

O'NEALS STUDY AREA PLAN

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O'NEALS STUDY AREA PLAN

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I

INTRODUCTION

This plan presents the goals and policies for growth, development and resource management within the O'Neals Study Area that have been developed by the O'Neals Citizens Advisory Committee. The Citizens Advisory Committee was appointed by the Madera County Board of Supervisors for the purpose of reviewing the County's planning policies for the O'Neals area and to recommend any changes in these policies that the Committee felt were necessary and consistent with the needs and desires of the residents of the study area. The Committee, in developing the goals and policies, has held a number of public meetings and study sessions. The major concerns that were expressed during these meetings are addressed in this plan.

The plan is based upon the concept that the historical use of land for cattle grazing should be maintained as the predominant land use within the study area. The goals and policies embodied in the plan are designed to enhance the existing rural-foothill environment, while ensuring that any new rural development will be compatible with the natural and human resources of the study area.

The goals and policies of the plan are designed to provide guidance for development and resource management within the study area for the next twenty years. It is recognized, however, that the goals and policies will have to be evaluated regularly and updated as necessary to reflect new opportunities, conditions, and attitudes within the study area.

The plan establishes two major land use classifications for the study area and presents goals and policies for both of these classifications. The land use classifications are summarized below; the specific areas to which they are applied are shown on the study area land use map.

- Resource Conservation and Public Land.

This category encompasses private range and timber production lands and most of the public land within the study area. The resource conservation and public land is now zoned for a wide range of uses, including public open space, agricultural, rural residential, and commercial uses and is generally in lots of forty acres or larger.

- Rural Development Areas. Land within rural development areas is designated for either rural residential, rural commercial, or public uses such as schools.

The land that is designated for rural residential development is generally located within existing approved subdivisions. The largest rural residential area is in the southwest portion of the study area and includes Bonadelle Ranchos No. 6, 7, 8, and 10. Other rural residential areas are Bonadelle Ranchos No. 9, Hidden Lake Estates, and the Davis Ranch Subdivision.

Land that is designated for rural commercial development includes all land that was zoned for commercial use prior to the adoption of this plan.

Several alternative locations for the future development of a ten acre elementary school have been reviewed by the Spring Valley School District within the area bounded by Road 36 on the west, Avenue 16 on the south, Road 38 on the east, and Avenue 17 on the north. The exact location of a future school will be determined by the Spring Valley School Board at such time that a school facility is needed within this general area.

GOALS & POLICIES FOR RESOURCE
CONSERVATION AND PUBLIC LAND

A. GOALS FOR RESOURCE CONSERVATION & PUBLIC LAND

1. To identify existing resource conservation and public land within the study area.
2. To conserve and protect resource conservation and public land free from conflicting land uses.
3. To encourage the management of agricultural resource conservation land under principles of sustained yield.

B. POLICIES FOR RESOURCE CONSERVATION & PUBLIC LAND

1. Land within the study area that is appropriate for resource conservation and public uses is designated on the study area land use map.
2. Activities or uses that are appropriate on resource conservation and public land include: maintenance of natural vegetation and wildlife habitat, mineral extraction, timber production, grazing, groundwater recharge, public and private parks.
3. The minimum permitted lot size within designated resource conservation and public land areas shall be forty acres.*

*Amended by Board of Supervisors' Resolution 89-266 dated December 11, 1989.

4. Residential development that is incidental to a resource conservation use is acceptable within designated resource conservation and public land areas, provided that it is in conformance with natural and human resource capabilities (see Section III, A, 2, j).
5. Property development standards for resource conservation and public open space zoning districts that are applied within designated resource conservation and public land use areas shall be reviewed by the County to ensure that they will allow development that is harmonious with the natural environment and rural atmosphere of the study area and the goals and policies of this plan.

III

GOALS & POLICIES FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT AREAS

A. GOALS & POLICIES FOR RURAL RESIDENTIAL LAND USE

1. Goals for Rural Residential Land Use

- a. To provide appropriate locations for rural residential development within the study area.
- b. To encourage rural residential development to occur on existing lots within designated rural development areas.
- c. To encourage the use of the subdivision process as the preferable method of dividing land for residential purposes within designated rural development areas.
- d. To encourage innovative, quality design for residential development within designated rural development areas.
- e. To provide flexibility in the types of housing that may be permitted within designated rural development areas.

