



City of Sonoma

2020 GENERAL PLAN

Prepared by:

City of Sonoma
Crawford Multari & Clark Associates
Strategic Economics
Crane Transportation Group
Illingworth & Rodkin

October 2006

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CONTENT AND PURPOSE

This 2020 General Plan is the fifth adopted by the City of Sonoma since its first general plan in 1964. Each of these, adopted in roughly ten-year intervals, has had a different scope and focus, but one quality has remained consistent: these plans have represented the collective vision of the community and expressed its desire to preserve and improve upon the essential characteristics that define Sonoma.

In the decades since Sonoma’s first general plan, State requirements for what must be included have changed dramatically, and community expectations have grown, leading to extensive citizen involvement and a sense of ownership in the plan. That pride of participation has translated into significant support for the policy direction embodied by the plan, upon

which City decision makers rely for effective implementation of plan objectives.

State law mandates much of what must be covered in a general plan, but allows the City considerable latitude to add elements and determine plan format (see Table CP-1). At a minimum, every general plan must address the following “elements”:

Land Use—designating the general distribution and intensity of land uses, including housing, business, industry, open space, education, and public facilities.

Circulation—identifying the general location and nature of existing and proposed highways, arterial and collector roadways, transit terminals, and other transportation facilities.

Table CP-1: General Plan Elements

Sonoma General Plan Elements	Required Elements	Examples of Topics Covered
Community Development	Land Use	Development patterns, neighborhoods, visual character, public facilities, recreation, cultural and historic resources.
Environmental Resources	Conservation, Open Space	Open space, hillsides, riparian areas, sensitive plants and animals.
Local Economy	Optional	Commercial and industrial land uses, economic diversification, job opportunities, tourism.
Circulation	Circulation	Traffic, street network, parking, transit services, bike routes.
Public Safety	Safety	Development in hazardous areas, hazardous materials management, seismicity, flood control, water quality.
Noise	Noise	Noise sources and mitigation.
Housing (Published Separately)	Housing	Demographics, housing needs, affordability, constraints on production.

Source: State of California General Plan Guidelines; City of Sonoma.

CONTENT AND PURPOSE

Conservation & Open Space—addressing treatment of natural and cultural resources, including wetlands, trees, and rivers.

Housing—assessing the current and projected housing needs of all segments of the community and identifying land to provide adequate housing to meet those needs.

Safety—establishing policies to protect the community from risks associated with seismic, geologic, flood, fire and other hazards.

This 2020 Sonoma General Plan is the product of numerous community workshops and Planning and Commission meetings guided by public participation. Community visioning workshops were held in September 2003 and September 2004. Several City Council/Planning Commission joint study sessions to establish a vision statement (see box, right) and review property owner requests were held between December 2003 and December 2004.

A series of Planning Commission meetings to review and recommend policy direction for the individual general plan elements occurred from February 2005 through November 2005, and City Council reviewed and then approved a draft General Plan for public review in February 2006. That draft was presented to the community and refined over a series of workshops and public hearings. Finally, the Planning Commission considered and recommended adoption of the new General Plan on September 28, 2006, and the City Council adopted the General Plan and certified the accompanying environmental impact report on October 4, 2006.

Each General Plan element contains goals, policies and implementation measures that set a course for future land use in the city. Goals summarize how development and future growth should be directed to achieve the general plan vision by identifying physi-

cal, economic and/or social ends that the community wishes to achieve. The accompanying policies establish basic courses of action for the Planning Commission and City Council to follow in working to achieve the community goals. Finally, implementation measures are identified that will need to be carried out by City departments to enact the policies and achieve the goals of the General Plan and realize the community's vision for its future.

City Council Vision Statement

Sonoma is a beautiful, environmentally friendly, and safe place, widely recognized as one of the most desirable cities in Northern California to live, visit, and do business. Ours is a diverse community where residents and their children can and want to remain. In 2020, Sonoma will be a place where:

- *Innovative, creative and sustainably-designed development respects the availability of natural resources and enhances the scale, character, and natural setting of the community.*
- *The community's history and its role as a cultural center are enhanced through public art, special events, and careful preservation of historic features.*
- *A vibrant, entrepreneurial economy is fueled largely by retention and incubation of locally-owned businesses that complement the small-town atmosphere and provide high-paying jobs.*
- *Housing is available and affordable to the residents and the local workforce to support an economically diverse population.*
- *Creeks, trees, other natural features are valued and preserved, and open space and agricultural lands are protected—both in and around the city.*
- *Residents have access to a variety of high-quality recreational opportunities.*
- *Walking and bicycling are safe and the use of clean-fuel transit is popular. Traffic congestion is mitigated.*
- *Residents enjoy peace, quiet, and security, as well as efficient, high-quality public services.*
- *The City enjoys productive relationships with neighboring communities to effectively address regional issues, including planning, service provision and capital improvements.*

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ELEMENT

Though all of its elements possess equal importance under State law, the Community Development Element is the centerpiece of the *2020 General Plan*. It sets the stage for the remainder by defining land use designations and boundaries and establishing City policy regarding growth and provision of services. The goals, policies, and implementation measures in this element embody community values expressed through the many citizen workshops, study sessions, and public hearings held during the course of the General Plan update, as captured in the Vision Statement adopted by the City Council.

In the future condition envisioned in the Community Development Element, Sonoma retains its small-town feel by managing growth within a tight sphere of influence. The greenbelt surrounding the town preserves scenic open space and supports agricultural operations that form a pillar of a vibrant local economy. The city is characterized by a diversity of land uses and building types, unified by a comfortable scale and design that respects Sonoma's rich history. Infrastructure is provided in a controlled, efficient manner and expanded only when and necessary. The community's past helps to guide its future, with historic buildings and sites preserved for use and enjoyment by future generations. Residents enjoy the pace of country living with the added benefits of urban services, a range of commercial uses—including quality restaurants, shopping, and arts and recreation opportunities to rival a large city, and a sophistication that comes from a diverse population in contact with visitors from around the world. Perhaps most importantly, local residents share a sense of community that

grows from Sonoma being a working town that provides housing and employment for all segments of the population.

COMMUNITY DIRECTIONS

The ideal state for Sonoma in 2020 is based on a set of principles that has consistently represented community direction for several decades as reinforced during the course of the General Plan update process:

- To best preserve the open space and agriculture surrounding Sonoma, the sphere of influence should be restricted, while accommodating a reasonable amount of future development.
- Growth in Sonoma should be controlled, and the provision of services and infrastructure should be tied to existing needs and planned development so that any expansion occurs in a cost-effective manner.
- Sonoma should continue to be characterized by variety in terms of land uses, building types, and housing, and this diversity should be consistent with preserving the town's small-scale and historic character.
- New residential development should emulate the desirable characteristics of existing neighborhoods by providing variety in lot and unit sizes and a range of prices, including opportunities for lower-income households, and respect unique site and neighborhood conditions.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ELEMENT

DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL

In addition to providing goals, policies and implementation measures, the Community Development Element includes a Land Use Plan and defines land use designations. The Land Use Plan (Figure CD-2) shows locations for different types of activities in order to shape and contain future development appropriately in the city and sphere of influence. Table CD-1 summarizes existing land uses and additional development potential.

As Table CD-1 illustrates, Sonoma is mostly built-out, with about 11% of the 1,717 acres in the city

and sphere of influence identified as vacant or substantially under-utilized as of November 2005. The table also shows that the most prevalent use in the city is single-family residential, with about 43% of all land in Sonoma designated primarily for detached homes (including about three-fourths of the vacant land). Land for public uses (such as school, park, and hospital facilities) comprises the next largest category—about 24% of the city and sphere of influence, while areas for multi-family housing account for roughly 17% of total land area. Areas designated for commercial uses (which also allow multi-family dwellings on site) encompass about 10% of the city and sphere of influence. The proportions of these cat-

Table CD-1: Existing Development and General Plan Buildout Potential (City Limits and Sphere of Influence)

General Plan Land Use Designation	Baseline Conditions, 2005				Development Potential								
	Developed			Vacant/ Under-used Acres	1995 General Plan Buildout (Additional) ¹			2020 General Plan Net Changes ²			2020 General Plan Buildout Potential		
	Acres	Units	Comm. Sq. ft.		Units	Comm. Sq. ft.	Acres	Units	Comm. Sq. ft.	Acres	Units	Comm. Sq. ft.	
Hillside Res.	43.7	13		32.5	+7		-25.9	-3		50.3	17		
Rural Res.	69.3	65		8.2	+16					77.4	81		
Sonoma Res.	74.0	187		48.0	+383		-12.6	-60		109.3	511		
Low Density Res.	457.2	2,199	25,000	28.8	+144		-1.0	-2		485.0	2,341	25,000	
Medium Density Res.	190.9	1,677	200,000	10.8	+119		-10.0			196.6	1,796	200,000	
High Density Res.	6.2	26								6.2	26		
Housing Opportunity	1.4	30					+4.4	+72		8.8	147		
Mobile Home	54.8	437								54.8	437		
Commercial	106.1	226	1,500,000	10.0	+119	+100,000	-2.0	+3	-20,000	107.0	348	1,580,000	
Gateway Commercial	51.6	17	250,000	30.6	+612	+306,000				82.2	629	556,000	
Mixed Use	78.9	255	100,000	2.2	+44	+22,000	+11.0	+22	+28,000	87.1	321	150,000	
Public Facility	210.5		300,000							210.5			
Park	163.4						+36.1			199.5			
Agriculture	25.4	4								25.4	4		
Wine Production	12.7		125,000							12.7		125,000	
Total	1,546.0	5,136	2,500,000	171.0	1,445	428,000	0.0	32	+8,000	1,717.0	6,613	2,636,000	

Source: City of Sonoma, October 2006.

1. In addition to 2005 baseline development.
2. Relative to baseline 2005 development and 1995 General Plan increment. See Figure CD-1 and Table CD-3 for locations and amount of changed development potential.

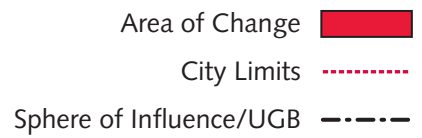
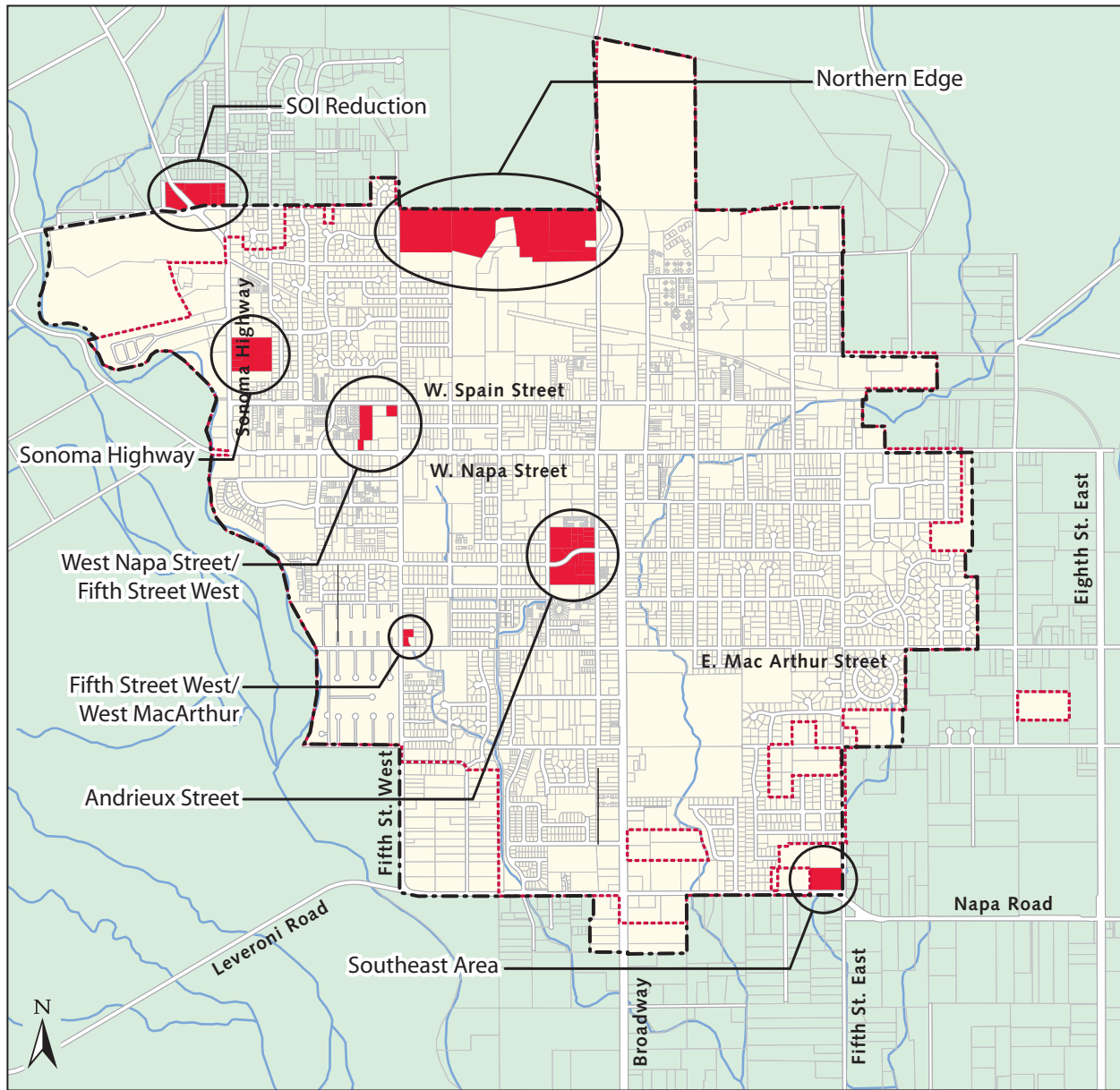


Figure CD-1

Areas of Change

Source: City of Sonoma, October 2006.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ELEMENT

Table CD-2: Changes in Land Use Designation

Location	1995 General Plan Designation	Lot Size (Acres)	Dwelling Units	Development Potential ¹ (Dwelling Units)	Proposed Designation (2020 General Plan)	Change in Development Potential ²
Northern Edge						
120 Fifth Street West	Sonoma Residential	9.75		60	Park	-60
N. of Vallejo Home	Hillside Residential	15.73		1	Park	-1
N. of Vallejo Home	Hillside Residential	8.16		1	Park	-1
N. of Vallejo Home	Hillside Residential	2.01		1	Park	-1
Sonoma Highway						
19320 Sonoma Highway	Commercial	0.34	1		Housing Opportunity	7
19320B Sonoma Highway	Commercial	1.83		18	Housing Opportunity	27
19330 Sonoma Highway	Commercial	0.34	2		Housing Opportunity	6
19336 Sonoma Highway	Mixed Use	1.37	3	10	Housing Opportunity	21
19340 Sonoma Highway	Mixed Use	0.34	1		Housing Opportunity	8
19360 Sonoma Highway	Mixed Use	0.17	1		Housing Opportunity	3
West Napa Street/Fifth Street West						
590 West Napa Street	Comm./Mixed Use	2.03	1	19	Mixed Use	
405 Fifth Street West	Low Density Res.	0.50	1	1	Commercial	3
Fifth Street West/West MacArthur Street						
872 Fifth Street West	Low Density Res.	0.28		1	Park	-1
880 Fifth Street West	Low Density Res.	0.19		1	Park	-1
Southeast Area (Napa Road/Fifth Street East)						
20455 Fifth Street West	Sonoma Residential	2.88	1	22	Mixed Use	5
Andrieux Street/First Street West						
105 Andrieux Street	Medium Density Res.	0.39			Mixed Use	
121 Andrieux Street	Medium Density Res.	0.21	2	1	Mixed Use	2
131 Andrieux Street	Medium Density Res.	0.20	4		Mixed Use	
141 Andrieux Street	Medium Density Res.	0.16	4		Mixed Use	
148-154 Andrieux Street	Medium Density Res.	0.30			Mixed Use	
151 Andrieux Street	Medium Density Res.	0.33	2	1	Mixed Use	4
178 Andrieux Street	Medium Density Res.	0.79			Mixed Use	
181 Andrieux Street	Medium Density Res.	2.01			Mixed Use	
657 First Street West	Medium Density Res.	0.16			Mixed Use	1
673 First Street West	Medium Density Res.	0.24			Mixed Use	
675 First Street West	Medium Density Res.	0.22			Mixed Use	
681 First Street West	Medium Density Res.	0.31			Mixed Use	
721 First Street West	Medium Density Res.	0.24	3		Mixed Use	2
731 First Street West	Medium Density Res.	0.55	2	3	Mixed Use	6

Table CD-2: Changes in Land Use Designation, Con't.

Location	1995 General Plan Designation	Lot Size (Acres)	Dwelling Units	Development Potential ¹ (Dwelling Units)	Proposed Designation (2020 General Plan)	Change in Development Potential ²
Andrieux Street/First Street West (Con't)						
743 First Street West	Medium Density Res.	0.20	1	1	Mixed Use	2
745 First Street West	Medium Density Res.	0.76	16		Mixed Use	
678 Second Street West	Medium Density Res.	1.90			Mixed Use	
Total	33 Parcels	55.90	45	171		32

Source: City of Sonoma, October 2006.

1. Additional residential development potential (under 1995 General Plan).
2. Relative to residential development potential allowed under the 1995 General Plan. To account for potential commercial component, parcels with Mixed Use and Commercial designations are assumed to build out at one-half of maximum residential potential.

egories are similar between the city (1,490 acres) and the sphere of influence (227 acres), except that very little land within the sphere of influence is dedicated solely to multi-family development.

The Land Use Plan would allow about 486 new single family homes and 1,072 new multi-family units (including mixed use development) on vacant and under-utilized land within the city and the sphere of influence. This total buildout capacity is 32 units higher (net) than under the *1995 General Plan*. The increase primarily targets housing for lower income families, both to comply with State requirements and to ensure that the housing supply meets the needs of the Sonoma workforce. Figure CD-1 and Table CD-2 identify parcel-specific changes to development potential. Also in comparison to the *1995 General Plan*, the land area designated for parks is increased by 36 acres and commercial development potential is increased by approximately 8,000 square feet.

With respect to future development, water supply is a significant potential constraint on growth in and around Sonoma. Most water in the city is purchased from the County Water Agency, with City wells augmenting that supply during periods of peak use. Even if residential construction continues to be limited by

the Growth Management Ordinance, water supply and delivery capacity in Sonoma likely will need to be expanded by 2010 through activation of one of the dormant City wells, and again by 2015 through the planned construction of additional pipe by the Water Agency.

GROWTH MANAGEMENT ORDINANCE

The General Plan buildout capacity is only slightly greater than the amount of development allowed by the City's Growth Management Ordinance, which limits residential construction in Sonoma to an average of 88 units per year. The Growth Management Ordinance was adopted in 1980 following fiscal and economic analysis of nine growth scenarios using a computer model developed by the Association of Bay Area Governments. Factors addressed in the model included City revenues, water supply and infrastructure requirements, police and fire service, street maintenance, and capital improvements. The evaluation indicated that an annual average of 100 new units would allow for manageable increases in service without exceeding the available water supply for at least 20 years. In 2005, the average rate of allowed development was reduced to 88 units per year in order to reflect the actual rate of development experi-

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ELEMENT

enced since 1995. Since its adoption, the ordinance has been effective in regulating the rate of growth in Sonoma and has, over the long term, provided stability in City revenues and expenditures as well as efficiencies in service and infrastructure provision.

Because the limitations imposed by the Growth Management Ordinance are based on infrastructure limitations that are subject to change, it is necessary to periodically review the ordinance to ensure its relevance. In addition, because the General Plan represents the City’s basic expression of land use policy, it is critical that the Growth Management Ordinance reflect the data, assumptions, and policy directions set forth in the updated plan. In light of these issues, the City typically conducts a review of its infrastructure and service requirements every two years.

The City of Sonoma recognizes its responsibility to provide housing opportunities for all income groups, a duty that must be balanced with the community’s need for ensuring controlled, cost-effective growth. Over the course of implementing the Growth Management Ordinance, numerous exemptions and incentives have been established to assure the provision of affordable housing. Similar allowances would have to be made in any future revision of the ordinance.

URBAN GROWTH BOUNDARY

The people of the city of Sonoma approved an Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) in 2000 to protect the unique small-town character of the city and the agricultural and open space character of the surrounding areas. The UGB is a line beyond which urban development will not be allowed, except for public parks and public schools. Only uses consistent with the General Plan “agricultural” land use designation (as it existed on February 25, 2000 and the definition of “open space lands” set forth in California Government Code Section 65560 (b) as of February 25, 2000¹ are

1 Carried forward unchanged in the 2020 General Plan.

allowed beyond the UGB. The UGB is established by the policies implementing Goal CD-1; its location is shown on this General Plan’s Land Use Plan.

Sonoma’s UGB reflects a commitment to focus future growth within the city in order to prevent urban sprawl into agriculturally and environmentally sensitive areas surrounding the city. The UGB protects the health, safety, welfare, and quality of life of the residents of Sonoma by concentrating future residential, commercial, and industrial growth in areas already served by urban services. The policies implementing the UGB allow sufficient flexibility within its limits to respond to the City’s changing needs over time. The UGB complements General Plan policies² promoting additional housing opportunities, emphasizing infill development, and supporting a thriving downtown center.

