,500 acre Bennett Valley Study district was established by the Board of Supervisors in 1977 in response to local resident concern about the impacts of residential development.

The eleven-person Citizens Committee, appointed by the Board of Supervisors to provide a policy framework for the 1978 plan, set as its goals provision of residential opportunities and the protection of agriculture while retaining the rural character in Bennett Valley.

The Bennett Valley Area Plan is guided by goals, objectives and policy framework of the adopted Sonoma County General Plan. Four major land use categories are used in the Bennett Valley Plan to achieve the desired balance of residential and agricultural use:

- (1) Rural Residential acknowledges residential development as the primary land use, but supports the retention of open space through density regulation, primarily to minimize public hazards.
- (2) Diverse Agriculture encourages the use of the land for agriculture by retaining larger parcels and clustering residential units on smaller parcels.
- (3) Land Intensive Agriculture recognizes agriculture as the primary land use. Dwellings are permitted to support the agricultural operation.
- (4) The Resources and Rural Development category supports agricultural and conservation uses and recognizes public safety hazards.

With the Land Use Map, the Bennett Valley Area Plan integrates a Critical Open Space Plan, a set of Development Guidelines, and implementation tools. The Critical Open Space Plan establishes visual and riparian corridors within which the development is prohibited except in special cases. The Critical Open Space Plan also designates scenic landscape units, unique biotic features and critical habitats. The Development Guidelines establish a policy of design review for all new structures in the Plan Area and recommend building and planting materials compatible with the landscape units of Bennett Valley. Other recommended implementation techniques include trust funds, assessment districts, open space easements and trusts, and special studies.