2. Policies for Rural Residential Land Use

- a. Land within designated rural development areas may be divided for and developed with rural residential land uses, provided that the land division or development conforms to the policies of this section.
- b. Land divisions creating lots that are dependent upon individual water and sewage systems, that have a minimum net area of five acres, and that are in conformance with natural and human resource capabilities (see Section A, 2, j) are acceptable within designated rural development areas.

c. Subdivisions of five or more lots are acceptable within designated rural development areas, provided that they are in conformance with natural and human resource capabilities (see Section A, 2, j) and the following maximum density and minimum lot size criteria:

- (1) The maximum permitted density within subdivisions shall be one dwelling unit per two gross acres.
- (2) The average gross area for lots with individual water and sewer systems within a subdivision shall be five acres, with a minimum gross area of three acres.
- (3) The minimum net area for lots served by a community water system and individual sewer system within subdivisions shall be one and one-half acres.
- (4) The minimum net area for lots served by community water and sewer systems within a subdivision shall be three-quarters of an acre.

d. Lots within a subdivision may not be resubdivided.

e. Single family detached dwelling units are the most appropriate housing type for individual lots within designated rural development areas.

Mobilehomes may be appropriate on individual lots within designated rural development areas, subject to the following conditions and criteria:

- (1) The location and improvements proposed for a mobilehome shall be reviewed in accordance with the Zoning Permit process.

- (2) Prior to acting on a Zoning Permit Application for a mobilehome, the County shall notify and request comments from all owners of property within one-half mile of the property that is the subject of the application.
- (3) All mobilehomes shall have manufactured aluminum or commercial type cement block skirting, or skirting that is made from some other non-combustible material that has been approved by the Madera County Building Department.
- (4) At least two off-street parking spaces shall be provided for each mobilehome.

The County should consider zoning land within designated rural development areas to exclude mobilehomes when the owners of the land have requested that the land be so zoned.

- f. Single family detached dwelling units are the most appropriate housing type of lots within subdivisions.

Mobilehomes located on individual lots may be appropriate within a subdivision, provided that the subdivision was specifically designed and approved to accommodate them, and the mobilehomes are developed in accordance with the criteria set forth in Section e, 3 & 4, above.

- g. Single family attached dwelling units (townhouses, duplexes, triplexes, four-plexes) and apartments may be acceptable within subdivisions, provided that they are developed pursuant to the provisions of the Planned Residential District of the Madera County Zoning Ordinance and the following criteria:

- (1) A comprehensive site plan for the development shall be submitted and approved at the same time and in the same manner as the tentative map for the subdivision.

- (2) The subdivision shall be developed in accordance with the maximum density and minimum lot size criteria specified in Section A, 2, c.
 - (3) The maximum permitted ratio of floor area to lot area shall be 20%; the maximum permitted ratio of building area to lot area shall be 30%.
 - (4) The development must be served by a community water and sewer system.
 - (5) The development shall be compatible with surrounding land uses and shall be located on lots that are of sufficient size to allow adequate setbacks, space between buildings, parking space and internal circulation.
 - (6) The development shall have safe, convenient access to a major street.
 - (7) The development shall be in conformance with natural and human resource capabilities (see Section A, 2, j).
- h. Mobilehome parks may be acceptable within designated rural development areas, provided that they are developed pursuant to the provisions of Madera County Ordinance No. 298-A-55 and the following criteria:
- (1) The development must be served by a community water and sewer system.
 - (2) The overall density of the development shall not exceed one dwelling unit per two gross acres.

- (3) The maximum coverage of an individual mobilehome space by a mobilehome and any accessory structures shall not exceed 50% of the area of the space.
 - (4) The development shall be compatible with surrounding land uses and located on a lot that is of sufficient size to allow adequate setbacks, space between buildings, parking space and internal circulation.
 - (5) The development shall have safe, convenient access to a major street.
 - (6) The development shall be in conformance with natural and human resource capabilities (see Section A, 2, j).
- i. Property development standards for residential zoning districts that are applied within designated rural development areas shall be reviewed to ensure that they will allow development that is harmonious with the natural environment and rural atmosphere of the study area and the goals and policies of this plan.
 - j. The following criteria shall be used in evaluating the conformity of a project with natural and human resource capabilities:
 - (1) Natural Resource Capabilities
 - (a) Prior the approval of a parcel map or final subdivision map which proposes the use of individual sewage systems, the applicant shall provide evidence in a form acceptable to the County Public Works and Health Departments that an adequate individual sewage system can be developed on each lot and that the system will not adversely affect environ-

mental conditions on or off the lot. This evidence shall include percolation tests and soils classification information to a minimum depth of ten feet below the land surface within proposed sewage reserve areas in the following cases:

- (i) Percolation and soils tests shall be required for all lots with a net area of five acres or less when the average slope of the lot is between 0-14%.
- (ii) Percolation and soils tests shall be required for all lots with a net area of ten acres or less when the average slope of the lot is between 15% and 29%.
- (iii) Percolation and soils tests shall be required for all lots with an average slope of 30% or greater.