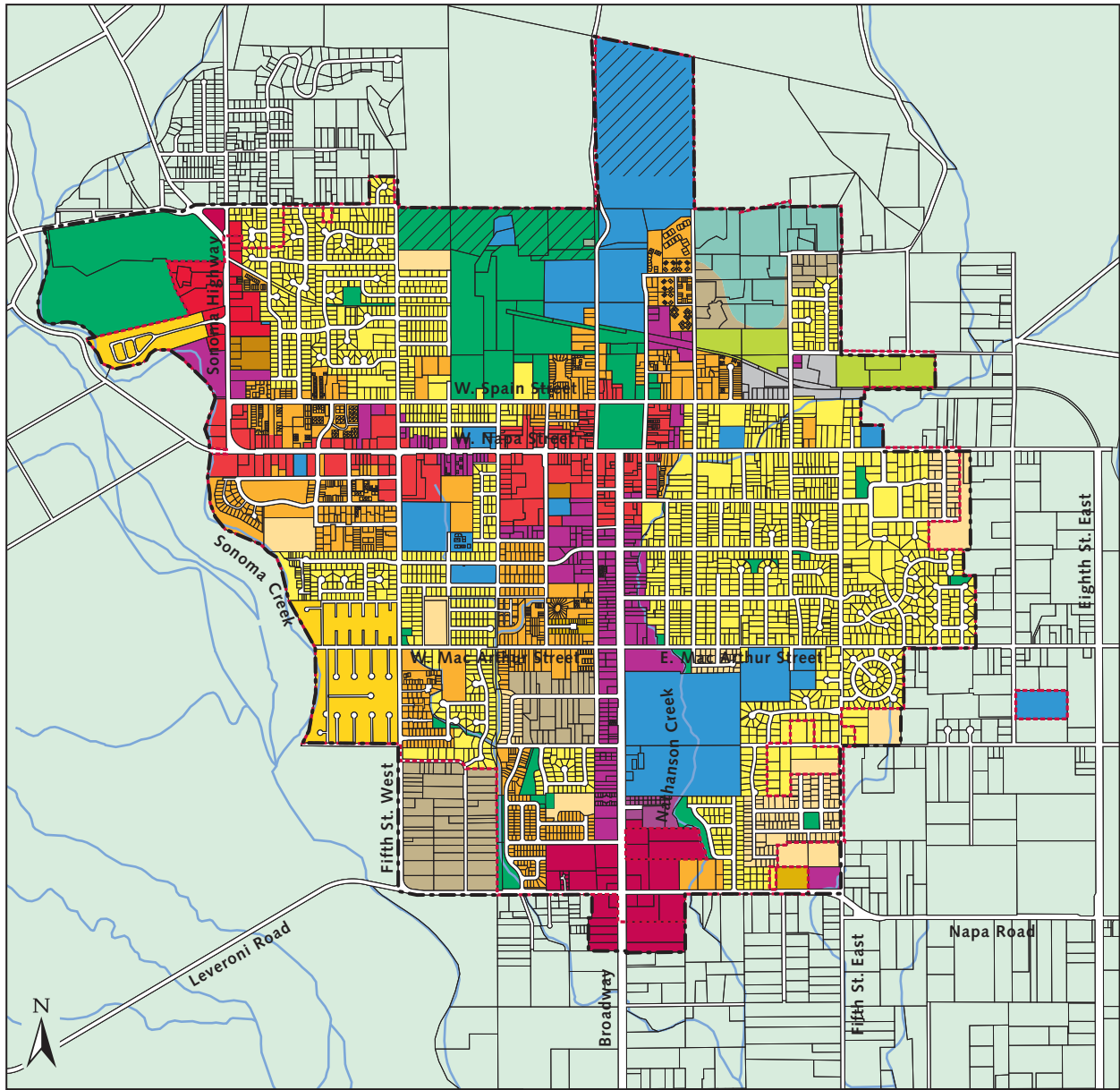
THE LAND USE PLAN

Data alone can offer only a limited picture of the disposition of uses set forth in the Land Use Plan. Because the map is rooted within the context of existing conditions in Sonoma, the following paragraphs offer a brief tour of the city to clarify the relationships of specific areas to the Land Use Plan (Figure CD-2).

Town Center and Northern Hills

Starting from the center of town at the Plaza, the Land Use Plan maintains the existing commercial district and seeks to enliven it with an additional residential presence through mixed use development and added higher density housing in established multifamily areas surrounding the commercial core. Two blocks north of the Plaza, there is a collection of park and public facilities, including Depot Park, Arnold Field, the Veterans’ Memorial Building, the Police Station, seven acres of playing fields, and Mountain Cemetery. No urban services are planned to extend beyond the northern city limit into the hills. The hill-

2 Including Housing Element policies.



Rural Residential		Mobile Home Park		Park	
Low Density Residential		Mixed Use		Hillside	
Sonoma Residential		Commercial		Agriculture	
Medium Density Residential		Gateway Commercial		Open Space Overlay	
High Density Residential		Wine Production		City Limits	
Housing Opportunity		Public Facility		Sphere of Influence/UGB	



Figure CD-2

Land Use Plan

Source: City of Sonoma, October 2006.



The Montini Property, a key element of Sonoma's northern hillside backdrop.

side areas within the city are designated to remain largely undeveloped, with the Rural Residential designation applied to the base of Schocken Hill and the Hillside designation above. The hillside area immediately north of the Vallejo Home State park has been acquired as protected open space.

Broadway

South of the downtown, the Broadway corridor is designated for mixed use between Maple Street and Four Corners. Improvements in the right-of-way are planned to continue the streetscape theme between the Plaza and MacArthur Street south to Four Corners. Street trees, lighting, benches, planters, and other features will enhance the travel experience by car, bike, and foot, and will extend the historic feel of the Plaza all the way south to the edge of town.

East and Southeast Sonoma

East Sonoma represents the city's largest and oldest single-family area. Several sites within the sphere of influence on East MacArthur Street and along Denmark Street can accommodate additional residential development. These properties include both Low Density Residential and Sonoma Residential land, the latter of which—inspired by the qualities of old So-

noma—requires variety in lot sizes, unit types, and affordability. A 2.8-acre property at the northwest corner of Fifth Street East/Napa Road is designated Mixed Use to provide an opportunity for establishing commercial uses to serve nearby neighborhoods.

Southwest Sonoma

In southwest Sonoma, Rural Residential pockets are planned to be retained, including the Harrington tract (at the corner of Leveroni Road and Fifth Street West) and the Malet Street area north of Newcomb Street. The designation reflects the existing large-lot development of these areas, which enhances the diversity of the local housing stock.

West Sonoma

Although already largely developed, this area of single- and multi-family neighborhoods contains several key vacant and underutilized parcels. In the multi-family area along Fifth Street West south of West MacArthur Street, several sites are well suited for additional multi-family development. As in other areas of Sonoma with opportunities for infill multi-family development, care must be taken to provide an appropriate fit between new development and established neighborhoods.

The Sonoma Valley Hospital exerts a significant influence on an otherwise largely single-family neighborhood. The hospital predates the surrounding residential development but is now hemmed in by houses. The growth of the hospital over the years has led to higher traffic and friction with neighboring residents. Although the hospital is a critical institution, it may have to relocate due to State standards for seismic safety. If so, the future use of the parcel will need to be determined with extensive input from neighbors.

If a six-acre single-family parcel at the west end of Curtin Lane becomes available for the type of lower-density multi-family housing that characterizes the rest of the neighborhood, consideration would be given to providing public access to the creek by extending the existing bike path from the north. The Sonoma Residential designation applied to this property provides the flexibility needed to preserve the special qualities of the site, including its historic residence.

West Napa Street

In recognition of existing development, West Napa Street from Fifth Street West to Sonoma Highway is designated for commercial use. Pockets of adjacent mixed use and multi-family development encourage a residential presence to reduce car trips and create a buffer for traffic-sensitive residential areas. A vacant parcel adjoining the Safeway property, having an area of approximately three acres, was considered for designation as Housing Opportunity in the course of the General Plan update. However, after much discussion, it retained its Commercial land use designation.

Northwest Sonoma

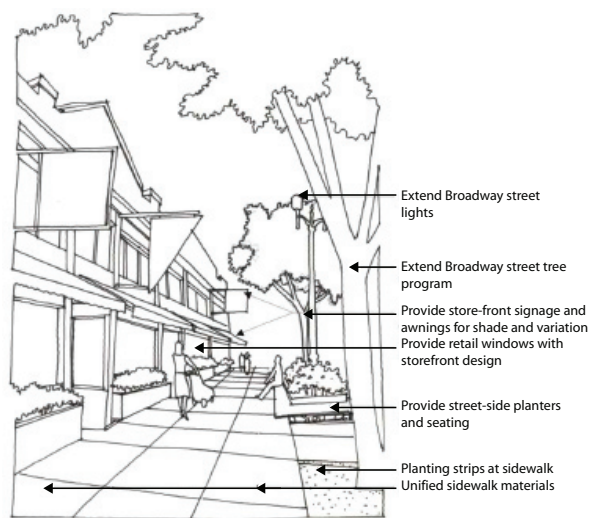
The area north of West Napa Street and west of Fifth Street West is the second largest section of single-family housing in Sonoma. It also contains Vallejo Home State Park, the largest tract of permanent open space in the city. Sonoma Highway is designated as a mixed use and commercial corridor, including at the city's northern gateway at Verano Avenue. Rede-

velopment and streetscape improvements in this area could greatly upgrade the appearance of the corridor and promote alternatives to vehicle travel. A group of seven parcels on six acres east of the highway just north of West Spain Street are designated Housing Opportunity.

Four Corners

The intersection of Broadway with Napa and Leveroni Roads, known as Four Corners, serves as the primary southern gateway to Sonoma. The area is planned to develop and densify with housing and resident- and visitor-serving uses that feature high quality, pedestrian-scale architecture, open space, and generous landscaping. Mixed-use development and adjacent multi-family development are encouraged as means of reducing traffic and encouraging a residential presence. Objectives for the area include integrating future commercial uses with existing and planned neighborhoods, ensuring that new development is designed at an appropriate scale, and implementing streetscape improvements, with improved sidewalks, curb bow-outs, and street trees. (See Figures CD-3 and CD-4.)

Figure CD-3: Four Corners Design Concepts



Source: RossDrulisCusenberry, Architects



This figure combines the conceptual development plan reviewed by the community with projected intersection improvement requirements, including two northbound and two southbound lanes on Broadway and dedicated left-turn lanes on Napa and Leveroni Roads. The diagram also depicts desired design features, such as bike lanes, parking, cross-walks and planter strips.



Figure CD-4

Four Corners Development Plan

Source: RDC; Crawford, Multarri, and Clark, 2005.

LAND USE DESIGNATIONS

The 2020 Sonoma General Plan establishes fifteen land use designations intended to allow appropriate development and encourage compatibility among adjacent uses (see Table CD-4). These designations, in conjunction with applicable policies and implementation measures throughout the General Plan, seek to accomplish a variety of land use objectives, including:

- Adding a residential presence in the town center and along Broadway through mixed use development that combines housing with nonresidential uses;
- Establishing an attractive, thriving commercial area at the southern gateway to Sonoma;
- Upgrading the appearance of the Sonoma Highway commercial corridor; and
- Providing opportunities for additional multi-family housing in selected locations distributed throughout the city.

Density

In the definitions below, density refers to the number of dwelling units normally allowed per gross acre (prior to dedications for streets and other improvements). The density range set forth for each land use designation is its base density. On any particular property, however, the maximum base density may be exceeded if a proposed development receives a density bonus or if the property is developed with a second unit.

A density bonus is an incentive provided to developers of affordable housing that allows a 25% increase above the maximum base density applicable to the site. A second unit is a small rental that may be allowed on owner-occupied residential properties, subject to regulations regarding size and appearance.

Density bonuses and second units are allowed by State laws that preempt many local controls, as described in detail in the Housing Element.

Intensity

The concept of intensity has two parts—use and building mass—both of which are set forth broadly by the land use designations and regulated specifically by the Development Code and Subdivision Ordinance. Uses may be allowed as of right (without the need for City discretionary approval) or by use permit, in which case Planning Commission review is required at a noticed public hearing. In the definitions below, conditionally-allowed uses and uses allowed as of right are described in general terms, allowing for a greater level of specificity to be implemented through the Development Code.

As with uses, building mass is broadly regulated in the land use designations and more specifically controlled through implementing ordinances and regulations. In the land use definitions, building mass is expressed through limits on height (feet and stories), floor area (ratio of developed square feet to lot size for selected designations), and lot coverage (percentage of site area), which refers to building footprint, excluding parking and access drives. The height and coverage limits set forth in the land use definitions are maximums; Development Code standards and project review conditions may be more restrictive.

Inclusionary Requirement

The purpose of an inclusionary requirement is to ensure that a component of affordable housing—above a specified threshold number of units—is provided as part of new residential development. In essence, any development above a certain size is required to include a percentage of affordable units, with the amount and level of affordability (very low, low, or moderate) set as part of the Housing Element policy establishing the requirement. The restrictions that apply to the designated affordable units are implement-

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ed through contracts with the City that typically run for a period of thirty years, at a minimum.

The Housing Element establishes a 20% inclusionary requirement for all residential development of five units or more. (In developments of more than five but fewer than 10 units, the inclusionary requirement is one unit.) Inclusionary units must be affordable at least to moderate income households. Because this requirement is applied across the board, it generally is not referenced in the land use definitions. However, because the Sonoma Residential designation requires

both low- and moderate-income inclusionary units, its unique requirement is noted in the definition.

Definitions

The General Plan designations, their purposes, and their corresponding allowed residential densities and building intensities are summarized in Table CDE-3 (following). As discussed above, densities shown for designations that allow housing may be increased by permissible second units and possible density bonuses of up to 25% for units affordable to lower income households.

Table CDE-3: Land Use Definitions

Land Use Category	Density ¹ and Intensity
Residential Designations	
<p><i>Rural Residential:</i> This designation is intended to preserve areas of lower density development within the city limits, especially adjacent to hillsides and in established low density neighborhoods. Day care facilities, fire stations, post offices, and similar activities may be allowed subject to use permit review. Home occupations are allowed, but retail and office uses are not.</p>	<p><i>Density:</i> Up to 2 residential units per acre. <i>Intensity:</i> 35-foot height limit (two stories) and maximum 40% lot coverage for residential development. Floor Area Ratio: 0.2</p>
<p><i>Low Density Residential:</i> This designation is intended primarily for single-family housing and duplexes, with attached or clustered development allowed by use permit, in association with related public improvements such as streets. Other uses compatible with the primary use may be allowed subject to use permit review, including transitional housing, schools, day care facilities, churches, fire stations, post offices, nursing homes, convalescent hospitals, and parking areas. Home occupations are allowed, but retail and office uses are not.</p>	<p><i>Density:</i> 2—5 residential units per acre. <i>Intensity:</i> 35-foot height limit (two stories) and maximum 40% lot coverage for residential development. Floor Area Ratio: 0.35</p>
<p><i>Sonoma Residential:</i> This designation, which usually applies to properties at least 3 acres in size, has three purposes: 1) to ensure a variety of unit types and lot sizes in new development, 2) to provide sufficient flexibility in site planning and design to allow individual developments to respond to site and neighborhood conditions, and 3) to ensure a range of housing prices and living opportunities for middle-income households. Through this designation housing units of different price ranges are mingled rather than segregated. A 20% inclusionary requirement applies to new development and half of the inclusionary units must be affordable to low income households. Home occupations are allowed, but retail and office uses are not.</p>	<p><i>Density:</i> 3—8 residential units per acre. <i>Intensity:</i> 35-foot height limit (two stories) and maximum 40% lot coverage for residential development. Floor Area Ratio: 0.35</p>

Table CDE-3: Land Use Definitions, Con't.

Land Use Category	Density ¹ and Intensity
Residential Designations, Con't.	
<p><i>Medium Density Residential:</i> This designation is intended to provide opportunities for multi-family housing and related public improvements, especially in transition areas between higher density and single-family development. Transitional housing, schools, day care facilities, churches, fire stations, post offices, nursing homes, convalescent hospitals, parking areas, and similar activities may be allowed subject to use permit review. Home occupations are allowed, but retail and office uses are not.</p>	<p><i>Density:</i> 7—11 residential units per acre. <i>Intensity:</i> 30-foot height limit (two stories) and maximum 50% lot coverage for residential development. Floor Area Ratio: 0.50</p>
<p><i>High Density Residential:</i> This designation is intended to provide opportunities for relatively dense multi-family housing and related public improvements, especially close to commercial centers and mixed use development. Transitional housing, schools, day care facilities, churches, fire stations, post offices, nursing homes, convalescent hospitals, parking areas, and similar activities may be allowed subject to use permit review. Home occupations are allowed, but retail and office uses are not.</p>	<p><i>Density:</i> 11—15 residential units per acre. <i>Intensity:</i> 30-foot height limit (two stories) and maximum 60% lot coverage for residential development. Floor Area Ratio: 0.70</p>
<p><i>Housing Opportunity:</i> This designation identifies sites suitable for higher density and affordable development, especially close to commercial centers and mixed use areas, and is intended to provide opportunities for low and very low income households. Uses other than housing and associated improvements are not allowed. Home occupations are allowed.</p>	<p><i>Density:</i> 15—25 residential units per acre. <i>Intensity:</i> 36-foot height limit (three stories) and maximum 60% lot coverage for residential development. Floor Area Ratio: 0.70</p>
<p><i>Mobile Home:</i> This designation is intended to acknowledge existing mobile home parks. Home occupations are allowed, but retail and office uses are not.</p>	<p><i>Density:</i> Up to 7 mobile homes per acre. <i>Intensity:</i> 16-foot height limit (one-story) and a maximum of 50% site coverage for mobile homes. Common facilities and buildings may be 30 feet in height. Floor Area Ratio: 0.30</p>
Commercial, Mixed Use, and Industrial Designations	
<p><i>Commercial:</i> This designation is intended to provide areas for retail, hotel, service, medical, and office development, in association with apartments and mixed-use developments and necessary public improvements. Schools, day care facilities, fire stations, post offices, emergency shelters, and similar activities may be allowed subject to use permit review. Heavy manufacturing and industrial uses are not allowed.</p>	<p><i>Density:</i> Up to 20 residential units per acre. Density limitation does not apply to hotels. <i>Intensity:</i> 36-foot height limit and maximum lot coverage ranging from 70% to 100%, depending on Development Code standards. Floor Area Ratio: 0.6 to 2.0</p>

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Table CDE-3: Land Use Definitions, Con't.

Land Use Category	Density ¹ and Intensity
Commercial, Mixed Use, and Industrial Designations	
<p><i>Gateway Commercial:</i> This designation is applied specifically to the Four Corners area and the Verano triangle. It is intended to promote high-quality neighborhood- and visitor-serving office and retail development while implementing a coordinated design program for these areas, in keeping with their status as gateways to the community and in recognition of the need to buffer residential development. Building coverage is limited compared to other commercial areas to allow for landscaping and transition areas. Cultural and recreational facilities, hotels, and small-scale agricultural support facilities are allowed in association with apartments and mixed use developments and necessary public improvements. Schools, day care facilities, fire stations, post offices, emergency shelters, and similar activities may be allowed subject to use permit review. Large-scale shopping centers, gas stations, high-turnover restaurants and heavy manufacturing and industrial uses are not allowed.</p>	<p><i>Density:</i> Up to 20 residential units per acre. (Density limitation does not apply to hotels.)</p> <p><i>Intensity:</i> 36-foot height limit and maximum lot coverage of 50%. Floor Area Ratio: 0.80</p>
<p><i>Mixed Use:</i> This designation is intended to accommodate uses that provide a transition between commercial and residential districts, to promote a pedestrian presence in adjacent commercial areas, and to provide neighborhood commercial services to adjacent residential areas. It is also intended to provide additional opportunities for affordable housing, especially for low and very low income households. The Mixed Use designation also is intended to recognize the continued existence of uses that contribute to the character or function of their neighborhood and to allow for the possibility of their expansion. Day care facilities, fire stations, post offices, transitional housing, and emergency shelters may be allowed subject to use permit review. A residential component is required in new development, unless an exemption is granted through use permit review. Retail and office uses are allowed subject to use permit approval to ensure compatibility with adjacent neighborhoods.</p>	<p><i>Density:</i> Up to 20 residential units per acre.</p> <p><i>Intensity:</i> 36-foot height limit and maximum site coverage ranging from 70% to 100%, depending on Development Code standards. Floor Area Ratio: 0.6—1.2</p>
Special Purpose Designations	
<p><i>Hillside:</i> This designation is intended to preserve Sonoma's hillside backdrop, while allowing limited residential development in conjunction with agricultural uses. Crop and tree farming are allowed.</p>	<p><i>Density:</i> 1 residential unit per 10 or more acres (excluding second units).</p> <p><i>Intensity:</i> 30-foot height limit (two stories) and maximum lot coverage of 20%.</p>
<p><i>Agriculture:</i> This designation is intended to protect remaining tracts of productive agriculture within city limits, including grazing land, truck farms, vineyards, and crop production areas.</p>	<p><i>Density:</i> 1 unit per 10 or more acres.</p> <p><i>Intensity:</i> 30-foot height limit (two-stories), excluding agricultural processing facilities, which may be higher subject to use permit review, and maximum site coverage of 30%.</p>

Table CDE-3: Land Use Definitions, Con't.