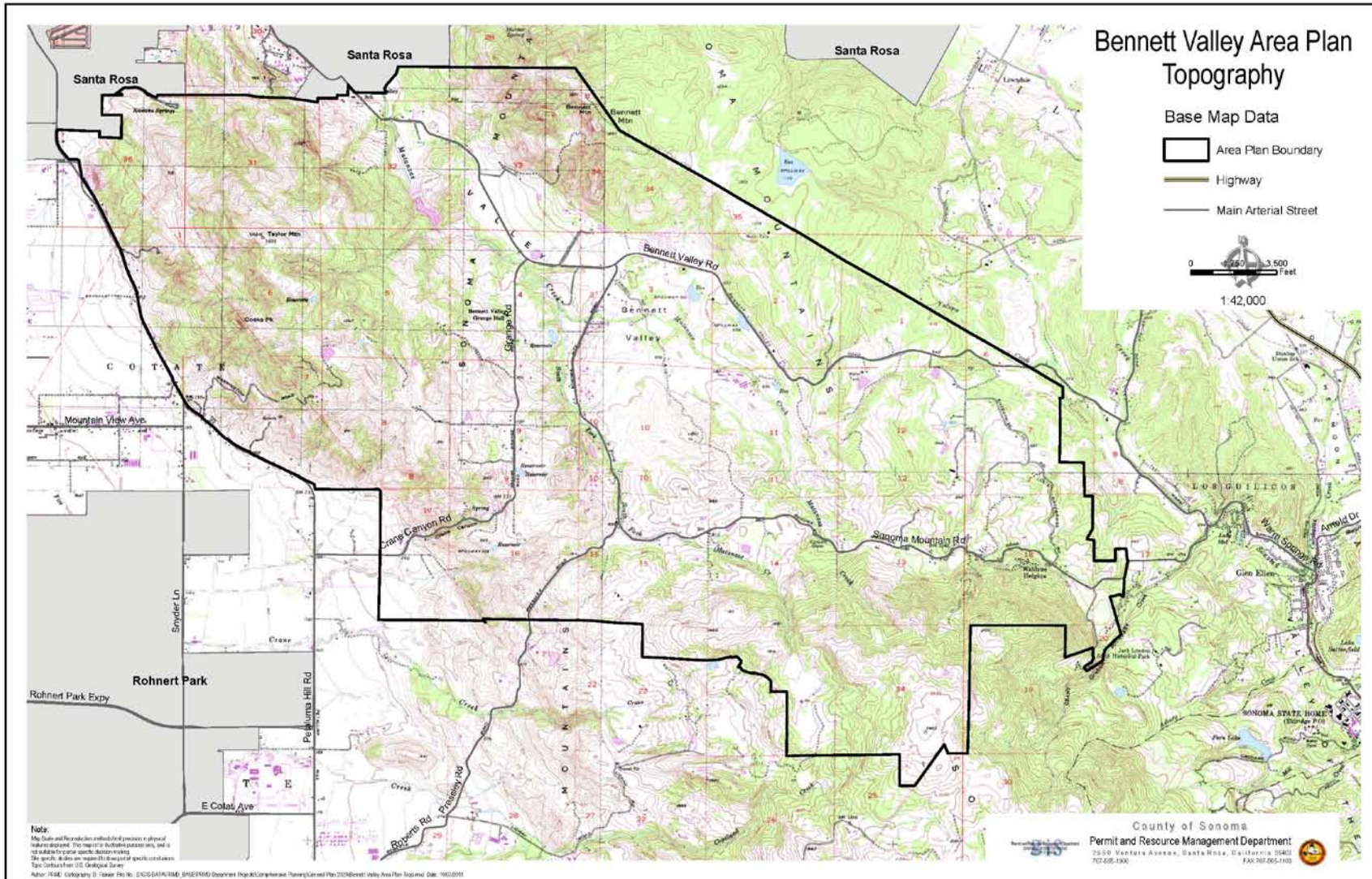
## **DESCRIPTION OF BENNETT VALLEY**

Bennett Valley is located just southeast of the city of Santa Rosa in the County of Sonoma, known as the North Bay Region (see Location Map). Between the mountain backdrops and the valley floors lie rolling upland hills: Taylor Mountain, Bennett Mountain and the Sonoma Mountains ring the triangular shaped valley, which is drained by Matanzas Creek, a tributary of Santa Rosa Creek (see Topography Map).

## Map - Location Map



### Map 3 Bennett Valley Area Plan Topography





## **GOALS AND POLICIES**

Two major goals define the Bennett Valley Area Plan: (1) to retain and enhance the rural character, and (2) to reflect the environmental and economic constraints, suitabilities and sensitivities of the area in the determination of the location and intensity of development. The following policies were endorsed by the committee to achieve these goals:

### **I. LAND USE**

Low density is important to maintain the rural character of Bennett Valley.

- (1) Residential densities shall reflect the extent of constraints, suitabilities and sensitivities of the area.
- (2) Commercial development is not considered appropriate to the rural character of Bennett Valley.
- (3) Development shall be coordinated with the public's ability to provide schools, fire, police and other needed services.
- (4) To minimize environmental disruption, the County Subdivision Ordinance shall be the minimum standards applied for grading, road construction, drainage, driveway construction, siting, landscaping and energy. Where development standards included in Bennett Valley Plan exceed County Subdivision Standards, the Bennett Valley Standards shall apply.
- (5) New development throughout Bennett Valley shall be reviewed for site design and consistency with Bennett Valley development guidelines.
- (6) Cluster development should be encouraged.

### **II. HOUSING**

- (1) When methods of on-site sewage disposal permit the accommodation of multiple-family dwellings, such dwellings should be considered to satisfy the need for lower cost housing. Multiple-family dwellings should be designed to appear to be single-family dwellings and surrounded by open space.
- (2) Agricultural employee housing should be encouraged.

### **III. CONSERVATION (Resources)**

- (1) Agriculture is a vital component of the rural character and shall be encouraged and protected.
  - a. Parcel sizes and future land division shall be consistent with economic productivity of potential and existing agriculture.
  - b. Board of Supervisors should reassess County policies implementing the Land Conservation Act to assure that they meet current needs of farmers.
- (2) Unique scenic, visually and environmentally sensitive, and historic resources are important to the character of Bennett Valley and shall be protected.
- (3) Water is a valuable and necessary resource which should be protected.
  - a. Residential densities shall reflect net safe yield of groundwater.
  - b. County Subdivision standards for areas designated as Marginal Water Availability (Groundwater Availability Map) shall be followed in Bennett Valley.
  - c. Mutual water systems should be authorized for major subdivisions only where supplies are adequate to serve existing and projected growth for the life of the system.
  - d. On existing but undeveloped lots, proof of water shall be required prior to issuance of a building permit.

### **IV. OPEN SPACE**

A feeling of Open Space is a vital component of rural character in Bennett Valley. Where the standards below are less restrictive than the General Plan standards, compliance with the General Plan standards is required.

- (1) Open vistas shall be protected.
- (2) Development patterns and specific development shall be in harmony with natural surroundings, including, but not limited to topography and vegetation.
  - a. Skyline development shall be prohibited.
  - b. Planting of native vegetation should be encouraged to screen existing development from the road.

- (3) A scenic corridor shall be established to protect views from the road and the community should be encouraged to undertake tree-planting programs where appropriate along scenic corridors.