The requirement for percolation and soils tests on lots greater than forty acres in size may be waived at the discretion of the Health Department.

- (b) Prior to the approval of a parcel map or final subdivision map that proposes a community sewage system, the applicant shall provide evidence in a form acceptable to the County Public Works and Health Departments and the State Water Quality Control Board that the system will meet all applicable County and State standards and can adequately serve the proposed development without adversely affecting environmental conditions on or off the site.

- (c) Prior to the approval of a parcel map or final subdivision map that proposes the use of individual water supply systems, the applicant shall provide evidence in a form acceptable to the County Public Works and Health Departments that there is a reasonable potential that an adequate water supply system can be developed on each lot and that the development of the water supply system will not adversely affect environmental conditions on or off the site.
- (d) Prior to the approval of a parcel map, final subdivision map, or application for a mobilehome park that proposes the use of a community water system, the applicant shall provide evidence in a form acceptable to the County Public Works and Health Departments and the Department of Water Resources that the system meets all applicable County and State standards and can adequately serve the proposed development without adversely affecting environmental conditions on or off the site.
- (e) Prior to the approval of a tentative parcel map, tentative map, or application for a mobilehome park, the applicant shall provide evidence to the County that the following physical or cultural resources or conditions do not exist on a lot or site to the extent they will preclude the development of a

lot or site with the uses that are proposed for the lot or site or that are consistent with this plan if no specific uses are proposed: topography and slope, soils and geologic conditions (including extent of rock area), flooding or seasonal high groundwater, unique plant or wildlife habitats, significant archaeological or historical resources.

(2) Human Resource Capabilities

Prior to the approval of a tentative parcel map, tentative subdivision map, or application for a mobilehome park, the County shall determine that the following conditions exist:

- (a) That the development can be provided fire protection by local responsible fire protection agencies according to the established standards of the agencies.
- (b) That the development can be served by the public street system without substantially altering existing traffic patterns or overloading the street system and without requiring improvements to the street system beyond those which the developer will consent to provide.
- (c) That the local school districts can absorb any children expected to inhabit the proposed development in accordance with the established classroom or facility standards of the districts.

B.

GOALS & POLICIES FOR RURAL COMMERCIAL LAND USE

1. Goals for Rural Commercial Land Use

- a. To avoid strip commercial development within the study area.
- b. To allow rural commercial development to occur only at locations that are closest and most convenient to the greatest number of potential customers.
- c. To provide for the harmonious integration of commercial development with the human and natural resources of the study area.

2. Policies for Rural Commercial Land Use

- a. Commercial development that is oriented toward providing retail goods and services for the residents and visitors of the study area may be acceptable within designated rural development areas, provided that the development conforms to the provisions of the Commercial, Rural, Median Zoning District or the Commercial, Rural, Restricted Zoning District and the policies of this section.
- b. Rural commercial development shall be limited to land that was zoned for commercial use prior to the adoption of this plan.

- c. All applications to rezone land for rural commercial development shall be accompanied by a Master Plan showing the development that is contemplated if the rezoning is approved. The purpose for requiring the Master Plan are to allow the County to determine if the area proposed for the rezoning is adequate in size and shape to accommodate the planned use in accordance with adopted zoning standards and policies of this plan and to provide reasonable assurance to the County that the applicants intend to proceed with the development of commercial uses permitted by the zoning within a reasonable period of time.
- d. The County will rezone to its original zoning any land that has been zoned for commercial purposes after the adoption of this plan if the development of commercial uses on the land has not begun within two years of the date the commercial zoning was granted. The property owners may request from the County an extension of the aforementioned two year period if the property owners can provide reasonable evidence that commercial development will begin within a period of time that is agreed upon by the County and the property owners.
- e. In order to encourage the development of commercial uses that are compatible with the natural and human resources of the planning area, all commercial development shall be subject to site plan review and shall conform to the following criteria:

- (1) The architecture of a development should have a rustic theme and utilize earth tone colors that reflect the natural environment and rural atmosphere of the study area. Unpainted metal shall not be used for any exterior surfaces of a building.
- (2) The minimum net lot area for any new commercial zoning shall be one acre.
- (3) Buildings and structures shall not exceed two stories in height above ground level and should be sited and designed to not obstruct scenic view as determined by the Planning Department.
- (4) Outdoor storage of equipment and supplies shall be enclosed by a solid, permanent wall or fence.
- (5) Adequate, paved off-street parking shall be provided for all commercial uses. Parking spaces shall be arranged so that the backing out of motor vehicles from them onto a street or across a public or private pedestrian access way does not occur.
- (6) The location, number, and design of points of access between a public road and private commercial development shall be controlled to avoid conflicts between traffic entering and exiting the development and through traffic on the public road.
- (7) Landscaped setbacks with a minimum depth of twenty feet shall be provided on all street frontages of a commercial development.

- (8) The number, area, height, and location of signs for a commercial development shall conform with the overall design of the development, the rural atmosphere of the study area, and the following criteria:
 - (a) Free-standing signs shall not be permitted.
 - (b) Signs mounted on a building shall not exceed the height of the building.
 - (c) The total area of all signs mounted or painted on any wall or facade of a building shall not exceed ten percent of the area of the wall or facade upon which they are mounted or painted but need not be less than forty square feet.
 - (d) Flashing, rotating, or animated signs shall not be permitted.
 - (e) All signs shall be subject to site plan review.
- (9) Billboards shall not be permitted on a commercial lot.
- (10) The maximum lot coverage by buildings or structures shall not exceed fifty percent of the total net area.
- (11) Prior to the approval of a site plan for a rural commercial development, the applicant shall provide evidence in a form acceptable to the County Public Works and Health Departments that adequate water supply and sewage disposal systems can be developed for the

NORTH FORK/O'NEALS PLANNING STUDY
ENVIRONMENTAL EVALUATION

A. METHODOLOGY:

The purpose of this section is to provide the Planning Commission, the Board of Supervisors and the public with a generalized analysis of the probable environmental impacts which would result from implementation of these planning studies. These plans present the goals and policies for growth, development and resource management within the study areas which have been developed by the O'Neals and North Fork Citizens Advisory Committee. The plans are based upon the concepts that within the O'Neals area the historical use of land for cattle grazing should be maintained and that the rural environment of the North Fork area should be enhanced. Specific goals and policies are recommended for adoption and are designed to provide guidance for development and resource management with the study areas for the next twenty years.

This summary is presented to emphasize and evaluate the expected long-range impacts of the proposed plan. The complete magnitude and importance of each impact cannot be specifically quantified, but major impacts will be identified as either adverse or beneficial and qualitatively evaluated for importance. This is done so that decision makers may consider and balance interests involved. The analysis will emphasize the identification of irreversible impacts and commitments of resources.

B. MAJOR IMPACT:

The major impacts of the plans are related to the proposed future land use regulations. The plan emphasizes retention of the overall rural and agricultural nature of the area through the direction and concentration of rural and commercial development onto land that is zoned or designated for residential or commercial land use. Thus, the principal impact generating feature of this plan is to encourage population growth in certain areas while discouraging growth in other areas.

Centralization of population generally creates the following major impacts:

1. Traffic volumes and congestion on streets and highways would be expected to increase within development area.
2. Urbanization usually results in an increase in the area of paved surfaces, which causes increased and altered water runoff and which inhibits groundwater recharge.
3. Population increase within specific areas usually necessitates development of various support systems. Services essential to urban development are usually water systems, sewer systems, drainage systems, streets and highways, street lighting, public safety services, etc.
4. Population concentrations necessitate construction activities to provide homes, businesses, and expanded service facilities. Temporary impacts might be dust, equipment noise, traffic circulation increase, etc.
5. The loss or displacement of some or all plant and wildlife in the vicinity of higher population concentrations can be expected.

These impacts are generally considered to be negative unless specific plans and policies are followed to mitigate these effects as the centralization process is encouraged. The following analysis summarizes these concerns and mitigation methods according to effects expected upon elements of the planning area environment.

C. IMPACTS ON EXISTING ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS:

The following checklist identifies and evaluates expected effects of the proposed land use plan upon the existing environment of the planning area. It is realized that environmental change is inevitable as a result of the economic and physical development process already existing within the planning area.