Land Use Category	Density ¹ and Intensity
Special Purpose Designations, Con't.	
<p><i>Open Space:</i> This overlay designation, applied in conjunction with a base land use designation, recognizes sites that should remain substantially undeveloped and in a natural condition. This designation is only applicable to properties that are publicly owned or for which open space or development easements have been established. New construction within the Open Space overlay shall only be allowed if it is found that the natural character of the site and its value as open space will not be diminished.</p>	<p><i>Density:</i> With the exception of caretaker's units, residential units are not allowed.</p> <p><i>Intensity:</i> Uses as allowed for in the base land use designation, subject to use permit review.</p>
<p><i>Public Facility:</i> This designation is intended to provide areas for public and quasi-public facilities of all kinds, including schools, fire stations, police stations, jails, civic centers, parks, recreational facilities, playing fields, community centers, emergency housing, government offices, public parking lots, cemeteries, museums, community gardens, hospitals, and medical facilities. Except for parks and temporary activities, all uses are subject to review.</p>	<p><i>Density:</i> Caretaker units are allowed subject to use permit review.</p> <p><i>Intensity:</i> 35-foot height limit and maximum lot coverage of 70%.</p>
<p><i>Park:</i> This designation is applied specifically to city parks and related facilities, including community gardens, museums, and recreational facilities and buildings, as well as to natural and undeveloped areas intended for walking, biking, and other low intensity recreational uses.</p>	<p><i>Density:</i> With the exception of caretaker's units, residential units are not allowed.</p> <p><i>Intensity:</i> 30-foot height limit (two stories) and maximum lot coverage of 25%.</p>

Source: City of Sonoma.

1. Densities may be increased by up to 25% for projects that qualify for a density bonus. Second units are not counted in the calculation of site density.

COORDINATION WITH OTHER ELEMENTS

The Community Development Element is directly related to all other elements of the General Plan. The land use designations determine the nature and extent of commercial activities, in conjunction with the Local Economy Element, and provide the basis for the amount, location, and mix of future housing, in conjunction with the Housing Element. The Land Use Plan, through its sphere of influence boundary and park and agricultural designations, defines areas excluded from urban development, complementing the policies and implementation measures in the Environmental Resources Element, which address preservation of natural and agricultural open spaces areas outside of the sphere of influence. The land use

designations are themselves subject to modification by other provisions of the General Plan, such as the creek protection measures set forth in the Environmental Resources Element.

The Local Economy Element

The Local Economy Element addresses issues related to land use, housing, and environmental resources. It provides policies addressing the types of businesses that will give life to the commercial land use designations set forth in the Community Development Element. By promoting the business of agriculture, the Local Economy Element works in concert with the Community Development and Environmental Resources Elements toward the preservation of agricultural open space.

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The Housing Element

Published separately to accommodate the frequent updates required by the State, the Housing Element provides policies and implementation measures guiding the integration of new residential development in existing neighborhoods. In addition, the Housing Element provides the policy framework for ensuring that new residential developments exhibit diversity in pricing—through the requirement of inclusionary units—to complement the diversity in unit types and lot sizes promulgated in the Community Development Element. In this way, residential developments of five units or more allowed through the Community Development Element contribute to Sonoma’s regional fair share requirement for affordable housing, as identified in the Housing Element. The Sonoma Residential designation goes even further toward meeting Housing Element objectives by requiring units affordable to both low income and moderate income households.

The links between the Housing Element and the Community Development Element are also demonstrated in the implementation of a 25% density bonuses for development of affordable units. The Community Development Element establishes base densities, while the Housing Element sets forth specific criteria for granting density bonuses, such as household income levels and requirements for maintaining long-term affordability.

The Environmental Resources Element

The Environmental Resources Element relates directly to the Community Development Element in a number of ways. Specific policies and implementation measures for resource protection may modify the way land use designations are applied. As an example, creek setback standards apply regardless of land use designation. At the site-specific level, policies and implementation measures in the Environmental Resources Element lay the basis for open space and landscaping standards applied to individual projects.

The element also provides means for implementing certain land use designations, as through hillside development regulations and open space acquisition programs. In addition, the element establishes the parkland standards utilized to determine when park dedications must be required of new development.

The Circulation Element

In conjunction with the Community Development Element, the Circulation Element plays a major role in defining the patterns of future development through the improvement and extension of the circulation network, including automobile, transit, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities. The land use and development directions embodied in the Community Development Element are reflected in the traffic projections used in the Circulation Element. As another example, the Circulation Element calls for the continuation of the historic grid street system in new development. The implementation of this policy will shape the visual character of new construction, both commercial and residential, as well as its integration with existing development and neighborhoods.

THE DEVELOPMENT CODE

The City of Sonoma Development Code carries out the policies and implementation measures of the General Plan by classifying and regulating the use of land and structures in the city. Specifically, the Code contains standards and provisions to:

- Encourage the use of land as designated by the General Plan Land Use Plan and ensure compatibility between neighboring land uses;
- Retain the unique small-town character of the community and the integrity of its neighborhoods through detailed prescriptions for block form, site planning, and building design for specific geographic areas of the city;
- Conserve and protect the city’s natural beauty, in-

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cluding scenic views, hillside open space, creeks, and trees;

- Retain and create small pockets of open space and natural areas and require adequate, park, open space, landscaping, and tree planting in new development;
- Protect historic buildings and sites, and carry the historic character of the Plaza and old Sonoma into the rest of the city through careful attention to urban design;
- Minimize automobile use and congestion by promoting pedestrian- and bicycle-oriented development, safe and effective traffic circulation, and adequate off-street parking facilities, and by expanding bicycle and pedestrian connections; and
- Support continued agricultural opportunities.

GOALS, POLICIES, AND IMPLEMENTATION

In conjunction with the Land Use Plan, the goals, policies, and implementation measures of the Community Development Element (set forth in table CDE-4) are intended to:

- Maintain a compact sphere of influence in order to preserve surrounding agricultural lands and natural open space.
- Establish a logical pattern of land uses and provide for the efficient provision of transportation, water supply, sewage treatment, and other public services.
- Ensure that new development is compatible with Sonoma's unique character and contributes to its quality of life.

Table CDE-4: Goals, Policies, and Implementation Measures

Goal CD-1: Establish and maintain a definitive urban growth boundary (UGB), which shall be set forth on the Land Use Plan map, beyond which only uses compatible with preserving agriculture and open space resources shall be allowed.	
Goal CD-2: Achieve a balance between protecting open space and providing housing and employment, consistent with the small-town character of Sonoma.	
<i>Policies</i>	<i>Implementation Measures</i>
1.1 Do not annex land outside the designated sphere of influence.	Self-implementing.
1.2 Only consider extending utilities outside the sphere of influence if necessary to remedy public health emergency conditions.	Implemented through out-of-city water connection ordinance.
1.3 Maintain the sphere of influence as mapped for the effective time frame of this General Plan (through the year 2020).	Self-implementing.
1.4 Coordinate planning efforts with the County to protect adjacent agricultural land and open space.	1.4.1 Request and maintain a prominent role in the County development review process to comment on applications in the area around Sonoma, and actively promote County policies of city-centered growth and agricultural preservation.
	1.4.2 Support the Sonoma Valley Citizens Advisory Commission through staff assistance and timely appointments.

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Table CDE-5: Goals, Policies, and Implementation Measures

<i>Policies</i>	<i>Implementation Measures</i>
<p>1.5 Urban Growth Boundary: An Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) is established at the location shown on this General Plan’s Land Use Plan map. The UGB is a line beyond which urban development will not be allowed, except for public parks, public schools, and uses consistent with the General Plan “Agriculture” land use designation as of February 25, 2000 and the definition of “open space lands” set forth in Government Code section 65560(b) as of February 25, 2000.</p>	<p>1.5.1 UGB Implementation: Until December 31, 2020, the following General Plan provisions, as adopted by the City of Sonoma UGB Initiative, may not be amended except by a vote of the people: (i) the section entitled “Urban Growth Boundary” in the Community Development Element; (ii) Goal CD-I; (iii) Community Development Element Policy 5; and (iv) this policy 6. Until December 31, 2020, the location of the UGB depicted on the Land Use Plan may be amended only by a vote of the people, or by the City Council pursuant to the procedures set forth in (a) through (d) below.</p> <p>a. The City Council may, if it deems it to be in the public interest, amend the location of the UGB depicted on the Land Use Plan, provided that the amended boundary is within or coterminous with the limits of the UGB as established by the City of Sonoma UGB Initiative.</p> <p>b. To comply with State law regarding the provision of housing for all economic segments of the community, the City Council may amend the location of the UGB depicted on the Land Use Plan to accommodate lands to be designated for residential uses, provided that no more than five (5) acres of land may be brought into the UGB in any calendar year, and that no more than a total of twenty (20) acres may be brought into the UGB under this provision prior to December 31, 2020. Such an amendment may be adopted only if the City Council makes the following findings based on substantial evidence:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) That the application of any aspect of the UGB depicted on the Land Use Plan would constitute an unconstitutional taking of a landowner’s property, and 2) That the amendment and associated land use designation will allow additional land uses only to the minimum extent necessary to avoid such a taking of the landowner’s property. 3) That there is no available vacant or undeveloped residentially-designated land within the UGB to accommodate the proposed development, and it is not reasonably feasible to accommodate the proposed development by redesignating lands within the UGB for low-and very low-income housing; and 4) That the proposed development is necessary to comply with State law requirements for the provision of low-and very low-income housing, and the area of land within the proposed development will not exceed the minimum necessary to comply with State law. <p>c. Upon request by an affected landowner with a pending development application, the City Council may</p>

Table CDE-5: Goals, Policies, and Implementation Measures, Con't.

<i>Implementation Measure 1.5.1 (con't)</i>	
<p>amend the location of the UGB depicted on the Land Use Plan if it makes both of the following findings based on substantial evidence:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) That the application of any aspect of the UGB depicted on the Land Use Plan would constitute an unconstitutional taking of a landowner's property, and 2) That the amendment and associated land use designation will allow additional land uses only to the minimum extent necessary to avoid such a taking of the landowner's property. <p>d. Prior to amending the location of the UGB pursuant to subparagraphs (b) or (c) of this measure, the City Council shall hold at least one noticed public hearing for the purpose of receiving testimony and evidence from the applicant and the public on the proposed amendment and any findings proposed in connection with such amendment. This hearing shall occur in addition to any other public hearings regularly required for a General Plan amendment.</p> <p>e. The General Plan may be reorganized, and individual provisions may be renumbered or reordered in the course of ongoing updates of the General Plan in accordance with the requirements of state law, but the following General Plan provisions shall continue to be included in the General Plan until December 31, 2020, unless earlier repealed or amended by the voters of the City or, with respect to the location of the UGB as depicted on the Land Use Plan map, by the voters of the City or pursuant to the procedures set forth above: (i) the section entitled "Urban</p>	<p>Growth Boundary" in the Community Development Element; (ii) Goal CD-1; (iii) Community Development Element Policy 1.5; (iv) the location of the UGB (depicted on the Land the Plan map; and (v) this implementation measure 1.5.1. After December 31, 2020, this implementation measure 1.5.1 shall not apply, and the City Council, if it deems it in the public interest, may amend the above-referenced General Plan provisions addressed by this implementation measure in accordance with state law without a vote of the people.</p> <p>f. The City, and its departments, boards, commissions, officers and employees shall not approve any general plan amendment, zoning amendment, specific plan, specific plan amendment, rezoning, subdivision map, conditional use permit, or any other entitlement that is inconsistent with the following provisions of the General Plan: (i) the section entitled "Urban Growth Boundary" in the Community Development Element; (ii) Goal CD-1; (iii) Community Development Element Policy 1.5; (iv) the location of the UGB depicted on the Land Use Plan map; and (v) this implementation measure 1.5.1. Any general plan amendment, zoning amendment, rezoning, specific plan, specific plan amendment, subdivision map, conditional use permit, or any other entitlement approved by the City on land brought into the UGB under paragraphs (b) or (c) must be consistent with the findings made in connection with that land's inclusion within the UGB.</p>
<i>Policies</i>	<i>Implementation Measures</i>
1.6 Limit growth in Sonoma to a rate that is based on the cost-effective provision of services within the sphere of influence.	1.6.1 Periodically review and update the Growth Management Ordinance as necessary to respond to the availability of public services and infrastructure.
2.1 Implement the Land Use Plan through the review of new development and redevelopment.	Implemented through the Development Code and project review.
Goal CD-3: Expand joint planning efforts with the County and other public agencies in Sonoma Valley.	
3.1 Promote locally based efforts to address city and regional planning issues, including in ways that inform and influence State decisions that affect Sonoma.	3.1.1. Work with legislators and the League of California Cities to achieve an appropriate degree of local control in regional governance.
3.2 Work cooperatively with public agencies and citizens toward long-term, environmentally appropriate methods for providing services in the Sonoma Valley.	3.2.1 Seek and maintain City representation on County and regional boards such as the Transportation Authority, Open Space District, Local Area Formation Commission, and Waste Agency.
	3.2.2 Obtain periodic updates from the Sonoma Valley County Sanitation District and the Sonoma County Water Agency to assess progress in meeting planned demand for drinking water and sanitation.

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Table CDE-5: Goals, Policies, and Implementation Measures, Con't.

Goal CD-4: Encourage quality, variety, and innovation in new development.	
<i>Policies</i>	<i>Implementation Measures</i>
4.1 Promote innovative design and mixed uses through the Development Code.	4.1.1 Implement the Development Code and update it as necessary to ensure the provision of appropriate street connections, lot patterns, site designs, building forms, and pedestrian and bicycle facilities in specific areas of the community and to encourage useful innovation, especially with regard to sustainability.
4.2 Encourage a variety of unit types in residential projects.	See measure 4.1.1.
4.3 Coordinate development on small contiguous lots to the extent possible.	See measure 4.1.1.
4.4. Require pedestrian and bicycle access and amenities in all development.	4.4.4 Upgrade connections between streets and bike paths to make them safer, more visible, and more attractive.
Goal CD-5: Reinforce the historic, small-town characteristics that give Sonoma its unique sense of place.	
Goal CD-6: Establish Sonoma as a cultural center.	
5.1 Preserve and enhance the scale and heritage of the community without imposing rigid stylistic restrictions.	See measure 4.1.1.
5.2 Promote positive community interaction through provision of attractive public spaces.	See measure 4.1.1.
5.3 Protect important scenic vistas and natural resources, and incorporate significant views and natural features into project designs.	See measure 4.1.1.
5.4 Preserve and continue to utilize historic buildings as much as feasible.	See measure 4.1.1.
5.5 Promote higher density, infill development, while ensuring that building mass, scale, and form are compatible with neighborhood and town character.	See measure 4.1.1.
5.6 Pursue design consistency, improved pedestrian and bicycle access, and right-of-way beautification along the Highway 12 corridor.	5.6.1 Install consistent signage to identify City facilities, directional routes, city limits, and bike path/street connections.
	5.6.2 Extend right-of-way, landscaping, and streetscape improvements along Broadway south of MacArthur Street.
	5.6.3 Develop and implement design improvement plans for Sonoma Highway and West Napa Street.
5.7 Develop and implement design improvements that highlight the primary gateways to Sonoma.	5.7.1 Install and upgrade landscaping, signs, monuments, and streetscape improvements to clearly mark Sonoma's gateways at: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Four Corners • West Napa Street/Sonoma Highway • Fifth Street East/Napa Road • Fifth Street West/Leveroni Road • Sonoma Highway/Verano Avenue

Table CDE-5: Goals, Policies, and Implementation Measures, Con't.

<i>Policies</i>		<i>Implementation Measures</i>	
5.8	Encourage the designation and preservation of local historic structures and landmarks, and protect cultural resources.	5.8.1	Develop incentives for property owners to preserve historic resources.
		5.8.2	Refer development proposals to the California Archaeological Inventory at Sonoma State University to ensure that important archeological sites are identified and protected.
5.9	Promote public art that is consistent with the history and character of Sonoma.	5.9.1	Adopt a public art plan, to be administered by the Cultural and Fine Arts Commission, and establish a public art ordinance.

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LOCAL ECONOMY

The Local Economy Element calls for a healthy, growing, sustainable economy, compatible with Sonoma's scale and character and contributing to its quality of life. In particular, the preservation and enhancement of the valley's agricultural industry is key to ensuring the long-term viability of a diverse economic base that meets the needs of both the present and future generations of local residents and visitors. In the vision of Sonoma's future underlying the policies and programs established in the element, the valley's economy will be balanced by retail, service, and professional businesses, with agriculture as a strong and essential component, supported and enhanced by tourism.

Resident and visitor patronage will allow existing and new local businesses to thrive, and established commercial centers, such as the Plaza, will be filled with pedestrians, many of whom live in or near the area. Eighth Street East will be developed as an agricultural production and service center, with an office/light industrial component at its southern end. Four Corners will become a vibrant commercial area and town gateway, featuring high quality architecture, a mix of resident- and visitor-serving uses, and a strong residential presence in mixed-use and multi-family development.

The city will continue to exhibit a strong sense of community and will remain a working town, with a large proportion of residents employed in the immediate area and with housing for all economic segments of the local workforce. Recognizing that Sonoma's economy cannot be separated from that of the larger

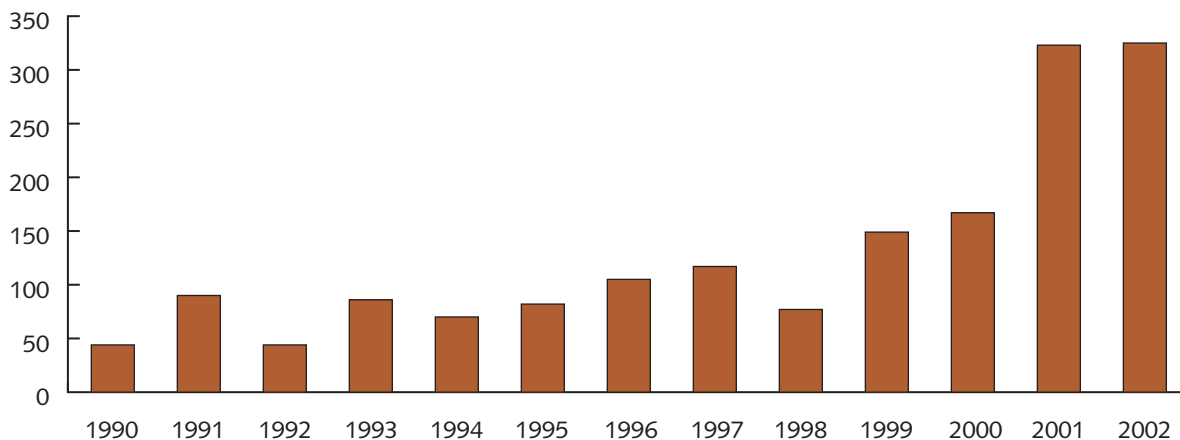
valley, the Local Economy Element emphasizes cooperation with the County to meet City objectives.

COMMUNITY DIRECTIONS

The directions set forth in the Local Economy Element are derived from public input during the General Plan update process. Participants in community workshops and City study sessions generally agreed that a healthy economy is essential to Sonoma's quality of life, and that economic growth should contribute to the enhancement of the community rather than be viewed as an end in itself. Public discussion indicated that steps could be taken to improve the business climate and to ensure that new economic development contributes to quality of life for the community. The main points of agreement, which form the basis of the element's policies and implementation measures, are as follows:

- Small businesses should be encouraged, and City regulations should be streamlined to facilitate business development.
- The relationship between tourism and agriculture should be emphasized. These activities should be nurtured to enhance the role of agriculture in Sonoma Valley, which provides a relatively clean source of economic activity.
- Sonoma should not become a bedroom community. Good jobs and housing opportunities for all income levels should be provided so that those who work in Sonoma may also live here.

Figure LE-1: Sonoma Valley Business Growth, 1990–2002



Source: Claritas, Inc., Business Listings Data, 2003.

ECONOMIC CLIMATE

Although local government has little influence on general economic conditions, there are things the City can do—or refrain from doing—to improve conditions for local enterprises, especially small businesses. Among various outreach efforts, the City’s Economic Development Partnership with the Sonoma Valley Chamber of Commerce assists local companies with regulatory process concerns and offers small business counseling. Policies and implementation measures provided in the Local Economy Element include evaluate City policies and ordinances for their effect on the business community and simplifying regulations where possible. This streamlining is especially important because the businesses that exist today are also businesses of the future in Sonoma.

Helping to increase occupancy at local hotels is another means of boosting the local economy, as is creating opportunities to meet the increasing demand for office space. Additional measures for improving business conditions include providing for ground-floor retail and mixed use developments to encourage a pedestrian consumer presence, and developing additional off-street parking near the Plaza. Visitor

spending would also be supported through a program to improve directional signage and beautify alleys in the Plaza area. Encouraging home-based operations (about 20% of companies in Sonoma) to grow by moving into commercial locations is another technique to support local business in multiple ways.

The city’s economy also is inextricably linked to that of the Sonoma Valley. Figure LE-1 shows that the number of business in the valley has increased sharply, while Table LE-1 indicates that many Sonomans work outside the city in the valley. As the commercial center of the valley, Sonoma depends on residents of the surrounding unincorporated area as consumers of products and services. The extent of this reliance is considerable, for the city houses only about one-fourth of the valley population. The city’s tourism industry (hotels, restaurants, specialty stores, etc.) benefits greatly from the presence of vineyards, wineries, and other agricultural activities in Sonoma Valley. In recognition of these relationships, the Local Economy Element calls for cooperation with the County and local businesses groups. Among its many purposes, such coordination can identify opportunities for the use of City redevelopment funds to create or promote economic development.

Table LE-1: Place of Work for Sonoma Residents, 1990 and 2000

Place of Work	City of Sonoma		Sonoma County	
	1990	2000	1990	2000
Worked in County	72.9%	66.1%	81.8%	82.0%
Worked in Place of Residence	43.2%	38.3%	39.0%	29.7%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1990 and 2000 U.S. Census.