## **V. PUBLIC SAFETY**

- (1) Residential development shall occur in the least constrained, most suitable areas.
  - a. Parcels within the Alquist-Priolo Zone or in geologically unstable areas shall be developed only at very low densities. Siting and foundation design of all structures in these areas shall comply with the General Plan Public Safety Element.
  - b. Structures shall be located outside of the flood inundation area.
- (2) Understanding that fire could destroy the rural character of Bennett Valley and present hazard of life and property.
  - a. New dwellings should utilize fire-resistant materials.
  - b. Roof overhangs shall be designed for fire resistance.
  - c. Densities should be reflective of degree or fire hazard as determined by fire department response time.
  - d. Site landscaping shall be managed to limit fire hazard around structures.

## **VI. CIRCULATION**

The character of the road system is a vital component of rural character of Bennett Valley.

- (1) The character of the existing public road system shall be retained. Improvements should be made in the interest of safety.
- (2) Development shall be sited with minimum impact on the view from the road.
- (3) Intensity of land use shall reflect the conditions character and capacity of roads.

## **VII. SCENIC CORRIDORS**

The scenic quality of all transportation routes within Bennett Valley is a vital component of the rural character, and shall be protected.

## **VIII. PUBLIC SERVICES**

- (1) Trust funds shall be considered to finance road construction and maintenance for public roads which are determined to be inadequate for proposed development.
- (2) School impact fees shall be considered to finance school construction and/or classroom construction when public schools are determined to be inadequate for proposed development.

## **IX. TRANSPORTATION**

Petaluma Hill Road, Bennett Valley Road and Grange/Crane Canyon Roads are two lane rural scenic roadways. Sonoma Mountain Road, Pressley and Enterprise Road, which complete the internal circulation system within Bennett Valley, are one lane rural scenic byways. Petaluma Hill Road is classified as a Rural Minor Arterial; Bennett Valley Road and Grange/Crane Canyon Roads as Rural Major Collectors; and Sonoma Mountain, Pressley and Enterprise Roads as Local Roads. The guiding priority is to retain their basic rural character. The following recommendations from the General Plan Circulation and Transit Element are standards for the roads in Bennett Valley:

- (1) All roads should receive maintenance and hazard correction as the need arises.
- (2) All roads may in some case need to be upgraded because of safety or structural deficiencies. Proposals for major safety upgrades should be thoroughly reviewed before specific projects are undertaken, including citizen review.
- (3) All roads should be retained in their basic rural character.
- (4) Petaluma Hill Road is designated for 3 lanes where necessary to provide access from side streets, driveways, etc.

## **LAND USE AND CRITICAL OPEN SPACE PLAN**

The Bennett Valley Area Plan is consistent with the County General Plan. It was the intention of the General Plan to assign densities to properties in this plan area which allowed the same number of residences as provided by the "PA Table" zoning in the 1979 plan.

Rural Residential (5 acre) category is characterized by residential development which precludes commercial agriculture, resource production or commercial development.

Diverse Agriculture describes the category where preservation of agriculture and agriculture potential is the highest priority but is complicated by the number of smaller residential parcels.

Land Intensive Agriculture is a category which reflects the existing and potential intensive agricultural land use. Residential development is related to the agricultural economy and can include farm labor housing as well as single-family residences. Residential density is low in this area.

Resources and Rural Development category is characterized by low level of human activity. It includes mountainous areas and other open space and agriculture.

The Bennett Valley Area Plan contains a Land Use Plan Map and Critical Open Space Plan Map.

## **MITIGATION MEASURES**

The following section of this report discusses the rationale for the Land Use designations in this plan. While the Zoning Ordinance provides a tool for implementing land use decisions, additional tools are needed to mitigate adverse impacts that might occur with the proposed land use. The list below gives mitigation measures which respond to specific impacts. At the conclusion of each subarea analysis, the pertinent mitigating measures have been noted.

### **A. FOR GEOLOGIC HAZARDS**

- (1) Retain very low density.
- (2) Site structure and design foundation in accord with recommendations of an engineering geologist.

### **B. FOR FLOOD HAZARDS**

- (1) Prohibit residential structures within designated inundation area as mapped on Critical Open Space Plan.

### **C. FOR WATER AVAILABILITY**

- (1) Encourage Board of Supervisors to authorize a monitoring of groundwater supplies in Bennett Valley.
- (2) Encourage Mutual Water Systems only when consistent with Policy PF-1h of the General Plan.

### **D. FOR FIRE HAZARD**

- (1) Retain low densities.
- (2) Encourage major subdivisions with mutual water systems and require adequate access for fire suppression equipment.
- (3) Where minor subdivision occurs, encourage cluster development with adequate water supply and access for fire suppression.
- (4) Clear wildland grass and brush near associated structures

### **E. TO MAINTAIN VISUAL AMENITY**

The Critical Open Space Plan Map shows designated open space areas. Where the following standards are less restrictive than General Plan standards, compliance with General Plan standards is required.