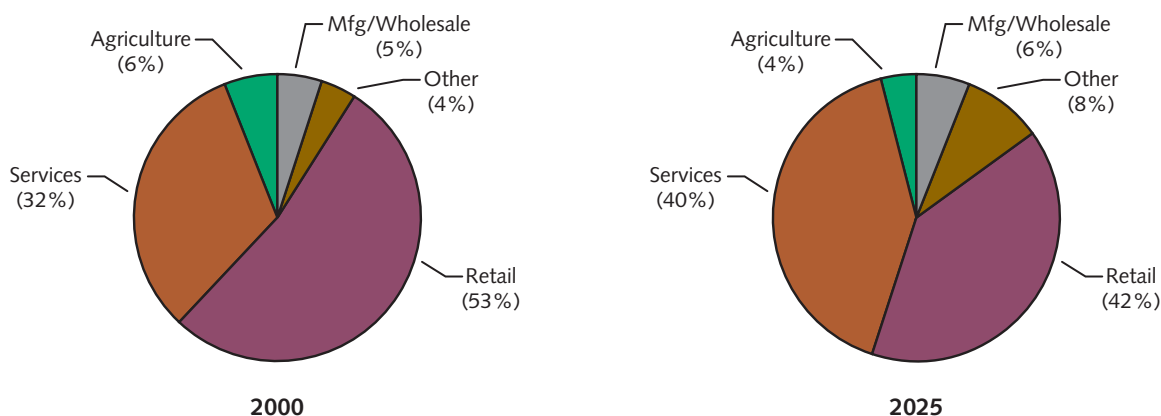
AGRICULTURE AND TOURISM

Agriculture is the valley's oldest industry and remains an economic mainstay. The influence of agriculture extends beyond the jobs and sales it generates to the scenic qualities enjoyed by everyone in the valley. The agricultural heritage and pastoral beauty of the valley draw visitors to the region from all over the world. Although the physical impacts of tourism are relatively ephemeral (tourists eventually return home), visitors to Sonoma create long-lasting positive economic impacts, especially by supporting shops and restaurants that could not survive on local dollars alone, and the tourist dollars spent in those establishments circulate among other businesses in the community.

Numerous policies and implementation measures are provided throughout the General Plan in support of agriculture. Those in the Local Economy Element include monitoring development applications in the unincorporated area to discourage proposals inconsistent with agricultural uses. In addition, agricultural uses and activities within city limits, such as the farmer's market, will continue to be encouraged. The element also supports the tourism industry and recognizes the critical role of the Sonoma Valley Visitor's Bureau in promoting Sonoma Valley and responding to visitor inquiries.

JOBS AND HOUSING

Sonoma is not a bedroom community, but many residents have expressed concern that the high cost of local housing could make it one. U.S. Census data show that in 1990, 57% of employed residents in the city had a commute of less than 20 minutes, while in 2000 that number dropped to 47%. In 2000, 43% of jobs in Sonoma were in retail, with another 40 percent in the service industry (see Figure LE-2). These sectors—retail in particular—tend to pay wages that are low relative to manufacturing and professional employment and perhaps not adequate to obtain hous-

Figure LE-2: City of Sonoma Employment Distribution

Source: Association of Bay Area Governments, *Projections 2002*.

LOCAL ECONOMY ELEMENT

ing in Sonoma’s high priced market. In response to this issue, the Local Economy Element focuses on encouraging the creation of higher-paying jobs, including at Four Corners where significant commercial development potential exists. The Housing Element promotes a mix of housing types, including affordable units, to ensure opportunities for all members of the workforce to find decent housing.

EIGHTH STREET EAST

Eighth Street East has long been pointed to as a place for larger-scale commercial development than could be accommodated within the city or elsewhere in the valley. The City’s 1985 General Plan, for example, designated large areas on Eighth Street East for office park and light industrial development. Nothing of that kind has yet materialized, however, because infrastructure deficiencies continue to constrain development. Although about 2 million square feet of office, warehouse, and light industrial development has been constructed or approved by the County around the airport, the general lack of sewer, water, road, and drainage infrastructure in the Eighth Street East area major obstacles to intensive development. The valley as a whole suffers from the geographic disadvantage, in terms of attracting some types of office park and light industrial uses, of being isolated from the Highway 101 corridor (which abounds with relatively inexpensive sites designated for light industrial). While the County is ultimately responsible for processing and deciding on development applications along Eighth Street East, the Local Economy Element provides a framework for working with the County and policy direction regarding City objectives for the area.

COORDINATION WITH OTHER ELEMENTS

The Local Economy Element is related to all other General Plan elements, but its primary links are with the Community Development, Housing, and Envi-

ronmental Resource elements. Additional information on the local economy is provided in the General Plan Background Report.

Community Development Element

In the Community Development Element, the Land Use Plan identifies areas suitable for commercial development and redevelopment through the Commercial, Gateway Commercial, and Mixed Use land use designations. By establishing a tight sphere of influence, the Land Use Plan helps preserve agricultural land, supporting policies in the Local Economy Element to ensure the continued vitality of farming and related activities. The provision of services and infrastructure, both of which are critical to economic growth, is addressed in the Community Development Element, as are policies and implementation measures related to urban design, including specific guidelines for development along Broadway and in the Four Corners area.

Housing Element

If Sonoma is to avoid becoming a bedroom community, suitable housing must be provided for all economic segments of the workforce. The provision of variety in new housing development, consistent with the character of the community, is a key theme of the Housing Element. The Housing Element also contains policies and implementation measures for the provision of housing in commercial areas and as a component of mixed use development, complementing measures in the Local Economy Element intended to promote commercial vitality by encouraging pedestrian-friendliness in business areas.

Environmental Resources Element

As expressed in the sole goal of the Local Economy Element, economic growth should contribute to, not detract from, quality of life in Sonoma. In this regard, the preservation and enhancement of agriculture is recognized in both elements as critical. Complementing initiatives set forth in the Local Economy Element

for the enhancement of agriculture as an industry, the Environmental Resources Element establishes policies and implementation measures for protecting the greenbelt and preserving agricultural lands. In addition, the Environmental Resources Element augments the Local Economy Element with policies and implementation measures promoting energy and water conservation, encouraging recycling, and regulating the disposal of hazardous materials.

Circulation Element

Adequate circulation is critical to the local economy. Sonoma faces unique transportation challenges resulting from its role as the commercial hub of the valley, its location along Highway 12, and its popularity as a tourist destination. The Circulation Element

promotes a balanced transportation system, in which provisions are made to ensure adequate traffic flow while limiting the need for traffic improvements by encouraging transit, bicycling, and walking. Efforts in the Local Economy Element to increase the presence of pedestrians in the downtown and in other commercial areas are supported by policies and implementation measures in the Circulation Element to improve sidewalks and add pedestrian amenities, and enhance pedestrian and bicycle safety.

GOALS, POLICIES, AND IMPLEMENTATION

Goals, policies, and implementation measures for the Local Economy Element are set forth in the following table.

Table LE-2: Goals, Policies, and Implementation Measures

Goal LE-1: Support and enhance the local economy in a manner consistent with Sonoma's character and in furtherance of its quality of life.	
<i>Policies</i>	<i>Implementation Measures</i>
1.1 Focus on the retention and attraction of businesses that reinforce Sonoma's distinctive qualities—such as agriculture, food and wine, history and art—and that offer high-paying jobs.	1.1.1 Work with the Chamber of Commerce to implement an economic development strategy that includes incentives for expanding existing businesses, techniques for attracting companies that fit Sonoma's character and respect the natural environment, and methods for providing infrastructure to support current and future local enterprises. 1.1.2 Work with education, non-profit, and business organizations to create and administer programs intended to support business attraction and retention and entrepreneurship in Sonoma.
1.2 Encourage mixed use development that includes small-scale, local-serving commercial uses, provided it will be compatible with surrounding development.	Implemented through the Commercial and Mixed-Use land use designations.
1.3 Support efforts by the County and other organizations to ensure the long-term viability of the agricultural economy in Sonoma Valley, including by preventing urban development from encroaching into agricultural areas.	1.3.1 Monitor County project review through the SVCAC in order to support commercial proposals in appropriate areas such as the Eighth Street East and Highway 12 corridors, and to oppose any proposed development in locations that would be incompatible with neighboring agricultural uses.
1.4 Encourage the continued production of agricultural commodities within the city and local-serving agricultural marketing opportunities.	Implementation measures 1.1.1 and 1.3.1.

Table LE-3: Goals, Policies, and Implementation Measures, Con't.

<i>Policies</i>		<i>Implementation Measures</i>	
1.5	Promote and accommodate year-round tourism that is consistent with the historic, small-town character of Sonoma.	1.5.1	Work with the Sonoma Valley Visitors Bureau and other organizations to 1) attract overnight visitors, especially during off-peak periods, 2) market locally-produced goods, and 3) promote tourism that supports and enhances Sonoma's qualities.
1.6	Ensure that city regulations do not unduly burden local business operation and development and provide incentives for business improvement.	1.6.1	Update the Development Code, Sign Ordinance, and other City regulations as necessary to streamline or reduce regulation of business where feasible, in a manner consistent with other City policies.
		1.6.2	Provide Redevelopment Agency loans to businesses desiring to make aesthetic and structural improvements.
1.7	Encourage efforts to develop new employment opportunities along Eighth Street East.	See implementation measure 1.3.1.	
1.8	Preserve and enhance the historic Plaza area as a unique, retail-oriented commercial and cultural center that attracts both residents and visitors.	1.8.1	Prepare a plan to increase the use and efficiency of parking lots and off-street parking areas around the Plaza.
		1.8.2	Work with the Chamber of Commerce and merchants to install directional signs and improve the appearance and usefulness of alleys around the Plaza.
1.9	Encourage a residential and pedestrian presence in commercial centers through mixed use and multi-family development.	Implemented through the Commercial and Mixed-use land use designations.	
1.10	Promote ground-floor retail uses in commercial areas as a means of generating pedestrian activity.	Implemented through the Commercial and Mixed-use land use designations.	
1.11	Establish a commercial center at Four Corners with a mix of resident and visitor-serving uses, cohesive and high-quality design, circulation connections to adjacent areas, and a built-in residential component.	1.11.1	Establish an annexation policy for the Four Corners area that will achieve integrated and orderly development.
		Also implemented through the Community Development Element.	
1.12	Encourage home-based businesses.	1.12.1	Offer time-limited Redevelopment Agency lease subsidies to home-based business ready to expand into traditional commercial space.
1.13	Support the efforts of the Sonoma Valley Hospital to respond to community needs and changes in health care.	1.13.1	Work with the Hospital District and other interested parties to identify and evaluate site options.

ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES ELEMENT

The Environmental Resources Element addresses two state-mandated element subjects—open space and conservation—plus recreation, an optional topic. Because issues in Sonoma associated with open space, conservation, and recreation are interwoven, they are combined in this section of the General Plan. The high value placed on environmental resources in and around Sonoma provides the foundation for the goals, policies and implementation measures in the Environmental Resources Element. The following objectives related to environmental issues have been expressed consistently by the community during the General Plan update process:

- Natural features should be preserved, including scenic hillsides, creek and riparian areas, trees, and wildlife habitat.
- The sphere of influence should be defined by surrounding open space, including agricultural lands, all of which should be protected.
- Open space areas should be accessible, linked with trails and bike paths, and provided in new development.
- City decisions regarding environmental resources should be guided by the principles of sustainability—meeting the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs without jeopardizing natural features or functions, and successfully balancing economic, environmental, and social equity concerns.



Montini Property, Fifth Street West

GREENBELT

Sonomans are fortunate to have the hills and adjacent agricultural lands provide a natural greenbelt. This greenbelt not only serves as a visual amenity, but also plays an important role in defining the community's character. Much of Sonoma's small town charm derives from the hillside backdrop and agricultural lands that frame the city, and the creeks, riparian corridors, and parks that comprise the natural environment within Sonoma.

The community consensus that the city and sphere of influence should be delineated by surrounding open space is embodied in Goals 1 and 2, following, which focus on preservation and enhancement of open space and significant environmental resources, including hillsides and land in and around Sonoma currently

ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES ELEMENT

in agricultural use. One supporting policy calls for maintaining the agricultural greenbelt surrounding the city. Other policies and implementation measures in this element seek to preserve open space and agriculture and regulate hillside development—means by which the long-term maintenance of the greenbelt may be accomplished.

OPEN SPACE

Open space includes land in a variety of categories. In Sonoma, open space is composed of agricultural land, hillsides, creeks, riparian corridors, parks, and small pockets of land with less intensive uses, including small vineyard, garden, grazing, and horse pasture areas. Much of the open space outside the city consists of larger parcels in agricultural use. Although these lands, along with most of the hillsides viewed from Sonoma, are not within the City’s jurisdiction, they are of primary importance because they provide a natural greenbelt, contain a variety of natural resources, and contribute significantly to the scenic beauty of Sonoma.

Three major creeks flow through the city. Sonoma Creek, the major waterway of Sonoma Valley, forms the city’s western boundary and provides a vital wildlife link for the region. Nathanson Creek flows from the northeastern corner of the city through the east-side residential section. Fryer Creek flows through the west and southwest portions of the city though in large part is channelized or culverted within city limits. In addition to their riparian values, these creeks help define neighborhoods and form an important basis of the city open space and trail system.

The importance of preserving open space is expressed in Goal 1 of this element, which provides for the acquisition and protection of important open space lands in and around Sonoma. Supporting policies include implementing the open space preservation plan, requiring new development to include both



Fryer Creek, at West MacArthur Street

private and public open space, and cooperating in County acquisition efforts, protecting scenic views, and securing public access to hillside areas, as appropriate. Goal 3 and accompanying policies and actions emphasize the need to respect the local environment by preserving and protecting natural features.

SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES

The long-term health of the local and larger natural environment requires the current generation to put into place resource conservation and management practices that will be maintained by future generations. City operations and requirements for private development need to ensure that:

- Renewable resources such as groundwater, soil, and fish are not used faster than they can regenerate;
- Non-renewable resources such as minerals and fossil fuels are not consumed faster than renewable alternatives can be substituted for them;

- Pollution and waste are not emitted faster or in greater volumes than natural systems can absorb, recycle, or render them harmless.

The City can play an important role in achieving a sustainable Sonoma by adopting and promoting standards for green building and facility operation that conserve land, materials, water, and energy, as called for by Goal 3 and corresponding policies and implementation measures.

RECREATION

The social and physical health of the community depends on passive and active recreational opportunities for all citizens. The city recreation system consists of a network of trails and bike paths linking residential areas with open space, neighborhood parks, and community parks (see Figure CE-1 in the Circulation Element). These parks mainly provide opportunities for passive recreation and spontaneous games (see Table ER-1). Residents also have easy access to County recreation facilities at Arnold Field and Maxwell Farms Regional Park, which are contiguous to the city. The 58-acre Vallejo Home State Park, which constitutes the largest open space area in Sonoma, offers both educational and recreational opportunities. Goal 4 and accompanying policies and implementation measures



Sonoma Plaza

highlight the importance of maintaining adequate recreational space and facilities to serve everyone in Sonoma.

COORDINATION WITH OTHER ELEMENTS

The environment cuts across jurisdictional boundaries and transcends legal definitions. While the Environmental Resources Element provides a focus for policies that reflect Sonoma's environmental values, related issues are addressed throughout the General Plan.

The Community Development Element

Through the Land Use Plan, the Community Development Element provides the framework for achieving many of the goals set forth in the Environmental Resources Element, most notably through delineation of a tight sphere of influence and implementation of policies controlling annexation and extension of urban services. By limiting the sphere of influence, the Land Use Plan helps protect Sonoma's greenbelt by preventing the encroachment of development. The Land Use Plan also provides for maintaining agricultural and hillside open space land in the city, and the Community Development Element establishes the policy basis for cooperative planning with Sonoma County. By applying the Mixed Use land use designation and locating higher density residential development near commercial centers, the Community Development Element also seeks to reduce auto dependency and promote alternative forms of transportation, objectives that help protect environmental resources.

The Local Economy Element

Agriculture is the main link between the Local Economy Element and the Environmental Resources Element. The Local Economy Element contains policies and implementation measures aimed at ensuring the continued health of Sonoma Valley's agricultural economy. Consistent with the Community Development Element, preventing the encroachment of

ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES ELEMENT

Table ER-1: Acreage & Description of Park & Recreation Facilities

Facility	City Parks	Regional Parks	State Parks	Description
State				
Casa Grande/Mission			2.0	Museum and historic structures including the Mission San Francisco de Solano.
Vallejo Home			57.7	Museum and historic structures. Class 1 bike path.
County/Open Space District				
Arnold/Teeter Field		4.9		1 base ball diamond, 2 little league diamonds, one football field.
Maxwell Farms Regional Park		85.0		Biking, hiking, 2 soccer fields, playground, 2 tennis courts, 1 basketball court, 1 volley ball court and a skate park.
Montini Ranch		97.2		Open space, to be developed with trails.
City of Sonoma				
Plaza Park	8.5			Picnicking, amphitheater, two play areas, duck pond, fish pond, fountain and rose garden.
Depot Park	4.6			Museum, train cars, petanque courts, volleyball, horseshoe, picnicking and children's playground. Class 1 bike path.
Olsen Park	2.0			Picnicking, basketball, playground. Class 1 bike path.
Pinelli Park	0.5			Picnicking and playground.
Eraldi Park	5.6			Associated with Sassarini School. Soccer, volleyball and softball.
El Prado Green	0.8			Neighborhood open space.
Nathanson Creek Park/Roland Hawk Preserve	2.8			Picnicking, playground and 2-acre natural creek area. Class 1 bike path. (Part of the Nathanson Creek Master Plan.)
Hertenstein Park	0.8			Picnicking, children's play area and winter creek. Class 1 bike path.
Cuneo Parcels	0.5			Open space, not yet developed with park facilities. Swale.
Jean K.T. Carter Park	3.0			Half-court basketball, lawn and picnic areas, play equipment, passive open space. Bike path connects to Fryer bike path.
Grinstead Park	0.1			Unimproved natural area with benches.
Bond Property	7.0			Community garden, care-taker's residence.
Madera Park	2.9			Picnicking and passive recreation. Class 1 bike path.
Armstrong Park	1.5			Picnicking, and passive recreation
Field of Dreams	7.0			Several configurations of playing fields including baseball and soccer. Class 1 bike path.
MacArthur Park	0.7			Picnicking and children's playground.
Sonoma Valley Oaks	1.0			Picnicking and passive recreation.
Starr Ranch Park	0.1			Picnicking and passive recreation.
Overlook Trail	44.0			Hiking trail, natural open space.
Nathanson Creek Preserve	2.9			Unimproved natural area. Class 1 bike path. (Part of the Nathanson Creek Master Plan.)
Total	96.3	187.1	59.7	
Grand Total: 343.1 acres				

Source: Sonoma County Outdoor Recreation Plan, 2003; City of Sonoma.

development into agricultural areas is a major policy directive of the element. In addition, the Local Economy Element supports the continued use of agricultural lands within the city. It also complements environmental quality by encouraging mixed use development and a pedestrian presence in commercial areas to help to reduce automobile use.

The Housing Element

The Housing Element and the Environmental Resources Element mesh on both the scales of citywide policies and development-specific regulations. For example, by providing the policy basis for the Growth Management Ordinance, the Housing Element regulates the city's growth rate, which ultimately affects environmental quality. In addition the Housing Element, in conjunction with the Community Development Element, provides for housing opportunities within and adjacent to commercial areas and in mixed

use development to help reduce auto use. At the project level, the Housing Element includes policies promoting water and energy conservation.

The Circulation Element

Through its policies aimed at promoting transit use and walking and biking, the Circulation Element provides the basis for both transportation and recreation systems that help sustain the environment and community health. The network of bicycle and pedestrian facilities that link Sonoma's parks, cultural facilities, schools, civic places, and commercial centers also provide access to important natural features.

GOALS, POLICIES, AND IMPLEMENTATION

The goals, policies, and implementation measures of the Environmental Resources Element are set forth in the following table.

Table ER-2: Goals, Policies, and Implementation Measures

Goal ER-1: Acquire and protect important open space in and around Sonoma.	
<i>Policies</i>	<i>Implementation Measures</i>
1.1 Maintain the greenbelt surrounding the city.	Implemented through Urban Growth Boundary.
1.2 Base open space dedication and acquisition decisions on creating a network of public and private spaces that reflects the significant natural and cultural characteristics of Sonoma.	1.2.1 Carry out the conservation and acquisition programs of the City Open Space Preservation Strategic Plan, in cooperation with the Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District and other interested agencies and organizations.
1.3 Support community programs that preserve and promote agriculture.	1.3.1 Assist in establishing and administering programs that support local agriculture, such as the Sonoma Community Agriculture Project and the Farmers' Market.
1.4 Require new development to provide adequate private and, where appropriate, public open space.	1.4.1 Enforce the provisions of the Development Code to ensure that new development provides adequate and attractive public and private open space, while monitoring existing parkland maintenance needs.
Goal ER-2: Identify, preserve, and enhance important habitat areas and significant environmental resources.	
2.1 Monitor the health of local environmental resources.	2.1.1 Work with the Sonoma Ecology Center and other appropriate parties to establish and maintain an inventory of significant local environmental resources and features.

ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES ELEMENT

Table ER-2: Goals, Policies, and Implementation Measures, Con't.