- (1) Avoid skyline development.
- (2) Site and design structures in harmony with natural surroundings.
- (3) Prohibit structures in visual/scenic corridors as mapped on the Critical Open Space Plan.
- (4) Prohibit structures in visual corridors as mapped on the Critical Open Space Plan.
- (5) Apply the Bennett Valley Design Guidelines.
- (6) Development in scenic landscape units shall comply with the General Plan and Zoning Ordinance.

#### **F. TO MAINTAIN VALUABLE OPEN SPACE**

The Critical Open Space Plan Map shows designated open space areas. Where the above standards are less restrictive than General Plan standards, compliance with General Plan standards is required.

- (1) Prohibit structures in riparian corridors and unique biotic features as mapped in the Critical Open Space Plan.
- (2) Site and design structures in harmony with natural surroundings.

#### **G. TO PRESERVE AND PROTECT AGRICULTURE**

- (1) Encourage utilization of Land Conservation Act of 1965 as amended.
- (2) Retain appropriately low densities.

#### **H. TO AVOID INCREASING HAZARD ON INADEQUATE ROADS**

- (1) Retain low density until road upgraded.
- (2) Encourage road trust funds to maintain establishment of and improve roads consistent with the transportation policy.

## **I. TO ASSESS IMPACTS OF PROJECTS ON PUBLIC SERVICES**

- (1) To assess adequately the cumulative impact of individual projects on the public services of the area, plans for any major or minor subdivision or rezoning should reflect the ultimate potential buildout of that project.

## **SUBAREA MITIGATION MEASURES**

To facilitate the analysis of a large and variable study district, the Bennett Valley area is divided into fifteen subareas as shown on the Subareas Map. Each subarea below is followed by a list of mitigation measures applicable therein.

- A. Kawana Springs Road: C-1, 2; E-1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7; F-1, 2; I-1
- B. Taylor Mountain: A-1, 2; B-1; D-1, 2, 3, 4; E-1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7; F-1, 2; G-1, 2; I-1
- C. Petaluma Hill Road/Warrington Road Area: A-1, 2; D-1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7; E-1, 2, 3, 4; F-1, 2; I-1
- D. Crane Canyon/Alta Monte Area: A-1, 2; C-1, 2; D-1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7; E-1, 2, 3, 4; F-1, 2; I-1
- E. Grange Road below Bennett Valley Road to Perracca and including Guenza: D-1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7; E-1, 2, 3, 4; H-1, 2; I-1
- F. Sonoma Mountain Road, North-South Alignment: C-1, 2; E-1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7; I-1
- G. Bennett Valley Road Adjacent to Matanzas Dam: A-2; B-1; D-1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7; E-1, 2, 3, 4; F-1, 2; G-1; I-1
- H. Valley Floor, Bennett Road: E-1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7; F-1, 2; G-1, 2; I-1
- I. Bennett Mountain: A-1, 2; D-1, 2, 3, 4; E-1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7; F-1, 2; G-1, 2; I-1
- J. Jamison Road Extension: A-1, 2; C-1, 2; D-1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7; E-1, 2, 3, 4; F-1, 2; G-1, 2; H-1, 2; I-1
- K. Lower Grange Road, Pressley Road and Sonoma Mountain East-West Alignment: A-1, 2; C-1, 2; D-1, 2, 3, 4; E-1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7; F-1, 2; G-1, 2; H-1, 2; I-1
- L. Sonoma Mountain Road East-West Alignment: A-1, 2; C-1, 2; D-1, 2, 3, 4; E-1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7; F-1, 2; G-1, 2; H-1, 2; I-1

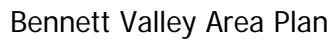


Open Land Between Bennett Valley Road and Sonoma Mountain Road (West of Enterprise): A-2; C-1, 2; D-1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7; E-1, 2, 3, 4; F-1, 2; G-1, 2; H-1, 2; I-1

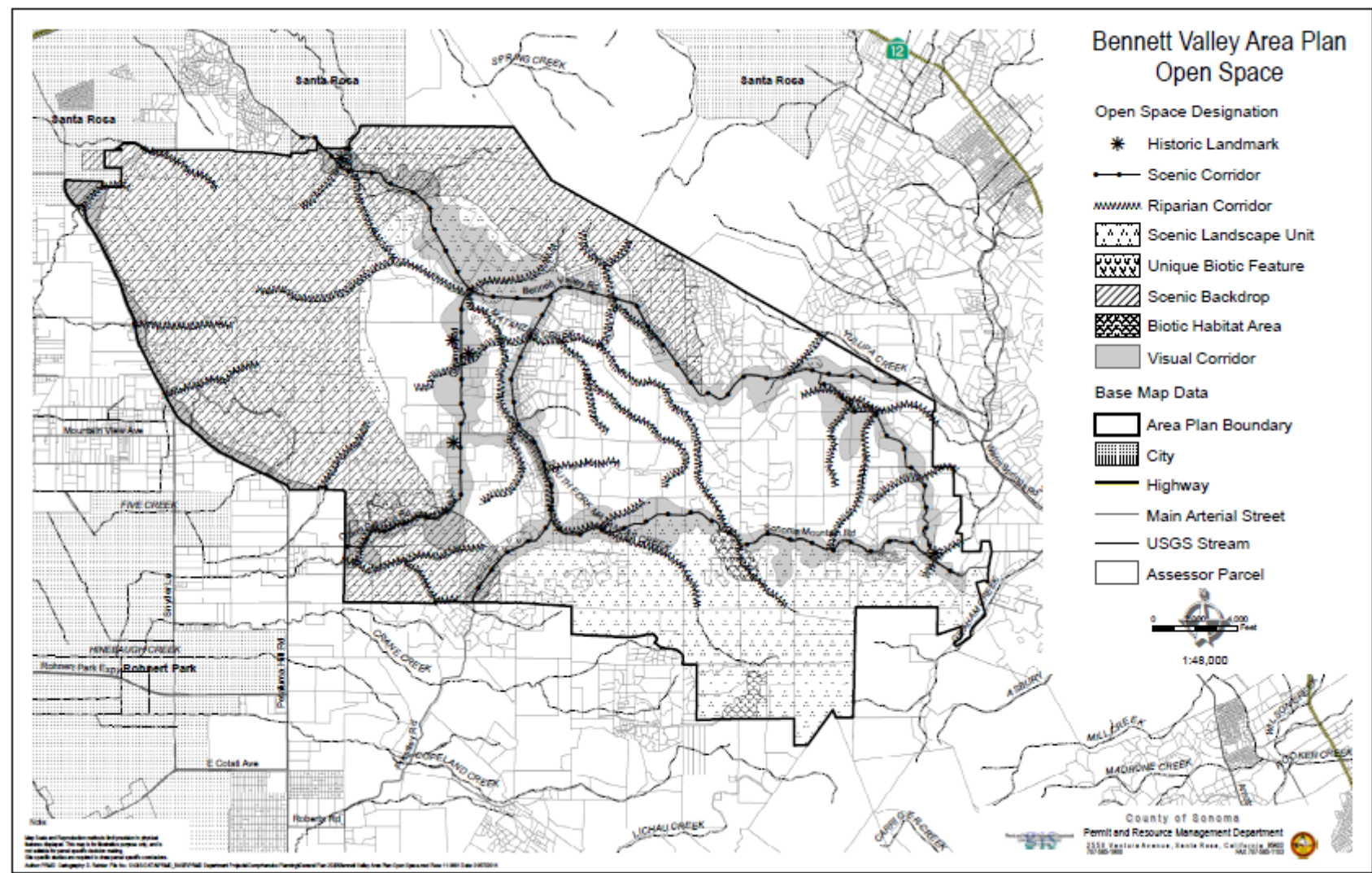
M. Enterprise Road Area: D-1, 2, 3, 4; E-1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7; F-1, 2; G-1, 2; H-1, 2; I-1