<i>Policies</i>		<i>Implementation Measures</i>	
2.2	Preserve habitat that supports threatened, rare, or endangered species identified by State or federal agencies.	2.2.1	Evaluate development applications in terms of potential impacts on significant biological resources.
2.3	Protect and, where necessary, enhance riparian corridors.	2.3.1	Work with the County Water Agency, State Department of Fish and Game, the Sonoma Ecology Center and other interested parties to implement guidelines and regulations for preserving and enhancing riparian corridors and wildlife habitat.
2.4	Protect Sonoma Valley watershed resources, including surface and ground water supplies and quality.	2.4.1	Prepare and implement a comprehensive strategy for water conservation and the protection of water quality, including quantified objectives, with the goal of producing a Water Element for the General Plan.
		2.4.2	Update the Development Code to ensure that new development incorporates applicable “best-management” construction and post-construction practices and design features, including maintenance programs where warranted, that provide quantified results in reducing run-off and protecting water quality.
		2.4.3	Work with the Sonoma County Water Agency, the Valley of the Moon Water District, the Sonoma Ecology Center and other appropriate agencies to monitor groundwater resources and to develop a ground water management plan, including guidelines and standards for preserving and enhancing valley watershed and surface and groundwater resources.
		2.4.4	Continue the street sweeping program and extend it as necessary to serve new development.
2.5	Require erosion control and soil conservation practices that support watershed protection.	See measure 2.4.2, above.	
2.6	Preserve existing trees and plant new trees.	2.6.1	Develop amendments to the Tree Ordinance to further protect significant trees on private property.
		2.6.2	Carry out the programs of the City Tree Planting Plan, including preserving existing trees through the Tree Ordinance and increasing canopy cover, streetscape trees, parking lot shading, and tree maintenance.
2.7	Advocate for only limited and environmentally appropriate hillside development in areas outside Sonoma but within the city viewshed.	2.7.1	Work with the County Planning Department and the Sonoma Valley Citizens Advisory Commission to monitor development proposed for hillsides visible from the city.
2.8	Promote awareness of local and regional environmental resources and issues.	See measure 2.1.1	
2.9	Require development to avoid potential impacts to wildlife habitat, air quality, and other significant biological resources, or to adequately mitigate such impacts if avoidance is not feasible.	See measures 2.2.1 and 2.3.1.	
		2.9.1	Evaluate applications for new development in terms of their potential to expose sensitive uses to substantial air pollutant concentrations and/or to create or emit objectionable odors.

Table ER-2: Goals, Policies, and Implementation Measures, Con't.

Goal ER-3: Conserve natural resources to ensure their long-term sustainability.	
<i>Policies</i>	<i>Implementation Measures</i>
3.1 Increase the conservation-effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of the solid waste source reduction program through expanded recycling and composting.	3.1.1 Work with the Sonoma County Waste Management Agency and other interested parties to expand source reduction, recycling and compost programs, especially at the local level.
3.2 Encourage construction, building maintenance, landscaping, and transportation practices that promote energy and water conservation and reduce green-house gas emissions.	3.2.1 Implement a sustainability program that includes quantified objectives, standards and incentives for green construction and assistance to local businesses and agricultural operations to institute green practices for construction and land, energy, and water conservation.
	3.2.2 Continue to implement the Xeriscape Ordinance and update it as necessary to achieve water conservation objectives.
3.3 Set an example of sustainability by conserving resources and following green practices in City facilities, services, and projects.	3.3.1 Develop a sustainable resource conservation strategy for City facilities, services, and projects with quantifiable standards that serves as a model of green building and operation for the community.
Goal ER-4: Respond to the recreational needs of the community.	
4.1 Monitor and quantify the recreational needs of the community, provide new facilities as necessary, and encourage optimal use of existing facilities.	4.1.1 Work with the County, school district, and other appropriate agencies and organizations to coordinate public use of recreation facilities and the development of new facilities.
	4.1.2 Develop and implement park use and special event procedures that protect City parks and recreation facilities from undue wear, mitigate event impacts, and ensure an appropriate balance between the cultural, recreational and promotional benefits associated with special events and their potential impacts on residents and local businesses.
4.2 Provide a minimum of 5 acres of open space and parkland per 1,000 city residents.	4.2.1 Enforce the provisions of the Development Code to ensure that new development provides adequate and attractive public and private open space, while monitoring existing parkland maintenance needs.
4.3 Link neighborhoods and recreational, cultural, educational, civic, and commercial destinations with bicycle and pedestrian facilities.	Implemented through the Bicycle Plan.
	4.3.1 Publish a recreation guide that includes local trails and bike routes.

CIRCULATION ELEMENT

One of the most important components of a community is its circulation network. It provides the connection between different land uses, linking homes to shopping, jobs, and recreation. An efficient and integrated transportation system enables Sonoma residents to combine the benefits of small-town living with the job and recreation opportunities afforded by easy access to Sonoma Valley, Santa Rosa, Marin County, and San Francisco.

The purpose of the Circulation Element is to coordinate development of the city circulation system with existing and planned land uses. Areas of particular focus include pedestrian, bicycle, and transit improvements, as well as auto use. This element balances the need to facilitate and promote alternative modes of transportation—including buses, bicycling, and walking—with the provision of an effective roadway network that reflects the character and scale of Sonoma.

The Circulation Element serves as the policy basis for the development of an integrated circulation system by providing for alternative modes of transportation, and it specifies the improvements necessary to resolve existing deficiencies and accommodate planned growth. The discussion of circulation network components begins with pedestrian and bicycle issues, followed by transit and auto use, with separate goals, policies, and implementation measures provided for each. Overall, the element emphasizes the importance of promoting alternatives to auto use as a means of avoiding the need for or minimizing road improvements while maintaining adequate service levels.

WALKING

Sonoma is a city with a size and a scale well-suited to walking. This is one of the features that makes the Plaza so enticing to both local residents and visitors. Unfortunately, many of the characteristics that make the Plaza area so pleasant to walk around vanish as one travels to other commercial and residential areas of the city. People who might otherwise choose to walk to the store, the library, or a restaurant do not because they are often confronted with intimidating noise, inconvenience, lack of shade, and even lack of sidewalks. So instead they get in their car and drive. This creates a dilemma: as most people tend to drive, there is little incentive to provide amenities for pedestrians, but because there are few amenities for pedestrians, most people tend not to walk.

Goal 1 of the Circulation Element and its associated policies and implementation measures are intended to recognize and enhance the inherent positive qualities of walking in Sonoma to get more people out of their cars more often. As discussed in the following section on bicycles, Class 1 bikeways are also commonly used as pedestrian pathways and serve as important links in the pedestrian network.

BICYCLING

Sonoma's size, scale, climate, and topography make it ideal for bicycling. However, many residents continue to use automobiles because the city lacks the facilities and amenities to render biking an efficient alternative to driving. The second goal and policy set

CIRCULATION ELEMENT

in the Circulation Element promotes bicycling as a means of reducing the number of vehicle trips on the local roadway network, recognizing it as more than just a recreational activity. Class 1 bicycle facilities in Sonoma also function as an important element in the pedestrian pathway system. Policies and implementation programs in this section recognize this dual use and seek to minimize conflicts between bicyclists and pedestrians.

Bicycle Safety

Safety is a primary consideration for the bicycle network. Safety issues extend to the overall layout of the bike path system, the design of specific features such as bike lanes and crossings, and public education, all of which are addressed in the policies and implementation measures that follow. The City Bicycle Plan proposes additional Class 1 bike lanes to help separate bicycle and automobile traffic, as well as new bikeway connections to schools (see Figure CE-1 for existing and proposed bicycle routes). One of the implementation measures (below) addresses potential conflicts between bikes and cars by calling for the Traffic Safety Committee to review existing and proposed bike path street crossings and develop recommendations to improve safety and visibility. The Circulation Element also provides for the continuation and expansion of the City’s bicycle safety program. Design standards for bicycle facilities are set forth in the Development Code.

Bikeway Classifications

Bikeways are typically classified as being one of three types:

Class 1: A completely separated right-of-way designated for the exclusive use of bicycles and pedestrians, commonly called a “bike path.” Cross-flows by pedestrians and motorists are minimized. The paths along Fryer Creek and the abandoned railroad right-of-way through the northern part of the city are Class 1 routes.



Class 1 bike path near East MacArthur Street

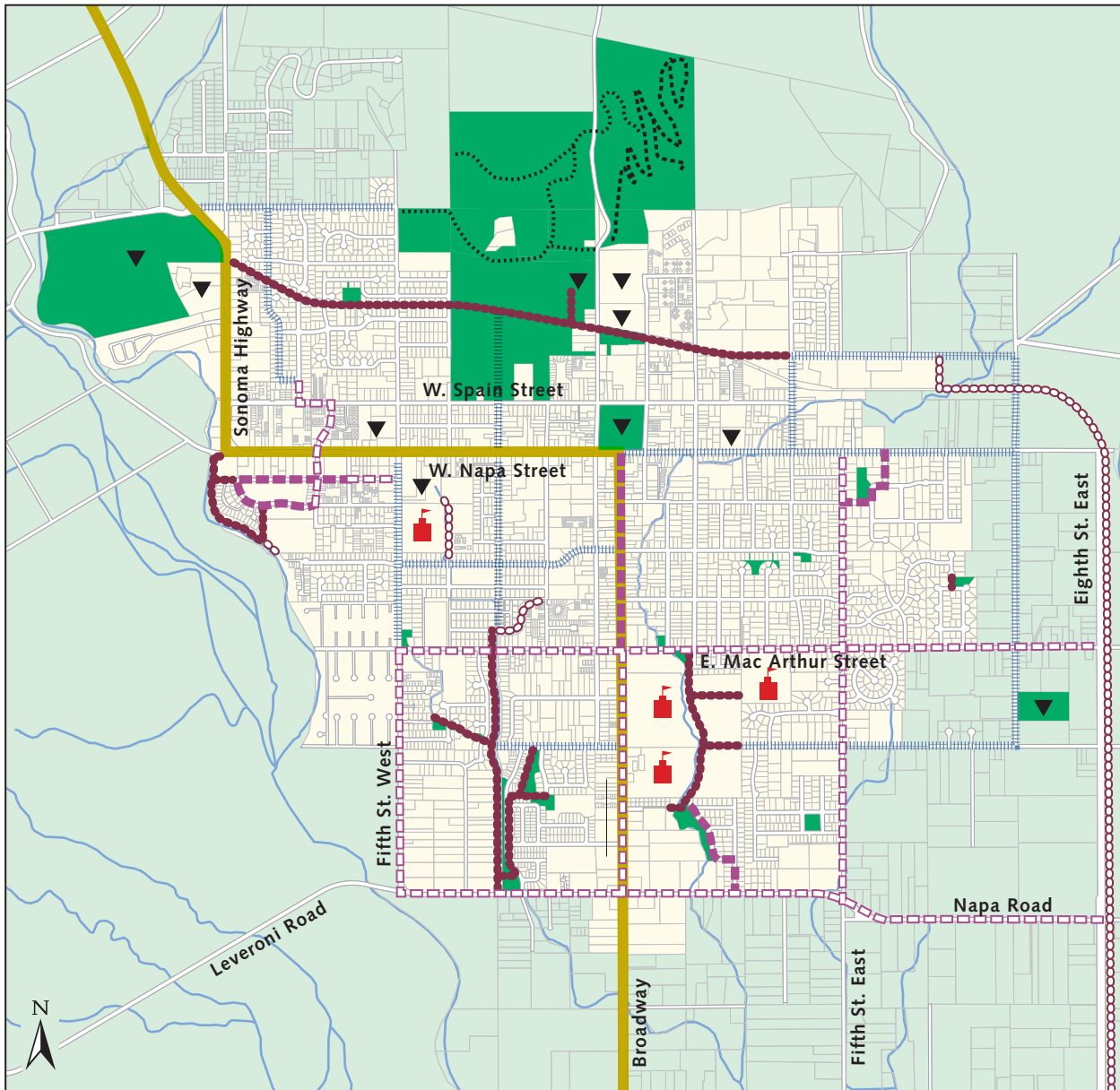
Class 2: A restricted right-of-way along a street designated for the exclusive or semi-exclusive use of bicycles, identified by pavement markings and signage and commonly referred to as a “bike lane.” Through travel by pedestrians or motor vehicles is not allowed. Bike lanes presently exist along Dewell Drive and portions of Broadway and Studley and Oregon Streets.

Class 3: A shared street right-of-way designated by signs placed on vertical posts or stenciled on the pavement. These bikeways, which share right-of-way with motor vehicles and are typically called “bike routes,” offer the least protection from automobile traffic. They are typically used to indicate preferred routes.

Many variations of these standard types are possible. Striping along shoulders can be used to designate bike lanes in areas without enough room for a standard Class 2 lane. This reduces the width of vehicle travel lanes and creates a common area shared by bicyclists and parked cars. Alternatives to standard bike lanes are presented in the Development Code and the Bicycle Plan.

Bicycle and Trail Plan

The City’s Bicycle and Trail Plan (Figure CE-1) shows proposed bikeways for Sonoma. The system includes all three classes of bikeway—as well as the Caltrans/



	Existing	Proposed		
Class 1 Bike Path			Park/Designated Open Space	
Class 2 Bike Path			Public School	
Class 3 Bike Path	(N.A.)		Other Destination	
Hiking Trail			Caltrans Touring Route	



Figure CE-1

Bicycle and Trail Plan

Source: City of Sonoma.

CIRCULATION ELEMENT

County designated regional touring route of Broadway, West Napa, and Sonoma Highway. In addition, significant hiking trails, both existing and proposed, are depicted. The Bicycle and Trail Plan is intended to accomplish the following:

- Link major community focal points such as schools, shopping, historic and cultural sites, parks, and other recreational facilities with the residential areas of the city.
- Provide continuity and visibility that will make the bicycle network a safe, effective, and efficient alternative to the automobile.
- Establish Class 1 and 2 routes wherever possible, while recognizing that existing street widths and on-street parking needs place limitations on the potential location and extent of these type of routes.
- Provide public access to significant open space areas.

Target dates for route and facility completion are established separately in the City’s Bicycle and Trail Implementation Plan. This program renders the City eligible to receive State funding for bicycle-related improvements.

TRANSIT

Sonoma County Transit provides bus service between Sonoma, Sonoma Valley, and the U.S. 101 Corridor, plus a once daily route to and from San Francisco (see Figure CE-2). The County Transit service, which is partially funded by the City, also provides a door-to-door paratransit service oriented toward seniors. A major constraint to increased transit use is geography (Table CE-1 summarizes transit ridership). Sonoma lies away from the major North Bay travel corridor along Highway 101, making express service to job

Table CE-1: 2003 Transit Ridership

Route	Daily Ridership
Route 30	450-600
Route 32	175-275
Route 34*	30-35
Route 38*	15-25
Route 40*	30-60

Source: Sonoma County Transit.

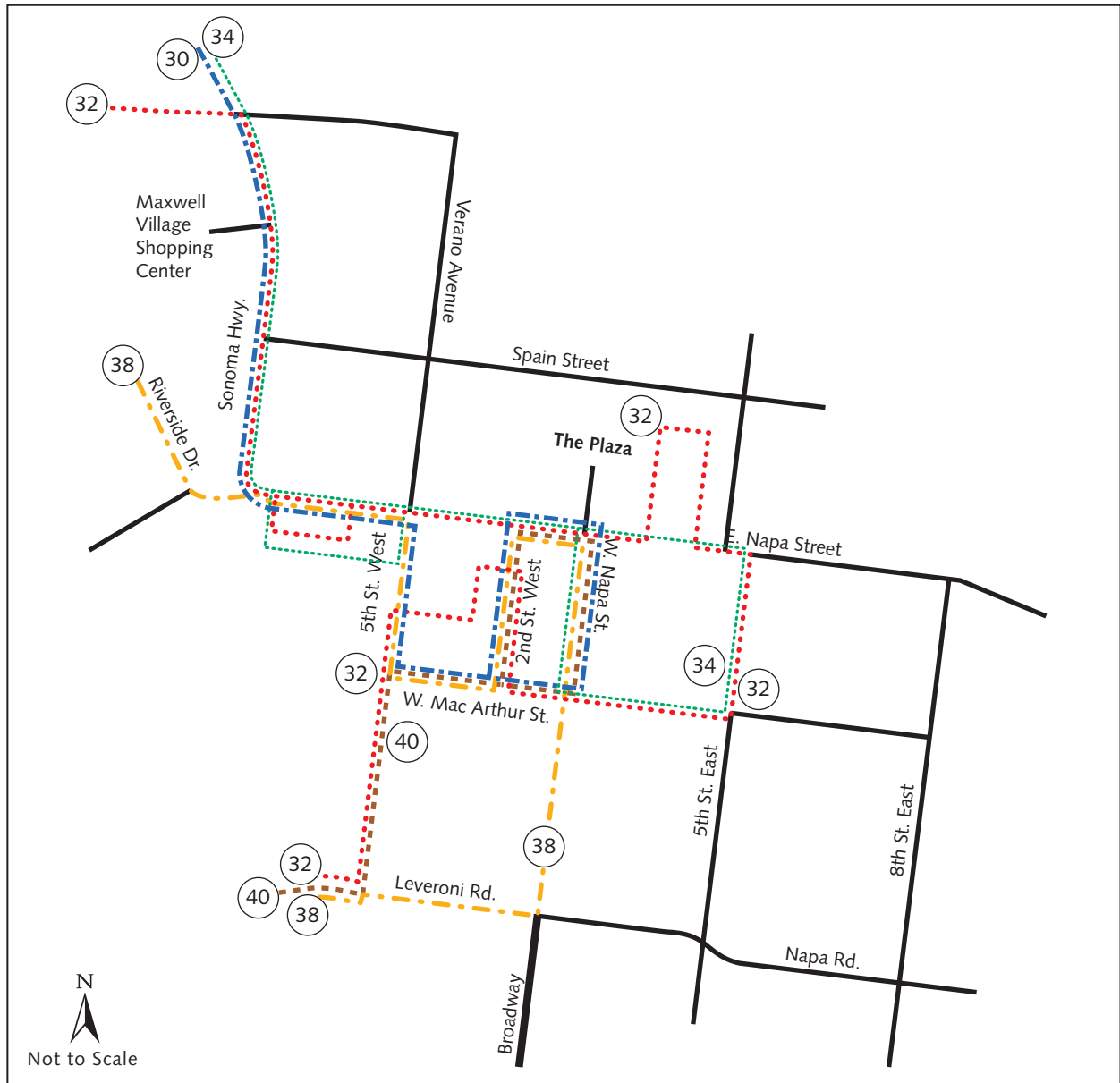
*Only one trip per day in each direction.

centers such as Santa Rosa and San Francisco expensive. There are no readily apparent opportunities for exclusive bus lanes in Sonoma County, which would help make transit more attractive to auto users. In addition, Sonoma Valley has a dispersed population and low densities that are not conducive to cost-effective transit provision.

The City is committed to increasing ridership through increased frequency, expanding operating hours, direct funding, transit-oriented planning, and upgraded transit facilities. The Land Use Plan envisions increased densities around existing retail commercial areas and promotes mixed-use development to encourage walking and help create nodes with a sufficient level of activity to support transit services. Improvements proposed in the Circulation Element range from additional bus shelters and turnouts to a transit center with park and ride facilities. The feasibility of a City-operated downtown jitney service will also be investigated.

STREET SYSTEM

Sonoma’s central street system follows a grid pattern established in the 1800’s by General Vallejo when the city was first laid out. As the city has grown, the basic grid has been elaborated in some areas, ignored in others. Many residential subdivisions developed in the 1970’s and 1980s employ curvilinear streets. The dominant element of the system is State Route 12, which follows the major local streets in the city:



Sonoma County Transit, Route 30
(Santa Rosa–Sonoma Valley) ————

Sonoma County Transit, Route 32
(Agua Caliente–Temelec) ······

Sonoma County Transit, Route 34
(Santa Rosa–Sonoma) - - - - -

Sonoma County Transit, Route 38
(Sonoma Valley–San Rafael) - - - - -

Sonoma County Transit, Route 40
(Sonoma–Petaluma) ······

Figure CE-2

Bus Routes

Source: Sonoma County Transit.

CIRCULATION ELEMENT

Broadway, West Napa Street, and Sonoma Highway. The regional importance of Highway 12, in conjunction with its path through the heart of the city, means that local circulation conditions are greatly affected by regional traffic and, therefore, by regional growth.

The major north/south carriers of traffic are Sonoma Highway, Fifth Street West, Broadway, and Eighth Street East. The major east/west roadways include Spain Street, Napa Street, Andrieux Street, MacArthur Street, and Napa/Leveroni Roads. These major routes are supported by a number of lesser arterials, collectors, and local streets. The road network in Sonoma's Planning Area is made up of five types of roadways, each of which serves a different primary function:

- *State Highway*—Although in traffic engineering parlance Highway 12 is considered an arterial, it is unique among local roadways. The highway is not only a primary route for through traffic, commuters, and tourists, but it also carries the majority of local trips of any distance.
- *Arterials*—These streets carry traffic to and from the highway and to major commercial and public destinations. Volumes are heavy compared to connectors and local streets.
- *Collectors*—These link arterials to local streets and commercial and public destinations. In some cases a connector may also serve as a lesser link to the highway.
- *Local Streets*—Typically residential streets, these provide access to neighborhoods and individual parcels within them. They are generally developed with curb, gutter, and sidewalk.
- *Rural*—These carry traffic to outlying districts. They are generally not developed with curb, gutter, or sidewalk.

Table CE-2 classifies main roads in Sonoma according to the functional types defined above and provides information on roadway characteristics such as number of lanes and peak hour capacity and volume. The roadway types are intended to work together as a system, with each type devoted to its primary function. Problems may arise when roadway types serve mixed functions, as with Highway 12. However, it is impossible to segregate functions completely, and some problems of mixed uses are inevitable.

The current travel pattern within the Sonoma is dominated by Highway 12 (Broadway, West Napa Street, and the Sonoma Highway), with the highest volumes occurring along West Napa Street. Supporting arterials include Napa Road, Fifth Street West, MacArthur Street, Second Street West, and West Spain Street. The heavy traffic on Highway 12, quantified in Table CE-2, has many sources: commuters, through traffic, tourists, and residents. In addition, analysis performed for the General Plan update indicates that heavy traffic on other major arterials and collectors can be attributed in part to driver avoidance of Highway 12. During peak commute times, the majority of drivers traveling between Napa County and points north of Sonoma appear to bypass the central part of the city by using Napa Road, Leveroni Road, and Arnold Drive.

Much of the local traffic on major streets such as Fifth Street West, MacArthur Street, Second Street West, and West Spain Street also results from drivers skirting Highway 12. While the increase in traffic along West Spain Street is well within capacity limits, residents along this street have been particularly affected by this diversion traffic. The Plaza also experiences considerable traffic, not only due to volume, but also because of limited parking, cars accessing on-street parking, and a large pedestrian presence. The frequent double parking of trucks necessitated by the lack of rear access to many commercial buildings further aggravates congestion in the area.

Table CE-2: Roadway Classifications and Traffic Volumes

Roadway Segment	Class	Capacity (no. of vehicles)	Volume (no. of vehicles) ¹	
			2003	2020
West Napa Street (SR 12)				
Riverside Dr. to Fifth Street West	arterial	880	1,065	1,335
Fifth Street West to Second St. West	arterial	880	790	990
Second Street West to Broadway	arterial	645	680	930
East Napa Street				
First Street East to Fifth St. East	collector	660	310	425
West Spain Street				
Fifth Street West to SR 12	collector	660	385	485
Broadway (SR 12)				
Watmaugh Road to Napa/Leveroni Road	arterial	1,020	555	985
Napa/Leveroni Road to MacArthur Street	arterial	755	675	1,210
MacArthur Street to West Napa Street	arterial	1,460	610	1,070
Sonoma Highway (SR 12)				
Riverside Drive to West Spain Street	arterial	855	780	945
Spain Street to Maxwell Village Center	arterial	795*	1,040	1,225
Napa Road				
Broadway to Fifth Street East	arterial	945	670	990
Fifth Street East to Eighth Street East	arterial	970	595	905
Leveroni Road				
Broadway to Fifth Street West	arterial	965	615	1,005
West MacArthur Street				
Broadway to Fifth Street West	collector	565	215	360
East MacArthur Street				
Broadway to City Limits	collector	565	195	315
City Limits to Eighth Street East	collector	620	145	180
Fifth Street East				
East Napa Street to Napa Road	local	650	105	230
Napa Road to East Watmaugh Road	rural	545	30	
Fifth Street West				
Verano Avenue to West Spain Street	collector	565	480	590
Andrieux Street to West MacArthur Street	arterial	685	475	700
West MacArthur Street to Leveroni Road	arterial	795	415	660
Verano Avenue				
SR 12 to Fifth Street West	collector	560	420	535

Sources: Crane Transportation Group; Institute of Transportation Engineers *Highway Capacity Manual*, 2000.

1. Volumes reflect P.M. peak hour weekday conditions. Capacities represent the low end of Level of Service D. **Peak volumes that exceed existing capacities are shown in bold.**
2. Two-lane section just north of West Spain Street.

Future changes to traffic patterns in the city will be largely determined by the location of jobs and housing in Sonoma and the region, and by improvements to the local street system. Growth will determine future volume, while circulation improvements can only modify its distribution. Traffic projections for the year 2020 (Table CE-2, above) indicate increased

traffic volumes citywide. This traffic is the result of expected growth in the city, Sonoma Valley, and the greater Bay Area. Table CE-3 summarizes intersections levels of service and Table CE-4 lists levels of service for key intersections in Sonoma, including projections for 2020 with the improvements shown in Figure CE-3.

CIRCULATION ELEMENT

Table CE-3: Intersection Level of Service Definitions

LOS	Delay Period	Description
A	0 - 5 seconds	Free/Insignificant Delay: No approach area is fully utilized by traffic. No significant restriction on driver operation.
B	5 - 15	Stable Operation/Minimal Delay: An approach area may be fully utilized. Some drivers feel restricted.
C	15 - 25	Stable Operation/Acceptable Delay: Approach areas are fully utilized. Most drivers feel restricted.
D	25 - 40	Approaching Unstable/Tolerable Delay: Drivers may have to wait through more than one red signal. Queues may develop but dissipate rapidly.
E	40 - 60	Unstable Operation/Significant Delay: Volumes at or near capacity. Vehicles may wait through several signal cycles. Long queues form.
F	> 60	Forced Flow/Excessive Delay: Jammed conditions. Intersection operates below capacity with low volumes. Queues may block upstream intersections.

Source: Institute of Traffic Engineers.

Roadway Network Improvements

The objective for future roadway network modification is to minimize needed improvements in Sonoma while promoting alternatives to automobile use. Accordingly, road widenings in the city will be minimized to the extent possible, but some improvements will be necessary to provide access and maintain adequate traffic conditions and levels of safety, such as:

- Extending Fourth Street West from West Spain Street to Rosalie Drive in conjunction with development of intervening properties. In order to prevent cut-through traffic and protect an established neighborhood environment, the interface between the extension and the existing segment of Fourth Street West to the north shall be designed to accommodate emergency vehicles, bicyclists and pedestrians, while prohibiting automobiles.
- Adding turn-pockets at major intersections and Class 2 bike lanes along Napa/Leveroni Road between Eighth Street East and Fifth Street West.
- Improving Hayes Street and Fourth Street West, south of West MacArthur Street.

Because intersections are the major determinants of local traffic conditions, it is particularly important to ensure they are capable of accommodating traffic flows smoothly and safely. Intersection improvements required to handle future traffic (see Figure C-3, following page), include:

- Signals at Fifth Street West/West Spain Street, Fifth Street West/West MacArthur Street, and Fifth Street East/Napa Road.
- Turning lanes at Fifth Street West/West Spain Street and Broadway/Napa Road/Leveroni Road (Four Corners).

Major roadway and intersection improvements will be implemented on an as-needed basis and only with the specific authorization of the City Council. As part of this consideration, the Council will determine whether proposed improvements are compatible with the historic character of Sonoma and whether there are mitigations measures available to achieve compatibility. A specific example in this regard is the intersection of Broadway/West Napa Street, where the installation of traffic signal would likely damage the historic character of the Plaza.

**Table CE-4: Intersection Levels of Service—Existing and Projected¹
(Summer Peak P.M. Period)**

Intersection	LOS/Average Delay in Seconds		
	2003	2020	2020 Mitigated
Signalized			
S.R.12/Verano Ave.	C/21.6	C/25.6	
S.R.12/Maxwell Village Shopping Center	B/10.3	B/11.4	
S.R.12/West Spain St.	B/15.3	B/17.8	
S.R.12/Riverside/West Napa St.	B/13.0	B/13.9	
Fifth St. West/West Napa St.	D/36.3	D/52.5	
Fifth St. West/Leveroni Rd.	B/14.9	C/21.6	
Broadway (S.R.12)/MacArthur St.	B/16.7	B/19.6	
Broadway (S.R.12)/Leveroni Rd./Napa Rd.	C/28.2	F/100.2	D/49.7 ²
All-way Stop			
Fifth St. West/West Spain St.	F/54.3	F/85.1	C/31.6 ³
Fifth St. West/MacArthur St.	C/16.2	F/59.4	C/25.8 ⁴
Broadway (S.R.12)/Napa St./Plaza	D/31.0	F/110.0⁴	F/110.0
Fifth St. East/MacArthur St.	A/8.6	B/10.5	
Fifth St. East/Napa Rd.	D/28.1	F/191.9	C/26.6 ⁴
Eighth St. East/Napa Rd.	F/68.3	C/29.8	
Side-street Stop (northbound approach)			
East Napa St./Fifth St. West	B/11.2	B/13.8	
East Napa St./Fifth St. East	C/15.7	D/29.7	

Source: Crane Transportation Group.

1. Instances where LOS exceeds the low end of LOS D (the City-standard) are highlighted in bold.
2. Add separate turn lanes on the westbound and southbound approaches.
3. Signalize. Stripe all approaches as separate left turn and combine through/right turn lanes.
4. Signalize with existing lane geometrics.
5. Reduced LOS accepted in order to preserve the historic character of the Plaza.

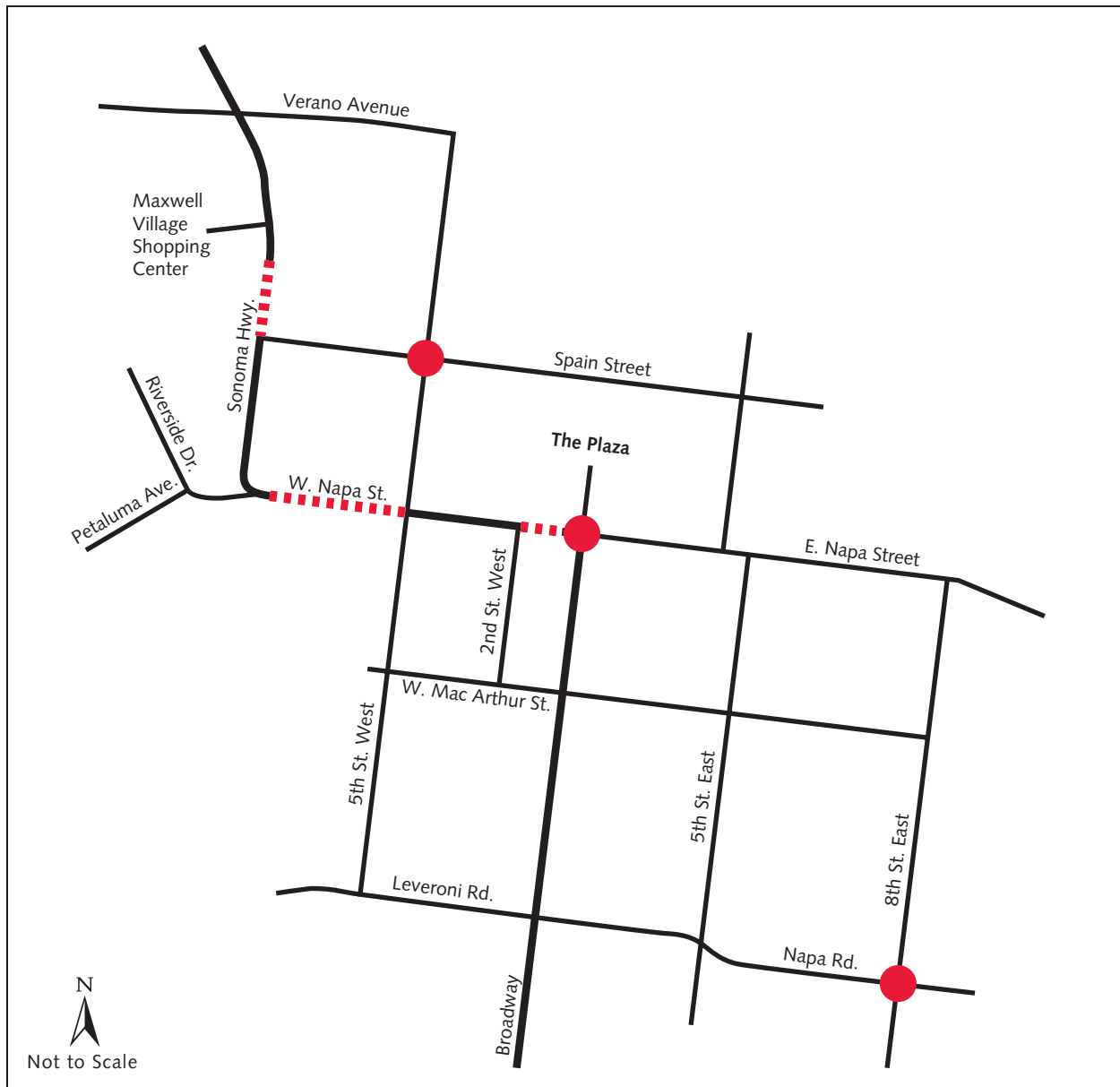
Future roadway improvements will be phased in accordance with the City Capital Improvement Plan and the State Transportation Improvement Program. Some improvements may be put in place as a condition of project approval as development occurs, and all will be funded in part by the City Circulation Improvement Fee imposed on all construction. The City will continue to rely on Capital Improvement Program revenues, Community Development Agency monies, and gas tax funds to finance street improvements. Sonoma County Transportation Authority funds are available for some maintenance of existing facilities and highway improvements, while

any Caltrans-initiated upgrades along Highway 12 would require State and federal funding.

COORDINATION WITH OTHER ELEMENTS

Circulation and land use are interconnected, as is recognized in the State guidelines pertaining to general plans, which emphasize the correlation between the circulation element and the land use element. The Circulation Element is also closely related to the Housing and Environmental Resources elements and has ties to the Local Economy Element. Traffic-related noise is addressed in the Noise Element.

CIRCULATION ELEMENT



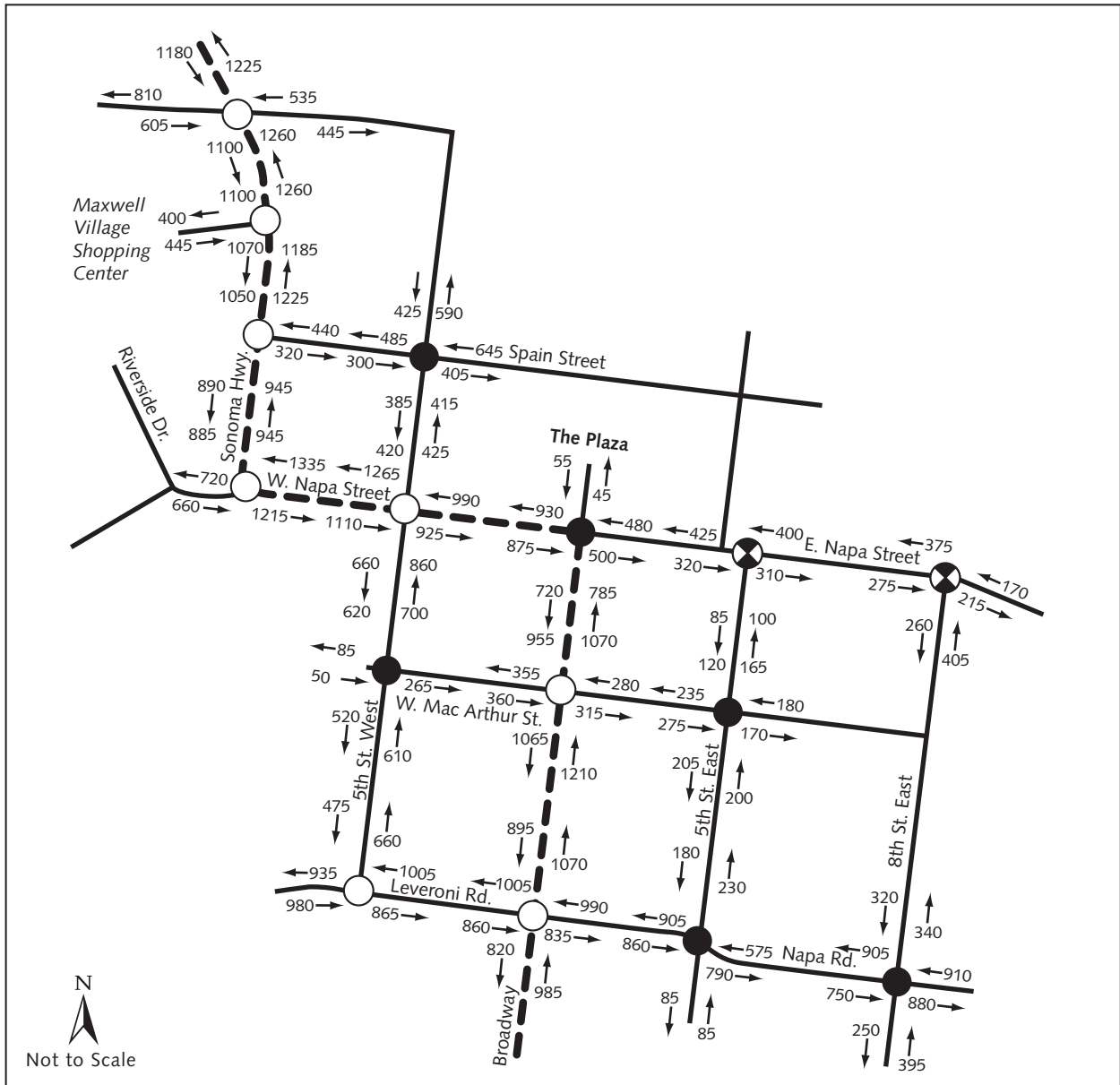
Intersections with Unacceptable Operation (worse than mid-range Level of Service D) ●

Roadway Segments with Unacceptable Operation (worse than mid-range Level of Service D) ■■■■

Figure CE-2

Locations with Unacceptable Levels of Service

Source: Crane Transportation Group, July 2003.



- Truck Route ———
- Signalized Intersection ○
- All-way Stop Controlled Intersection ●
- Side-street Stop Sign Controlled Intersection ⊗
- Weekday Peak P.M. Traffic Volumes ←-515

Figure CE-3

2020 Intersection Approach Volumes

Source: Crane Transportation Group, July 2003.

CIRCULATION ELEMENT



The Cuneo Apartments—A historic example of mixed use.

The Community Development Element

The Land Use Plan and designations in the Community Development Element establish the general arrangement of uses by type and intensity, from which circulation relationships derive. Through the organization of uses, the Land Use Plan lays the basis for linking housing, employment, goods and services, schools, and parks and recreation. The connection between land use and circulation has been reinforced by using the Land Use Plan as the basis for the traffic model used to develop projected traffic volumes. Building on that foundation, the elements are designed to work in concert to achieve various General Plan policy objectives. For example, in order to reduce auto dependence and promote walking, the Land Use Plan establishes higher densities adjacent to commercial centers and encourages mixed-use development. These measures also help promote transit. At the same time, the Circulation Element helps organize land use through policies requiring adequate access, pedestrian and bicycle amenities, and safety improvements at street/bike path connections.

The Local Economy Element

Through its programs to ensure acceptable traffic conditions, address downtown parking, and improve pedestrian conditions, the Circulation Element helps support the Local Economy Element in its objective of maintaining the continued vitality of Sonoma's

commercial centers. Through their policies and implementation measures, the two elements also seek to encourage a pedestrian presence in retail and service areas, particularly the downtown, by promoting mixed-use development and ground floor retail use.

The Housing Element

Like the Community Development Element, the Housing Element includes policies and implementation measures aimed at promoting mixed-use development and locating higher density residential development near commercial centers. The Housing Element expands upon those basic directions by providing guidance for the design of new housing, ensuring that higher density developments are compatible with their surroundings and include provision for bicyclists, pedestrians, and transit users.

The Environmental Resources Element

The Circulation and Environmental Resources elements share the objectives of reducing auto dependency, encouraging transit use, and promoting energy conservation. The Circulation Element provides goals and policies intended to establish safe and convenient bicycle and pedestrian networks linking housing, shopping, services, schools, and parks, while the Environmental Resources Element includes additional measures supporting that effort. In addition, the Environmental Resources Element includes a street tree planting measure to make local travel more enjoyable for pedestrians, bicyclists, and drivers.

The Noise Element

Current and projected traffic volumes, as documented through the Circulation Element, are assessed as a noise source in the Noise Element.

GOALS, POLICIES, AND IMPLEMENTATION

The goals, policies, and implementation measures of the Circulation Element are set forth in the following table.

Table CE-5: Goals, Policies, and Implementation Measures

Goal CE-1: Provide a safe walking environment throughout Sonoma.	
<i>Policies</i>	<i>Implementation Measures</i>
1.1 Preserve and establish short-cuts that take pedestrians away from major streets.	1.1.1 Require the preservation or replacement of cut-through paths in conjunction with proposed development projects.
1.2 Eliminate gaps and obstructions in the sidewalk system.	1.2.1 Create and fund a pedestrian improvement category in the five-year Capital Improvement Program as a mechanism for identifying, budgeting, and implementing specific pedestrian improvements, including constructing pathways and repairing and completing sidewalks.
1.3 Improve pedestrian circulation and safety at major intersections.	1.3.1 Install crosswalk actuators and improve bicycle safety signs at all signalized intersections and bikeway crossings.
	1.3.2 Monitor and prioritize the need for pedestrian improvements through the Traffic Safety Committee.
1.4 Establish a system of hiking trails through major public open space.	See measure 2.2.2.
Goal CE-2: Establish Sonoma as a place where bicycling is safe and convenient.	
2.1 Promote bicycling as an efficient alternative to driving.	2.1.1 Work with Caltrans, the County Bicycle Authority, and the SCTA to coordinate bicycle improvements within Sonoma Valley, to provide connections to regional routes, and to incorporate bicycle facilities, and services, such as carriers and racks, on transit buses and at bus stops.
	2.1.2 Work with schools and other interested organizations to establish safe bike routes and to promote bicycle use, registration, safety, and etiquette in accordance with the Police Department bicycle education program.
2.2 Extend the bike path system, with a focus on establishing safe routes to popular destinations.	2.2.1 Earmark Circulation Improvement Fee funds for bikeway system and facility improvements.
	2.2.2 Prioritize and implement bicycle and trail improvements through the five-year Capital Improvement Program and the Bicycle and Trail Implementation Plan.
	2.2.3 Require development projects to provide all rights-of-way and improvements necessary to comply with the Bicycle Plan and Development Code requirements pertaining to bicycle and pedestrian amenities.
2.3 Expand the availability of sheltered bicycle parking and other bicycle facilities.	2.3.1 Implement Development Code requirements for bicycle access and amenities in commercial and multi-unit residential developments and update the provisions as necessary.