N. Bennett Ridge: A-2; C-2; D-1, 2, 3, 4; E-1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7; H-1; I-1

# Bennett Valley Area Plan

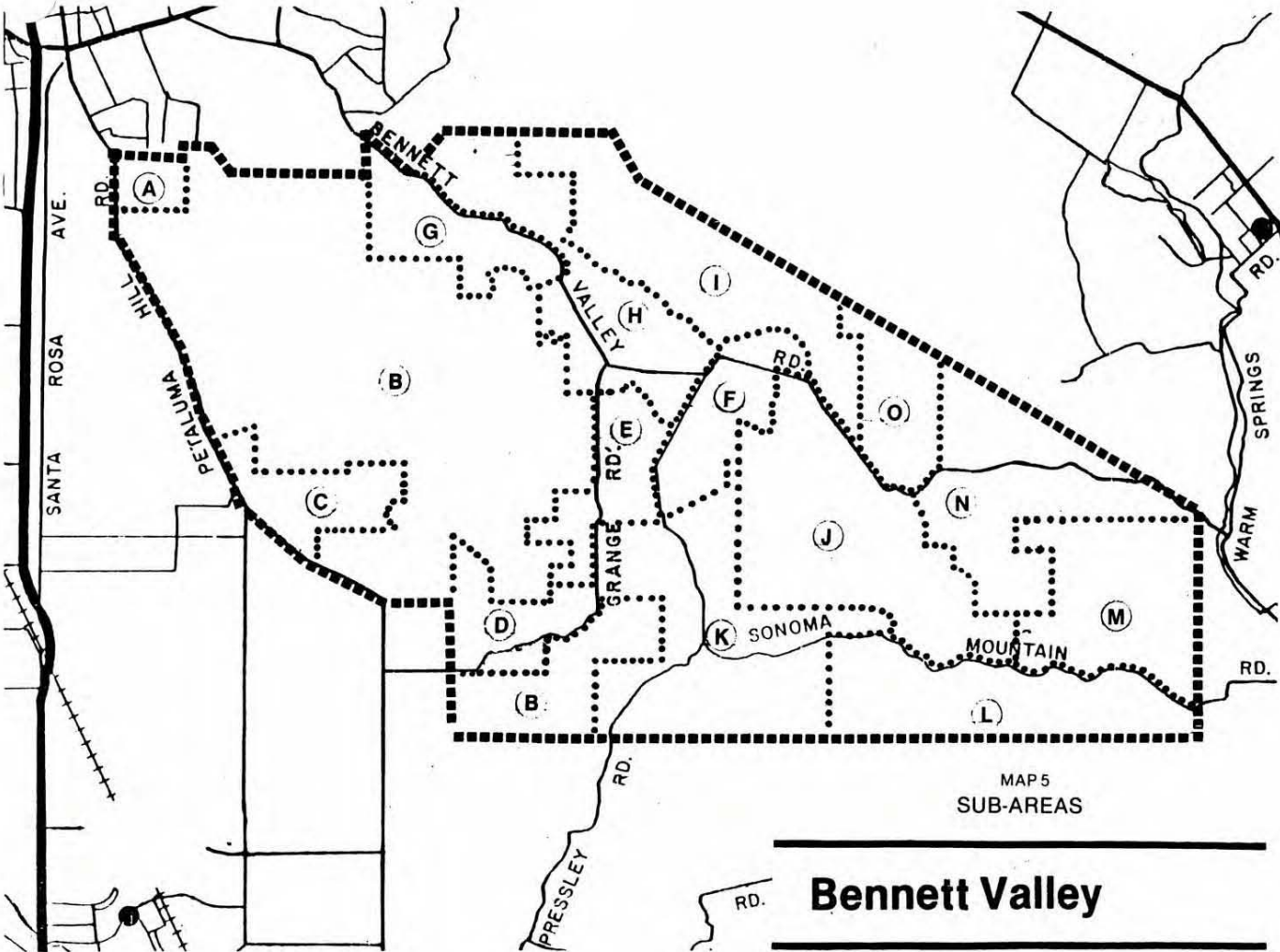


Map - Bennett Valley Area Plan Open Space Map





Map - Bennett Valley Area Plan Sub Areas



## **PLAN IMPLEMENTATION TOOLS**

Mechanisms in addition to zoning are needed to achieve the desired goals of a Land Use Plan. The mitigations specifically related to the subarea analysis are some of the implementation measures. Specific standards for development will also implement the goals and policies of this Plan. The following section addresses Development Guidelines, Public Service Standards, other techniques and Development Staging.

# **BENNETT VALLEY DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES**

## **DESIGN REVIEW COMMITTEE**

To insure the adherence to the goals and policies set forth in this study, the Board of Supervisors should establish a Design Review Committee to advise the County regarding development within the Bennett Valley study area. All properties depicted on the Area Subject to Design Review Map shall be subject to these guidelines. However, properties outside of the Bennett Valley Area Plan boundary shall not be subject to other goals, policies and implementation measures set forth in this Area Plan.