CIRCULATION ELEMENT

Table CE-5: Goals, Policies, and Implementation Measures, Con't.

<i>Policies</i>		<i>Implementation Measures</i>
2.4	Resolve potential conflicts between bicycles and vehicles and pedestrians.	See measures 1.3.1 and 2.1.1.
2.5	Incorporate bicycle facilities and amenities in new development.	See measures 2.2.3 and 2.3.1.
Goal CE-3: Minimize vehicle trips while ensuring safe and convenient access to activity centers and maintaining Sonoma's small-town character.		
3.1	Promote safety for all users of the street system.	See measures 1.1.1 through 2.2.2.
3.2	Encourage a mixture of uses and higher densities where appropriate to improve the viability of transit and pedestrian and bicycle travel.	Implemented through the Community Development Element and the land use Plan.
3.3	Promote transit use and improve transit services.	3.3.1 Work with Sonoma County Transit to improve transit services and report annually to the City Council on ridership and new initiatives.
		3.3.2 Construct attractive and consistently designed bus shelters along Highway 12 and other transit corridors.
		3.3.3 Evaluate alternative design approaches to reduce congestion at the intersection of Fifth Street West/West Napa Street and other impacted locations.
3.4	Encourage shared and "park once" parking arrangements that reduce vehicle use.	3.4.1 Implemented through the Development Code.
3.5	Maximize efficient use of the existing circulation system and avoid widening streets to the extent possible.	3.5.1 Negotiate with Caltrans to gain greater local control over the design and implementation of Highway 12 improvements.
		3.5.2 Work with the County and the Sonoma Valley Citizens Advisory Commission to monitor potential traffic impacts of proposed development, to identify options for circulation improvements, and to implement methods of alleviating traffic congestion, such as improved signal timing along Highway 12.
		3.5.3 Evaluate alternative design approaches to reduce congestion at the intersection of Fifth Street West/West Napa Street and other impacted locations.
3.6	Improve city streets as necessary to preserve safety and expand opportunities for alternative means of transportation.	3.6.1 Prioritize and implement circulation improvements through the five-year capital improvement program.
		See measures 2.1.1, 2.2.2 and 3.3.2.
3.7	Ensure that new development mitigates its traffic impacts.	3.7.1 Establish a traffic impact fee.
		3.7.2 Require development projects to mitigate traffic impacts through installation of necessary associated improvements or payment of in-lieu fees.
3.8	Ensure that new development complements and extends the historic street grid pattern, where feasible, while minimizing cut-through traffic.	Implemented through the Development Code and the project review process.

Table CE-5: Goals, Policies, and Implementation Measures, Con't.

<i>Policies</i>	<i>Implementation Measures</i>
3.9 Protect residential areas by keeping traffic speeds low and discouraging through truck traffic.	3.9.1 Implement adopted traffic calming procedures through the Traffic Safety Committee.
	3.9.2 Establish and enforce truck routes and regulations that apply to all heavy vehicles, including delivery trucks and tour buses.
3.10 Improve parking availability and traffic and pedestrian circulation around the Plaza area while maintaining the historic, small-town character of the area.	3.10.1 Adopt a specific Level of Service standard for the Plaza that reflects the community's desire not to install traffic signals in that area.
	3.10.2 Work with the State Parks Department to retain and expand the use of the Casa Grande lot for public parking.
	3.10.3 Provide maps, signage, entrance lighting, and other improvements that advertise off-street public parking.
	3.10.4 Work with property-owners to acquire land and/or develop public off-street parking to serve the Plaza area.
	3.10.5 Explore the feasibility of creating a downtown improvement district to fund acquisition and development of parking as well as other types of improvements.

CIRCULATION ELEMENT

PUBLIC SAFETY ELEMENT

This element is required by State law for the purpose of ensuring that public health and safety considerations are incorporated into the community's long-range planning. The Public Safety Element must identify and evaluate natural and human-caused hazards present or potentially present in the community, and it must establish appropriate goals, policies, and implementation measures necessary to reduce risks to persons and property to acceptable levels. Hazards present in the Planning Area are summarized in this element and discussed further in the General Plan Background Report.

POTENTIAL RISKS

The most significant hazards within the Planning Area are associated with earthquakes, fires, hazardous materials, and flooding (see Figures PS-1 and PS-2). The risks posed by these hazards are summarized as follows:

- Earthquakes pose the most serious potential threat in the Planning Area, particularly the city, as urban areas are more prone to damage than less developed areas (see Table PS-1 and Figure PS-1). Although no known faults lie cross the Planning Area, Sonoma County is traversed by seven active or potentially active faults, including the San Andreas fault, the Tolay fault and the Healdsburg/Rodgers Creek fault. The Rodgers Creek fault, which has been identified as an extension of the Hayward fault, lies closest to the Planning Area and represents a significant earthquake risk.

Table PS-1: 30-Year Earthquake Probabilities

Fault Segment	30-year Probability	Characteristic Magnitude
Healdsburg/Rodgers Creek	22%	7.1
Hayward		
Northern Segment	28%	7.1
Southern Segment	23%	7.1
San Andreas		
North Coast Segment	2%	8.0
San Francisco Segment	23%	7.1

Source: ABAG, *On Shaky Ground*, 1995.

- Fires, both urban and wildland, pose a significant potential threat. The closely packed wood-frame buildings around the Plaza, many of them without sprinklers, raise a particular concern. The risk of structure fires may increase in the future due to changes in land use patterns, such as an increased emphasis on infill and planned unit developments, if not mitigated through site planning and building design and retrofit requirements. The risk of a widespread structure fire is related to seismic risks in that major earthquakes in urban areas often cause conflagrations and make firefighting more difficult.
- The level of hazardous materials use and storage within the Planning Area is estimated to be relatively low. The area most likely to suffer an accident involving hazardous materials is the industrial strip along Eighth Street East and the Highway 12 corridor, along which hazardous materials may be transported; however, such an

PUBLIC SAFETY ELEMENT

accident could occur almost anywhere. At present, the risk of a large-scale incident is considered minor.

- Flooding, even at its worst, presents only localized threats to property and little or no threat to life. Although some local urbanized areas lie within the 100-year floodplain mapped by the Federal Emergency Management Agency, flood water heights rarely exceed one-to-two feet and flood control improvements have eliminated many former problems.

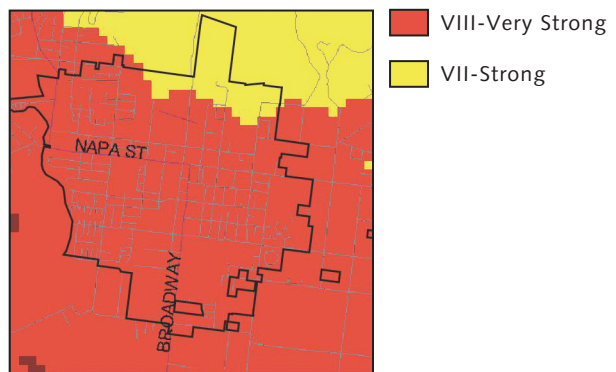
Although the risks posed by these hazards are expected to increase with population growth—simply because more people will be exposed to them, medical emergencies present the greatest risk that most Sonomans face. Medical aid is provided by Sonoma Valley FireMed, an ambulance service operated through the City Fire Department. By employing firefighter/paramedics, the Fire Department has both improved its emergency medical service to the community and upgraded its firefighting capabilities.

The General Plan seeks to reduce risks to life and property through a variety of techniques but emphasizes prevention as the least expensive and most effective method. For example, the land use pattern established in the General Plan minimizes risk by assigning very low densities to floodplains and hillsides. A framework of risk reduction and hazard prevention is set forth in the goals, policies and implementation programs that follow.

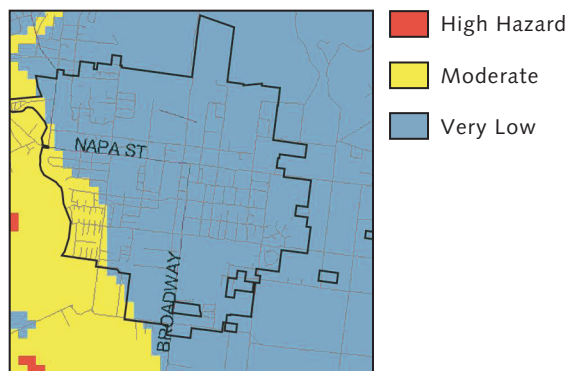
EMERGENCY PLAN

An up-to-date emergency plan is vital to respond effectively to large-scale emergencies, such as earthquakes and flooding. The adoption of a local emergency plan is required by the State and federal governments as a prerequisite to obtaining disaster relief funds following an event. It is not enough to have an

Figure PS-1: Groundshaking and Liquefaction Potential



Shaking Intensity, Modified Mercalli Intensity Shaking Severity Level



Liquefaction Hazard level

Simulated shaking intensity expected from a magnitude 7.0 earthquake on the Rodgers Creek fault.

Source: Association of Bay Area Governments.

adopted plan, however. Those who will use the plan in the event of an emergency must be familiar with the plan and the directions it contains. The regular exercise of simulations, especially in coordination with other responders, is critical to ensuring a successful response in the event of an actual emergency.

Accordingly, the City maintains a response plan based on the principles of the Standardized Emergency Management System. This system provides a flexible structure for responding to emergencies of any size or nature, while ensuring full coordination with outside agencies. The system is designed to be expanded

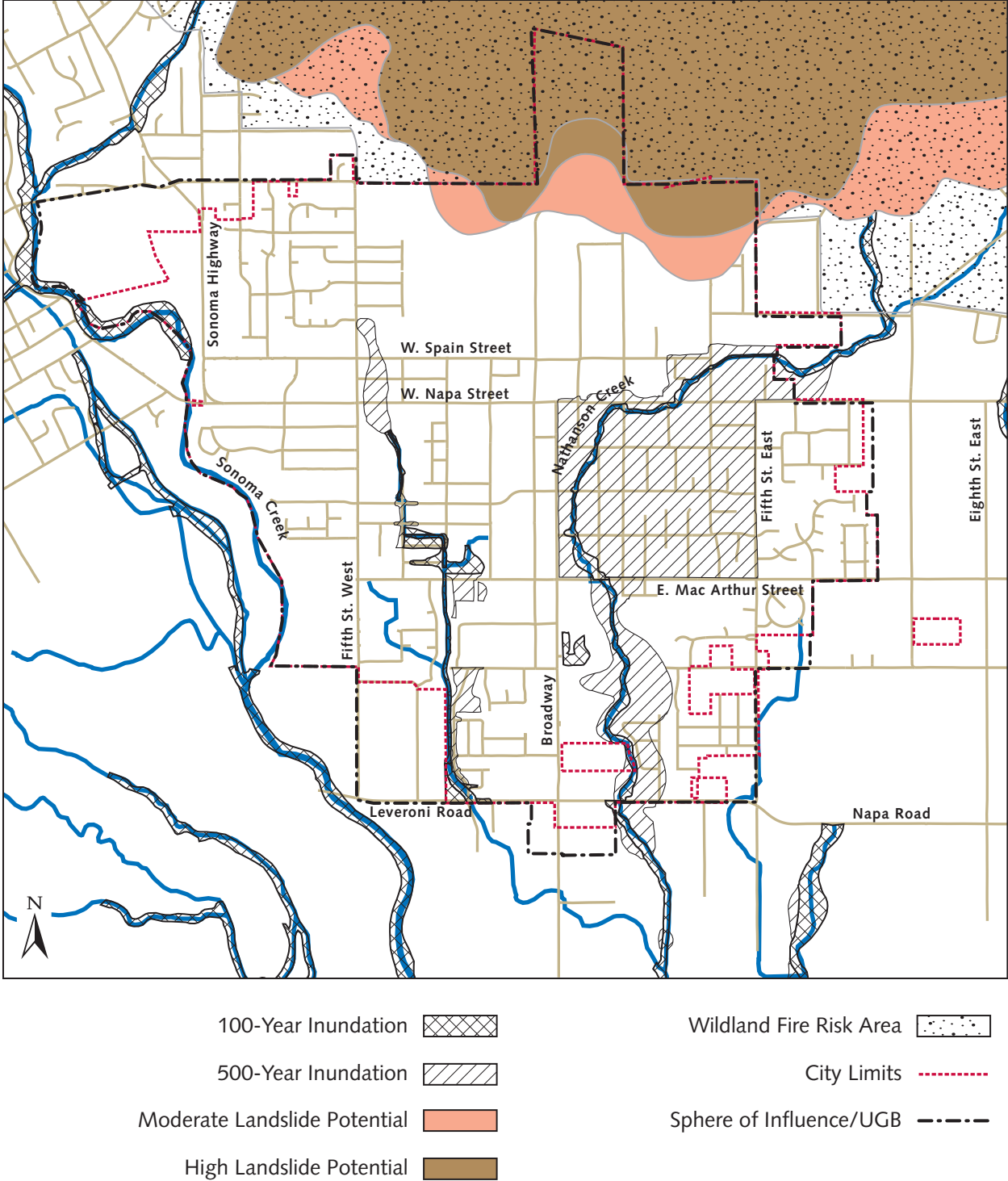


Figure PS-2

Natural Hazards

Source: City of Sonoma; FEMA; USGS.

PUBLIC SAFETY ELEMENT

Table PS-2: Important Buildings and Earthquake Readiness

Structure	Description of Condition
<i>Critical Emergency Buildings</i>	
Fire Station	A new Fire Station was constructed on 2003 and is in conformance with all applicable seismic safety standards.
Police Department Council Chambers	Completed in 1981, this structure is no longer in strict compliance with applicable seismic safety standards. It is scheduled for renovation in 2006/07.
Sonoma Valley Hospital	The original structure was built in the 1950's but has since been expanded. In 1981 some of the buildings were strengthened to comply with seismic safety standards. The oldest area of the complex does not, however, comply with state seismic standards applicable to hospitals.
City Hall	Built in 1908, this historic stone and mortar structure was seismically upgraded in 1987.
<i>High Priority Buildings</i>	
Public Schools	Prestwood and Sassarini Elementary Schools, Adele Harrison Middle School, and Sonoma Valley High School are all located within city limits. All were built since 1952, except for the main building of the high school (which was reinforced in compliance with the Field Act) and all are considered earthquake safe.
Convalescent Hospitals	The convalescent hospitals and rest homes within the Planning Area are single story structures of recent construction and therefore have moderate to high earthquake resistance.
Sebastiani Theater	The theater, located across from the Plaza, was built in the 1930's. Seismic retrofit has not been required because the building has a steel-reinforced structure.
Community Center	A former school, this originally unreinforced brick and concrete structure now houses a variety of community groups. The seismic renovation of this structure was completed in 1989.
Sonoma Valley County Library	Constructed in 1977-78, this building is considered earthquake safe.
Post Office and Veterans' Memorial	These two single-story buildings, built since 1952, are considered only minimally susceptible to earthquake damage.

Source: City of Sonoma.

in an organized, modular fashion, as circumstances require. The City conducts periodic simulation exercises, regularly trains key personnel in Standardized Emergency Management System principles, and maintains state-of-the-art facilities to enable swift, effective responses to specific tasks and situations.

COORDINATION WITH OTHER ELEMENTS

The Public Safety Element is most closely related to the Community Development Element and the Environmental Resources Element. Development allowed through the land use designations defined in the Community Development Element and delineated on the Land Use Plan is subject to policies and implementation measures set forth in the Public Safety Element with regard to ensuring construction that protects structures and people from the effects

of earthquakes, fire, and flooding. The Environmental Resources Element and the Public Safety Element complement each other by limiting development adjacent to creeks, restrictions that both prevent flood damage and protect riparian resources.

GOALS, POLICIES, AND IMPLEMENTATION

The goals, policies, and implementation measures of the Public Safety Element, as set forth in Table PS-3, target hazards in the Planning Area to minimize risks to life and property through prevention, preparedness, and education. Because it is neither physically nor financially feasible to eliminate all risk, the following policies and implementation measures seek a balance whereby risks are reduced to acceptable levels without either unwarranted expense or undue infringement of property rights.

Table PS-3: Goals, Policies, and Implementation Measures

Goal PS-1: Minimize risks to life and property associated with seismic and other geologic hazards, fire, hazardous materials, and flooding.	
<i>Policies</i>	<i>Implementation Measures</i>
1.1 Require development to be designed and constructed in a manner that reduces the potential for damage and injury from natural and human causes to the extent possible.	1.1.1 Require development to incorporate measures that mitigate risks associated with seismic, geologic, fire, or flood hazards to acceptable levels.
1.2 Comply with State-mandated upgrades of unreinforced masonry structures.	1.2.1 Require all development—including post-earthquake building replacement, reconstruction, and rehabilitation—to be constructed in accordance with the latest State- and City-adopted seismic and building codes.
	1.2.2 Provide technical assistance to owners of structures that require rehabilitation to meet adopted seismic safety and building codes.
	1.2.3 Complete the City seismic retrofit program.
1.3 Ensure that all development projects provide adequate fire protection.	1.3.1 Review all proposed projects for adequacy of fire protection, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Response time • Emergency access, water supply, and fire flow, • Vegetation clearance and visible addressing, • Spacing between buildings, • Construction materials, and • Refuse removal.
	1.3.2 Develop and implement standards of coverage for fire protection.
	1.3.3 Implement fire sprinkler requirements in new development and redevelopment.
1.4 Coordinate and maximize emergency medical service and firefighting capabilities in the city and Sonoma Valley.	1.4.1 Pursue the continued coordination of fire services through the Joint Powers Agreement with the Valley of Moon Fire District.
	1.4.2 Maintain mutual and automatic aid agreements and continue joint training exercises with fire departments in Sonoma Valley.
	1.4.3 Work with Schell-Vista Fire District to monitor fire safety and hazardous material use, storage, and transport in the Eighth Street East area.
	1.4.4 Hire personnel certified as both firefighters and paramedics, and train and utilize volunteer fire-fighters to the extent feasible.
1.5 Maintain an Insurance Service Organization fire department rating of 4 or better (where 1 is the highest possible mark of effective response on a scale to 10).	See measures 1.3.1-1.4.4, above.

PUBLIC SAFETY ELEMENT

Table PS-3: Goals, Policies, and Implementation Measures, Con't.

<i>Policies</i>	<i>Implementation Measures</i>
1.6 Ensure that all operations that use, store, and/or transport hazardous materials to comply with all applicable regulations.	1.6.1 Maintain contingency plans for responding to spills, accidents, and fires involving hazardous materials.
	1.6.2 Provide information to assist businesses in complying with regulations regarding use, storage, and transport of hazardous materials.
1.7 Reduce the potential for local flooding to the extent possible.	1.7.1 Upgrade and expand the storm drain system to provide added capacity that will alleviate flooding potential.
	1.7.2 Work with the Sonoma County Water Agency to develop environmentally acceptable methods of reducing or preventing flooding.
	1.7.3 Require a hydrologic study and adequate mitigation for any development proposed in the 100-year floodplain.
	1.7.4 New development shall be evaluated in terms of the adequacy of proposed storm drain improvements, shall contribute, as applicable to the implementation of the Sonoma Area Master Drainage Plan, and shall comply with Water Agency design criteria. Best management practices shall be required, as applicable, to reduce or mitigate the volume, concentration and velocity of run-off.
Goal PS-2: Assure that essential emergency and public services will function effectively in a disaster.	
2.1 Use the Standardized Emergency Management System as the basis for emergency planning.	2.1.1 Review, update, and test the City Emergency Plan as necessary, and train prevention and response personnel in utilizing the Standardized Emergency Management System and the emergency operations center.
2.2 Promote awareness of the City Emergency Plan and effective public response to a major event.	2.2.2 Offer regular public education programs in emergency safety and hazard response.
2.3 Coordinate emergency planning with appropriate jurisdictions, agencies, and groups.	See measure 2.1.1, above.

NOISE ELEMENT

The Noise Element is one of the seven State-mandated General Plan elements. The 1973 Noise Control Act declares it State policy to minimize adverse noise impacts and requires all local general plans to include a noise element that conforms with State planning guidelines. State Noise Insulation Standards adopted in 1974 establish specific acceptable levels noise measured both outside and inside multifamily residences. Since then, these standards have been extended by most local jurisdictions to all types of homes, sensitive sites such as schools and care facilities, and many other land uses. City standards (see Table NE-1) are slightly more restrictive than State levels, as allowed, to ensure protection of local citizens from noise.

Defined as unwanted sound, noise can have adverse effects ranging from interference with sleep and conversation to hearing loss. Accordingly, the purpose of this element is to provide:

- Information about Sonoma's existing and projected noise environment; and,
- Criteria for evaluating the noise environment of future developments and the compatibility between existing and potential land uses.

In addition to goals, policies, and implementation measures aimed at limiting exposure to noise in Sonoma, this element also includes definitions of technical terms, standards for acceptable noise levels, a Noise Contours map, and a Noise Assessment Guide to assist the City in flagging possible noise problems

Noise Term Definitions

Ambient Noise: The normal or existing composite level from all sources in an area.

Decibel (dB): A unit expressing the relative intensity of sound.

dBA: The most common unit of sound level measurement, it compensates for the effects of low and high frequencies to mimic the response of the human ear.

Day/Night Noise Level (Ldn): The annual average equivalent noise level (Leq) when 10 dBA are added to noise levels measured between 10 p.m. and 7 a.m.

Equivalent Noise Level (Leq): The estimated constant noise level that would deliver the same sound intensity that a fluctuating source actually creates over the same period during the same time of day.

Impulsive Noise: Sound with a distinct peak occurring in a short time interval.

Intrusive Noise: Any noise perceptible over ambient levels, even if within acceptable standards.

Intermittent Noise: Noise present only on occasion but that interferes with human activities such as sleep or conversation.