- (1) The Bennett Valley/North Sonoma Mountain Design Review Committee shall consist of seven (7) members who shall be residents of the Area Subject to Design Review as depicted on Figure B. Members shall be appointed by the Board of Supervisors which shall take into consideration expertise in architecture, landscape architecture, site planning, engineering or other similar fields.
- (2) All meetings of the Bennett Valley/North Sonoma Mountain Design Review Committee shall be open to the public, and interested Bennett Valley/North Sonoma Mountain area residents shall be encouraged to attend sessions.
- (3) The Bennett Valley/North Sonoma Mountain Design Review Committee shall review the siting and design of subdivisions and single-family dwellings within the area depicted on Figure A except that after the Committee has reviewed a subdivision, individual single-family dwellings within that subdivision need not be reviewed a second time.
- (4) Advisory decisions by the Bennett Valley/North Sonoma Mountain Design Review Committee shall be made in writing to the Planning Director.
- (5) The following findings shall be made for any project recommended for approval by the Committee or ultimately approved by the Planning Director.
  - a. That the site is adequate in size and shape to accommodate the proposed use.
  - b. That private streets and driveways, both existing and proposed, are properly designed and located to carry the type and quantity of traffic generated by the proposed use and to minimize visual impact.
  - c. That approval of the proposed use at the proposed site will have no significant adverse effect on adjacent property.
  - d. That the proposed use is consistent with the County General Plan, and where applicable, the Bennett Valley Area Plan.

- e. That the minimum requirements are met with respect to:
  - i. Visual/scenic corridor, riparian corridor, scenic landscape unit and critical habitat and unique biotic feature setbacks.
  - ii. Height and location of fences and walls.
  - iii. Controlling erosion and screening structures with landscaping.
  - iv. Other conditions to insure conformity with the intent and purpose of this plan, where applicable.

If the Design Review Committee recommendation results in staff refusal to sign off the building permit, an applicant may appeal in the same manner provided for in Chapter 26 of the Sonoma County Code.

## **STANDARDS - APPLICATION**

Review of any proposed development should consider each of the standards described below. Each standard should be applied to the maximum extent feasible, recognizing that in some cases these standards when applied to a particular project may be contradictory. General Plan policies shall apply where the development guidelines conflict with the General Plan. The Design Review Committee should consider the total impact of the project in determining the extent to which each standard should be applied.

- (1) It is the policy of this study to preserve the natural state of the land and vegetation.
- (2) Structures shall blend with the existing landscape and vegetation to the maximum feasible extent. Therefore, minimum setbacks shall be consistent with the Sonoma County Subdivision Ordinance, the General Plan, or where applicable, with the adopted Bennett Valley Area Plan, whichever is more restrictive. No new structure shall be sited within visual/scenic corridors, riparian corridors or unique biotic resource areas as designated on the Critical Open Space Plan Map of the Bennett Valley Area Plan, where applicable, except in the visual/scenic corridor where the entire parcel is included within such designation or except in the visual/scenic corridor where said structure is a fence or agricultural appurtenance. Where the entire parcel is included in a visual/scenic corridor area, or where said structure is an agricultural appurtenance greater than 200 sq. ft., the Bennett Valley/North Sonoma Mountain Design Review Committee shall condition the approval of such structure(s) to mitigate adverse effects to the open space resource. In considering mitigation measures on agricultural appurtenances, the Design Review Committee will give priority to the needs of productive agriculture. A fence or agricultural appurtenance less than 200 square feet is permitted without design review.

- (3) Site plans shall be presented to the Bennett Valley/North Sonoma Mountain Design Review Committee including:
  - a. An existing topographic map
  - b. An existing vegetation plan
  - c. Photographs of the site from four (4) directions
  - d. A proposed grading plan (if any)
  - e. A proposed landscape plan
  - f. A plan showing siting, bulk, design, color and materials of structures.
- (4) Approval of plans for new structures shall consider the relationships of the site.
- (5) All new structures shall be sited so that they harmonize with the natural surroundings, including but not limited to topography and vegetation; specifically
  - a. Roof lines shall follow established lines of land and/or tree forms;
  - b. Existing vegetation and landforms shall be utilized to screen structures from public view.
- (6) New structures should be sited to take advantage of solar energy where that siting does not conflict with the public view.
- (7) Structures shall utilize color, texture and materials that blend harmoniously with surrounding landscape. The following are recommended for harmonious development:
  - a. Materials: natural wood siding or shingles and natural stone for exteriors;
  - b. Colors: earth tone;
  - c. Roofing: fire resistant but dark toned if visible;
  - d. Roofline: considered in relationship to the total composition of structure with landscape.
- (8) Utilities shall be placed underground from source point, unless masked by existing vegetation.
- (9) Project outdoor lighting shall comply with the outdoor lighting policies of the General Plan Open Space and Resource Conservation Element.
- (10) Existing structures shall be encouraged to comply with the standards for new structures as they undergo remodeling and maintenance.
- (11) Existing neighborhoods shall be encouraged to undertake tree planting and landscaping programs to screen existing development from public view and to increase the privacy, comfort and habitability of the neighborhood (Chart 1).



**Chart 1 SOIL PLANTING MATRIX**

PLANTING CHOICES	MAJOR SOIL GROUPINGS IN BENNETT VALLEY					
		A	C	D	E	G
A. Choice of plants NOT LIMITED BY SOILS. Soils are deep through very deep, moderately coarse through medium textured, moderately well through well drained, moderately rapidly through moderately slowly permeable. (Soils in this group can have slight salinity or alkalinity).	Akc Bof Cca Ccb DbE GgE GgG	x x    x x	 x x x			
C. Choice of plants LIMITED BY FINE TEXTURES. Soils are deep through very deep, moderately fine through fine textured, moderately well drained, moderately slowly through slowly permeable.	GID GIE GIF GoF HcC			    x		x x x x
D. Choice of plants LIMITED BY VERY SLOWLY PERMEABLE (CLAYPAN) SUBSOILS. Soils are moderately well drained, with slow or very slow subsoil permeability.	HcD LaC LaD LuA	 x x x		 x		
E. Choice of plants LIMITED BY WETNESS. Soils are somewhat poorly through very poorly drained. (Drained soil phases will be placed in appropriate group according to their current drainage status. Slight salinity and/or alkalinity may be present).	LvB MbC PeC Phb PIC PsC	x x x x x		   x x		
G. Choice of plants LIMITED BY DEPTH. Soils are shallow through moderately deep, well drained, over hardpan, bedrock, or other unfractured reuse material.	RaC RaD RaE RnA SkC SkE SkF ToE TuE YsA ZaA ZaB	        x x x	x x x	   x x x	  x	     x x

## **PUBLIC SERVICE STANDARDS**

To maintain present standards for the schools, redistricting the elementary school boundary to take advantage of Bellevue Union's declining enrollment, relieve Bennett Valley Union's overcrowding and converting bus service to a self-supporting entity by requiring a fare should be considered.

The cumulative impact of additional development on the school system should be completely analyzed in the consideration of major and minor subdivisions and rezonings.

The Sheriff's Department foresees no need to expand facilities as a result of increased development. The Fire Department, however, will require at least an additional pumper and another firefighter. The present revenue base is not sufficient to provide the additional equipment and staff will not be funded. Other revenue sources will need to be sought.

At the densities proposed, the capacity of the roads should not be exceeded. Improvements to roads other than safety and maintenance will occur if, and only if supported by the local residents, and if designated in the General Plan Circulation and Transit Element. If road improvements are desired, funding will be generated by development fees, trust funds, state and federal government funding, or combination of these. In the case of conflict of policies of standards between the Bennett Valley Area Plan and the General Plan, the more restrictive policies or standards shall apply.

If tax revenues are insufficient to support present public service standards for future development, and if the public wishes to maintain these standards, alternative sources of funding must be generated. Both Trust Funds and Assessment Districts can be used to provide fund for schools, fire departments, roads and landscaping.

Trust Funds are a one-time assessment that can be established by the Board of Supervisors without a vote of the people. They are not expensive to administer and they place the fiscal burden on new development. Trust Funds are most appropriate for providing for one time capital expenditures.

The following procedure should be utilized to implement road trust funds:

- (1) Determine condition of roads.
- (2) Determine minimum facility that would be required by development allowed in Land Use Plan and compute cost of facility.
- (3) Develop a factor for a County share of road costs based on factors such as through traffic and typical maintenance costs before development.
- (4) Assess a per lot fee based on total construction costs minus county share of such costs, divided by the number of potential building sites.
- (5) Lot fee would be due and payable at the time of lot sale (lots in excess of 100 acres would be exempt).

Assessment Districts also generate revenues. They are taxing jurisdictions established for a particular purpose by a two-thirds vote of the residents involved. They are both expensive and difficult to establish particularly with the new taxation requirements of Jarvis-Gann, and place the burden of the assessment on the entire district, rather than the new development. Assessment Districts are continual sources of funds which can provide for ongoing operational expenditures.

Provision of permanent Open Space is a major objective of this plan. The Land Conservation Act of 1967 as amended provides a property incentive for Open Space Easements, if the County makes the findings that the preservation of the land as open space is consistent with the General Plan and is in the best interests of the County.

Permanently dedicated Open Space can also be preserved and qualify for income and estate tax benefits if the landowner deeds development rights or property to the Sonoma Land Trust.

Where land is not voluntarily restricted from development, preservation of other unique resources is complex. Sensitive archaeologic sites and biotic communities could be irreversibly damaged if adequate precautions are not exercised. Specific designation of such sensitive areas might result in their destruction; thus, in concert with County policy, sensitive archaeologic and biotic sites are mapped in a generalized way. Any development proposals that fall in one of the mapped locations will be referred to the appropriate experts for further investigation and mitigation as part of the project level CEQA review.