Noise Contour: A line connecting points of equal noise level measurement.

Pure Tone: Sound characterized by a singular pitch over a prolonged time period.

and evaluating the need for project-specific acoustical studies.

LOCAL NOISE ENVIRONMENT

Noise is generally not a serious problem in Sonoma. Table NE-2 shows that more than 90% of city residents live in areas with outdoor noise levels substantially below the general 60 dBA State and City standard for acceptability.

NOISE ELEMENT

Table NE-1: Acceptable Outdoor Noise Levels

Land Use	Noise Level Standards, dBA L				
	55	60	65	70	75
Residential Single-family dwellings, duplexes, condominiums, apartments, hotels.	Clearly Acceptable	Normally Acceptable	Conditionally Acceptable	Normally Unacceptable	Clearly Unacceptable
Outdoor Public Facilities Neighborhood parks, amphitheatres, cemeteries	Clearly Acceptable	Normally Acceptable	Conditionally Acceptable	Normally Unacceptable	Clearly Unacceptable
Public Buildings Schools, libraries, churches, nursing homes	Clearly Acceptable	Normally Acceptable	Conditionally Acceptable	Normally Unacceptable	Clearly Unacceptable
Commercial Offices, retail businesses, and professional facilities	Clearly Acceptable	Normally Acceptable	Conditionally Acceptable	Normally Unacceptable	Clearly Unacceptable
Industrial Manufacturing, utilities, and agricultural facilities	Clearly Acceptable	Normally Acceptable	Conditionally Acceptable	Normally Unacceptable	Clearly Unacceptable

Clearly Acceptable
The activities associated with the specified use can be carried out with virtually no interference from noise.

Normally Acceptable
Occasional slight interference with outdoor activities may occur. Conventional structures will ensure that interior noise levels are compatible with indoor activities and with indoor activities if windows are open. New construction should only be undertaken following a noise study and subject to implementation of noise reduction measures to upgrade conditions to normally acceptable levels.

Conditionally Acceptable
The indicated noise levels will cause moderate interference with outdoor activities and with indoor activities if windows are open. New construction should only be undertaken following a noise study and subject to the implementation of noise reduction measures to upgrade conditions to normally acceptable levels.

Normally Unacceptable
Noise will create substantial interference with indoor and outdoor activities. New construction should be discouraged. If construction does occur, noise mitigation should be required to bring exterior levels up to normally acceptable levels and interior levels in compliance with state law.

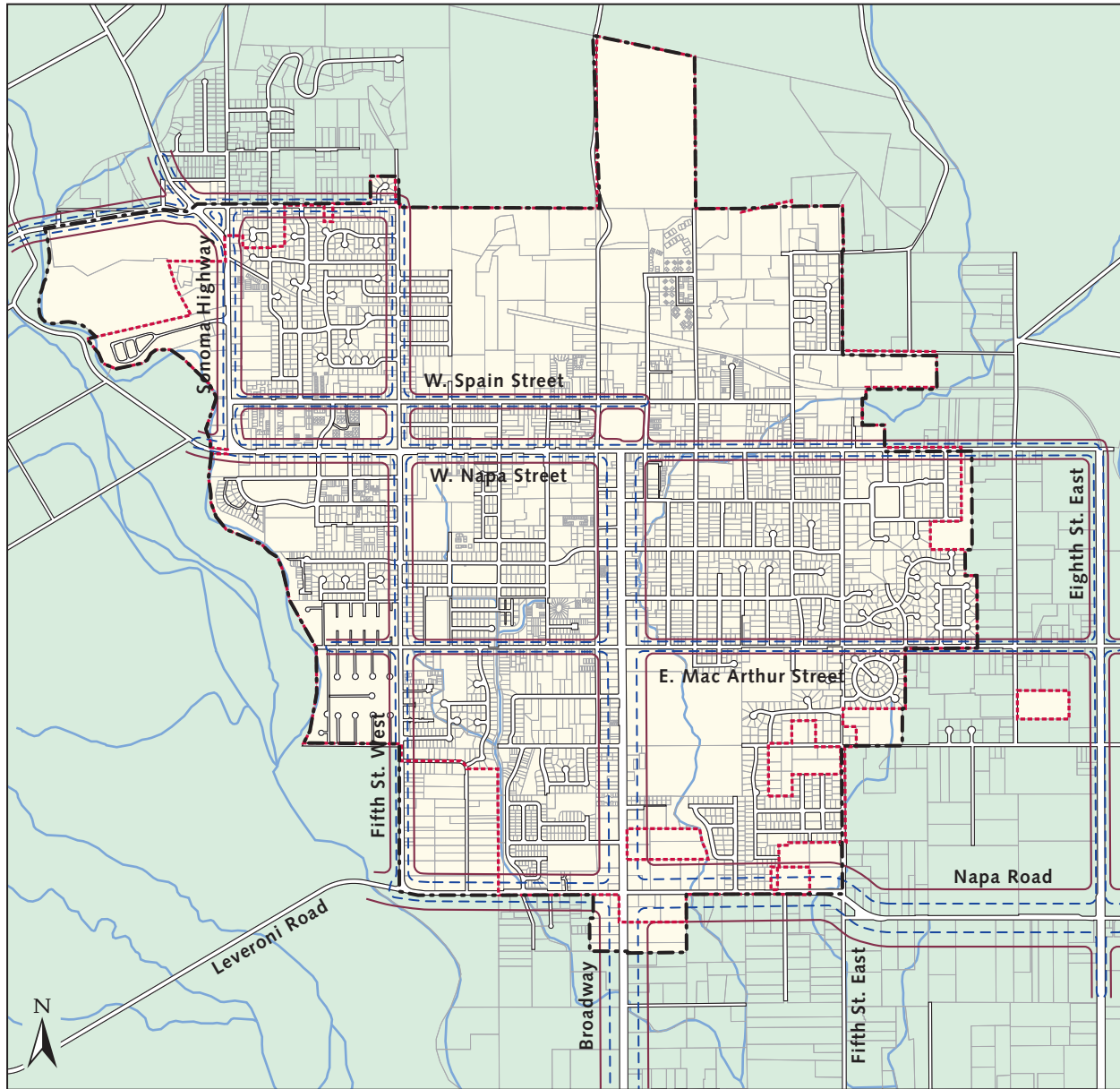
Clearly Unacceptable
Unacceptable noise intrusion upon land use activities will occur. Adequate structural insulation will be impractical under most circumstances. New construction is generally not recommended.

Source: Adapted from California General Plan Guidelines, 2003.

The primary source of noise locally is traffic on major streets, especially Highway 12, Leveroni Road, Napa Road, Napa Street, and Eighth Street East. As shown on Figure NE-1, major roadways in the city generate 50-60 dBA 50 feet from centerline (based on continuous 24-hour measurements obtained in October 2003). The louder the vehicle traffic, the further from the roadway the associated noise contours extend.

Some noise also emanates from stationary sources such as car washes and commercial loading areas.

With relatively little change anticipated under the Land Use Plan in terms of the amount and distribution of future development, roadway traffic is expected to remain the major noise source in Sonoma. As shown on Figure NE-2, traffic noise increases are not



- 65 DBA Ldn Contour ———
- 60 DBA Ldn Contour - - - -
- City Limits ·····
- Sphere of Influence/UGB - · - · -



Figure NE-1

Existing Noise Contours

Source: Illingworth and Rodkin, 2003.

NOISE ELEMENT

Table NE-2: Exposure to Noise

Average Day/ Night Exposure (Ldn)	Area of City Exposed	
	Existing (2003)	Projected (2020)
<55 dBA	65%	56%
55-60 dBA	17%	21%
60-65 dBA	9%	11%
65-70 dBA	5%	7%
>70 dBA	4%	5%

Source: Illingworth and Rodkin, 2005.

expected to exceed 2 dBA—a rise not usually discernible to the human ear. However, some residents already are bothered by traffic noise, which indicates that unfavorable reactions can occur even when standards are easily met in relatively quiet areas. Thus, project review requires careful evaluation of noise potential to minimize conflicts and preserve ambient noise levels that are in keeping with the town’s character.

Aircraft produce intermittent noise in Sonoma, but it tends to be faint and infrequent. Flights to and from Sonoma Skypark—a small general aviation airfield about 1.5 miles southeast of the city—usually occur south of the airstrip, and the 50 Ldn noise contour for Skypark operations lies about a mile from the city limit. Helicopter flights also have a negligible impact on the ambient noise environment of the city: they occur rarely for law enforcement or to transport Sonoma Valley Hospital patients.

STANDARDS FOR NOISE MITIGATION

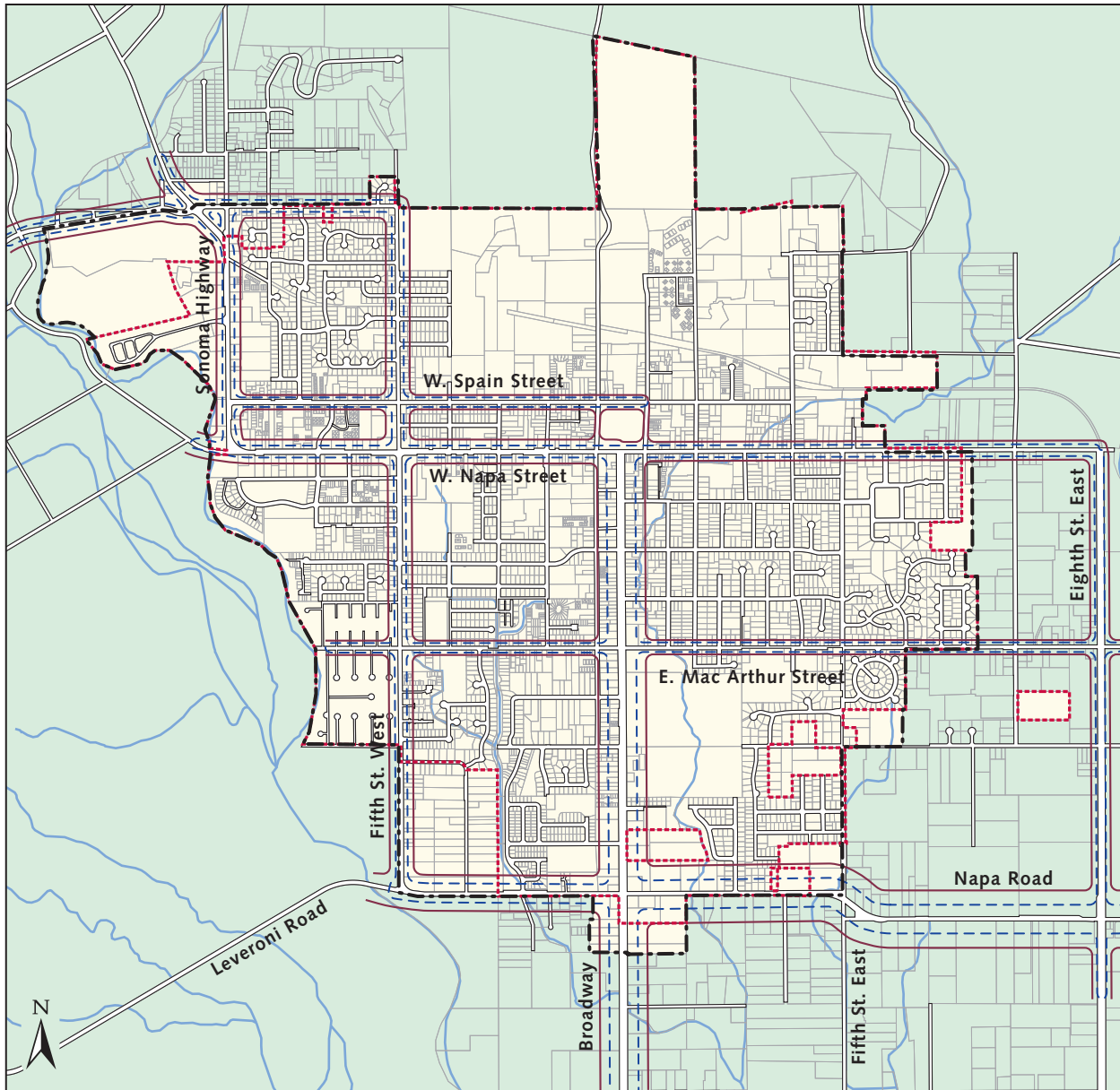
Once an existing or potential noise level is determined for a particular location or project, Tables NE-4 and NE-5 are referenced to determine whether City standards can be met and acceptable interior noise environments in the home or workplace can be ensured. If not, mitigation to achieve an acceptable level is required. These more-detailed standards separately address intrusive noise, intermittent noise, and new stationary sources.

Table NE-3: Typical Noise Levels

Land Use Category	Activity to Remain Undisturbed	Max. Interior Level (dBA)
Residential		
Single-family dwellings, duplexes, apartments, condominiums, hotels	Daytime conversation at 5’ Nighttime conversation at 10’ Sleep	60 55 50
Public Facilities		
Concert Hall	Listening	25
Theater	Listening	30
School Auditorium	Listening	35
Movie Theater	Listening	45
Church Sanctuary	Listening	45
School Classroom	Speech at 20’, raised voice	55
Library	Speech at 20’, raised voice	55
School Laboratory	Speech at 20’, raised voice	60
Commercial		
Conference Room	Speech at 12’, normal voice	55
Staff Offices	Speech at 6’, normal voice	60
Sales, secretarial	Telephone use	65
Restaurants, markets, retail stores	Conversation at 4’, normal voice	65
Industrial		
Laboratory	Speech at 6’, normal voice	60
Machine Shop	Speech at 3’, Raised voice	75
Assembly, construction	Speech at 2’, raised voice	75

Source: Illingworth and Rodkin, 2005.

In circumstances where new land uses are proposed that could create or be subjected to intrusive noise, the City requires 15-minute integrated average noise level measurements at locations where potential impacts may be significant. The measured level of the intrusive noise is then adjusted to account for special noise source characteristics and the prevailing attitude of Sonoma residents toward noise (see Table NE-4). After adjustment, if the source would create exterior noise levels in the surrounding neighborhood more than 5 dBA higher than ambient levels, noise-reduction measures are required.



- 65 DBA Ldn Contour ———
- 60 DBA Ldn Contour - - - - -
- City Limits ·····
- Sphere of Influence/UGB - · - · -



Figure NE-2

Projected Noise Contours

Source: Illingworth and Rodkin, 2003.

NOISE ELEMENT

Table NE-4: City Adjustments for Intrusive Noise

Type of Correction	Circumstances Under Which Correction is Applicable	Adjustment
<i>Seasonal Correction</i>	Summer (or year-round operation).	0 dBA
	Winter only (or windows always closed).	-5 dBA
<i>Correction for Previous Exposure and Community Attitudes</i>	No prior experience with the intruding noise.	+5 dBA
	Community has had some previous exposure to intruding noise but little effort is being made to control the noise. This correction may also be applied if the community has not been exposed to noise previously, but the people are aware that serious efforts are being made to control the noise.	0 dBA
	Community has had considerable previous exposure to the intruding noise, and the noise-maker's relations with the community are good.	-5 dBA
	The community is aware that the operation causing the noise is very necessary, and that it will not continue indefinitely. This correction can be applied to an operation of limited duration under emergency circumstances.	-10 dBA
<i>Pure tone or Impulse Characteristics</i>	No pure tone or impulsive character.	0 dBA
	Pure tones present.	+5 dBA
	Impulsive sounds present.	+5 dBA

Source: Illingworth and Rodkin.

Table NE-5: Allowable Levels for Stationary Noise Sources¹

Level	Daytime ⁵ (7 am to 10 pm)	Nighttime ^{2,5} (10 pm to 7 am)
Hourly Leq dB ³	50	40
Maximum Level, dB ³	70	60
Maximum Level, dB Impulsive Noise ⁴	65	55

Source: Illingworth and Rodkin, 2005.

- As determined at the property line of the receiving land use. When determining the effectiveness of mitigation measures, the standards may be applied on the receptor side of noise barriers or other property line noise mitigation measures.
- Applies only when the receiving land use operates or is occupied during nighttime hours.
- Sound level measurements shall be made with "slow" meter response.
- Sound level measurements shall be made with "fast" meter response.
- Allowable levels shall be raised to ambient levels where ambient levels already exceed allowable levels. Allowable levels shall be reduced 5 dB if the ambient Leq is at least 10 dB lower than the allowable level.

The services of an acoustical consultant may be required to evaluate whether a project meets these standards. If any source would cause outdoor noise levels in the surrounding neighborhood to exceed the ambient level by more than 5 dBA, mitigation measures are required to reduce the projected noise increase to less than 5 dBA above ambient levels.

COORDINATION WITH OTHER ELEMENTS

The Noise Element is most closely related to the Community Development Element and the Circulation Element. Development allowed through the land use designations and delineated on the Land Use Plan will be subject to policies and implementation measures set forth in the Noise Element with regard to the location and buffering of residential and other noise-sensitive uses. Policies and implementation measures in the Community Development Element directs the location of land uses. The Circulation Element further details traffic conditions, including the projected traffic volumes used to estimate future noise levels along major roadways.

GOALS, POLICIES, AND IMPLEMENTATION

The goals, policies, and implementation programs contained in this element, as set forth in Table NE-6 (following page), reflect the desire of the community to maintain the city's quiet environment. Applying the Noise Assessment Guide early in the project review process is key to determining whether potential noise conflicts generate the need for detailed acoustical studies.

Noise Assessment Guide

The City uses the following steps to evaluate the potential noise impacts of a proposed development and determine whether additional acoustical analysis is needed to ensure that associated noise levels conform to adopted City standards. This process is designed to facilitate informed, objective decisions regarding the compatibility of proposed land uses with the existing noise environment. The objective is to ensure that the community's ambient noise level is not degraded and that existing and future residents can enjoy the relative quiet that characterizes Sonoma.

Step 1: Application received.

Step 2: Identify Traffic Volume. Identify projected traffic volumes on nearby roadways.

Step 3: Locate Noise Contours. Determine the location of existing and projected traffic noise contours.

Step 4: Assess Compatibility. Compare projected noise levels with City standards. If the proposal is "clearly" or "normally" acceptable, go to Step 8. If not, continue with Step 5.

Step 5: Residential Use. If a residential area is impacted, go to Step 6. If not, Go to Step 7.

Step 6: Require Noise Study. Require an acoustical study to demonstrate compliance with State noise insulation standards and City noise standards. Go to Step 9.

Step 7: Project modifications. If a proposal falls in the "normally" acceptable category, notify the applicant that the project may create or be exposed to slightly adverse outdoor noise levels, and require design measures that ensure compliance with City standards.

Step 8: Address Special Concerns. If short duration noises (such as live music, truck loading, or machine operations) may significantly intrude on ambient levels in the surrounding neighborhood and/or there have been substantial complaints about noise on or in the vicinity of the site, go to Step 9. If not, go to Step 10.

Step 9: Mitigate intrusive noise. Require an acoustical study to demonstrate compliance with City standards.

Step 10: Findings. Make findings that all applicable criteria will be met, or if special circumstances merit, consider variances from City standards. Variances from State standards are not permitted.

NOISE ELEMENT

Table NE-6: Goals, Policies, and Implementation Measures

Goal PS-1: Achieve noise compatibility between existing and new development to preserve the quiet atmosphere of Sonoma and quality of life.	
<i>Policies</i>	<i>Implementation Measures</i>
<p>1.1 Apply the following standards for maximum Ldn levels to citywide development: 45 Ldn: For indoor environments in all residential units. 60 Ldn: For outdoor environments around all residential developments and outdoor public facilities (e.g., parks). 65 Ldn: For outdoor environments around commercial and public buildings (libraries and churches). 70 Ldn: For outdoor environments around industrial buildings.</p>	<p>1.1.1 Require all acoustical analyses necessary to demonstrate project compliance with City standards to contain:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. A summary of noise data collected, including identification of noise sources and their characteristics, a description of the methodology used to determine noise levels, and quantification of existing and future Ldn on the site. b. Figures illustrating the spatial relationship of noise sources and the project site. c. A description of project-related impacts on noise levels in the surrounding area, based on the standards adopted in this element. d. Specifications for noise mitigation measures and an analysis of their effectiveness in mitigating noise levels to accepted standards.
<p>1.2 Consider imposing more restrictive standards in locations that may be especially sensitive to noise.</p>	<p>1.2.1 Monitor noise complaint reports annually to determine if existing regulations are maintaining acceptable community-wide noise levels and/or sensitivity thresholds.</p>
<p>1.3 Require adequate mitigation of potential noise from all proposed development.</p>	<p>1.3.1 Require project design modifications as necessary to adequately mitigate potential noise impacts, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Locating usable outdoor areas (yards, patios, balconies) and noise-sensitive indoor areas (bedrooms, living rooms, windows) where noise levels will be lowest. b. Locating noise-compatible uses (open space, parking garages, other buildings) to shield noise-sensitive uses (e.g., residences, hospitals, convalescent homes) from major noise sources. c. Using berms, walls, fences, setbacks, dense plantings and other buffers to shield projects from noise sources.
<p>1.4 Evaluate proposed development using the Noise Assessment Guide and require an acoustical study when it is not certain that a proposed project can adequately mitigate potential noise impacts.</p>	<p>Implemented through the project review process and the Noise Assessment Guide (preceding page).</p>
<p>1.5 Encourage all development to minimize noise intrusions through project design.</p>	<p>See measure 1.3.1, above.</p>
<p>1.6 Minimize noise impacts of vehicle idling.</p>	<p>1.6 Require buses and trucks parked anywhere in the city for longer than five minutes to shut off their engines, except when they are <u>actively</u> unloading or loading passengers or goods.</p>

