



## **NEVADA COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION**

### **STAFF REPORT**

**APPLICANT:** County of Nevada

**HEARING DATE:** July 23, 2020

**FILE NO:** PLN20-0131; GPT20-0001; GPA20-0001; RZN20-0004; ORD20-3; EIS20-0007

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**PROJECT:** Public hearing to consider a recommendation to the Board of Supervisors for the 2020 Penn Valley Area Plan, including: 1) approving a Negative Declaration (EIS20-0007); 2) approving a General Plan Text Amendment (GPT20-0001) to adopt the Area Plan and to update references to the Area Plan within Chapter 1. Land Use Element of the General Plan; 3) approving the site-specific General Plan Land Use Map Amendment (GPA20-0001) for APN: 051-220-015 from Residential (RES) to Recreation (REC); 4) approving a Zoning Map Amendment (RZN20-0004) to correspond with the proposed expansion of the Area Plan boundaries to add the Site Performance (SP) Combining District zoning to specific parcels to reflect the applicability of the Area Plan, and site-specific rezoning as follows: APN: 051-220-015 from Residential Agricultural-1.5 (RA-1.5) to Recreation (REC) and APN: 051-120-005 and 051-120-013 from RA-1.5 to Public (P); and 5) approving a Zoning Ordinance Amendment (ORD20-3) to amend Sec. L-II 4.2.3 of the Nevada County Zoning Ordinance to update the reference to the Penn Valley Area Plan.

**PROJECT LOCATION:** Penn Valley is an unincorporated community in Western Nevada County. The Village Center is located south of California State Highway 20, six miles west of Grass Valley and five miles east of the Nevada-Yuba County line.

**ASSESSOR'S PARCEL NUMBER:** APNs: 051-220-015; 051-120-005; 51-120-013. Also see Appendix B of Attachment 1 for a list of parcels that have been added to the Area Plan.

**PROJECT PLANNER:** Tyler Barrington, Principal Planner

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**ATTACHMENTS:** (Duplicate Attachments Removed)

- ~~1. Draft Resolution: Initial Study/Negative Declaration (EIS20-0007)~~
- ~~2. Draft Resolution: Penn Valley Area Plan (GPT20-0001)~~
- ~~3. Draft Resolution: Site Specific General Plan Land Use Map Amendment (GPA20-0001)~~
- ~~4. Draft Ordinance: Site Specific Zoning District Map Amendment (RZN20-0004)~~
- ~~5. Draft Ordinance: LUDC Sec. L-II 4.2.3. Design Guidelines (ORD20-3)~~
- ~~6. 2000 Penn Valley Area Plan~~
- ~~7. Public and Agency Comments~~

**RECOMMENDATION:** Staff recommends the Planning Commission make the following recommendations to the Nevada County Board of Supervisors:

- I. Environmental Action: Adopt Negative Declaration (EIS20-0007)
- II. Project Actions:

1. Adopt the Penn Valley Area Plan and amend the General Plan Land Use Element for internal consistency (GPT20-0001)
  2. Approve the General Plan Land Use Map Amendment (GPA20-0001)
  3. Approve the Zoning District Map Amendment (RZN20-0004)
  4. Approve the Amendment to the Zoning Regulations (ORD20-3)
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### **PROJECT DESCRIPTION:**

The proposed project is an Area Plan for the Penn Valley area, with land use regulations focused on the Penn Valley Village Center as established by the County General Plan, but also extending to the surrounding area to assist in establishing a connection from Penn Valley to Lake Wildwood. The project builds upon and overhauls the existing 2000 Penn Valley Area Plan as a comprehensive Area Plan that is more than just an update to the prior planning policy document. The 2020 Penn Valley Area Plan is a focused policy and design document that supplements the Nevada County General Plan and Zoning Ordinance. It serves as the comprehensive land use and zoning plan for the community of Penn Valley and embodies the expressed goals of residents and business owners to help shape the future of their community. The Area Plan provides long-term guidance that is intended to improve the prosperity of Penn Valley in a way that supports a healthy economy, environment, and social fabric for the residents and general public, while maintaining the rural character and charm of the area.

The Penn Valley Area Plan is comprised of the following plan components and discretionary actions:

- **General Plan Text Amendment:** To adopt the Area Plan and to update references to the Area Plan within Chapter 1. Land Use Element of the General Plan including the Planning Supporting Documents and Planning for Legacy Communities Sections, Policies 1.3.13, 1.4.3 and 1.9.2.
- **General Plan Land Use Map Amendment:**
  - APN: 051-220-015. (7.11-acres). Western Gateway Park property from Residential (RES) to Recreation (REC).
- **Zoning Map Amendment:** Parcel rezoning to correspond with the proposed expansion of the Area Plan boundaries to add the Site Performance (SP) Combining District zoning to specific parcels to reflect the applicability of the Area Plan, and site-specific rezoning as follows:
  - APN: 051-220-015. (7.11-acres). Western Gateway Park property from Residential Agricultural-1.5 (RA-1.5) to Recreation (REC).
  - APN: 051-120-005 and 051-120-013. (1.23 and 0.52-acres). Nevada County Cemetery District properties from RA-1.5 to Public (P). Site already has a Public (PUB) General Plan Land Use designation.
- **Zoning Ordinance Amendment:** Amending Sec. L-II 4.2.3 of the Nevada County Zoning Ordinance to update the reference to the proposed Penn Valley Area Plan design guidelines and standards.

**Project Location and Surrounding Land Uses:** Penn Valley is an unincorporated community in Western Nevada County. The Village Center is located south of California State Highway 20, six miles west of Grass Valley and five miles east of the Nevada-Yuba County line (*Figure 1.1*).

The Village Center is an area slightly greater than one-half square mile in size, encompassing 219 parcels. The Area Plan incorporates a larger area into the Plan boundaries with the intention of linking the Village Center to Lake Wildwood recognizing the importance the entire region has on the overall prosperity of the area and to encourage an integrated community design. An additional 136-parcels have been added to the Plan boundary (*Figure 1.2*). The Plan area is a relatively flat basin, bifurcated by State Route 20. Two perennial creeks, Squirrel Creek and Clear Creek, traverse the Plan area from east to west, converging near the northeast boundary of the Village Center. Woodlands, riparian vegetation, pastureland and floodplains occur within the boundaries of the Plan area.

In addition to individual business sites and residential sites, the Village Center contains a 125-unit mobile home park, a community shopping center, a business park, Ready Springs Elementary School, and the Penn Valley Fire Protection District headquarters. The Village Center is the cultural and functional center of the larger Community Region, containing the principal commercial uses serving the community. To the north is the Lake Wildwood a single-family gated residential community with recreational amenities.

The Village Center is currently divided into primarily commercial, medium to high density residential land uses with some parcels zoned Public, Business Park, Residential Agriculture and Interim Development Reserve. This Area Plan expands the influence and boundary of the Area Plan by adding key portals or entry points, local/regional assets such as Western Gateway Park, existing industrial and commercial business centers and the rural corridors that serve residents and visitors alike. The draft Area Plan provides a detailed review of land uses in the Plan boundary.

**Background:** The 2020 Area Plan is designed to meet State of California requirements for specific plans and to facilitate the implementation of development goals and policies by establishing zoning districts, standards and criteria for development, and to



Figure 1.1. Vicinity Map and Aerial Photo

Protection District headquarters. The Village Center is the cultural and functional center of the larger Community Region, containing the principal commercial uses serving the community. To the north is the Lake Wildwood a single-family gated residential community with recreational amenities.

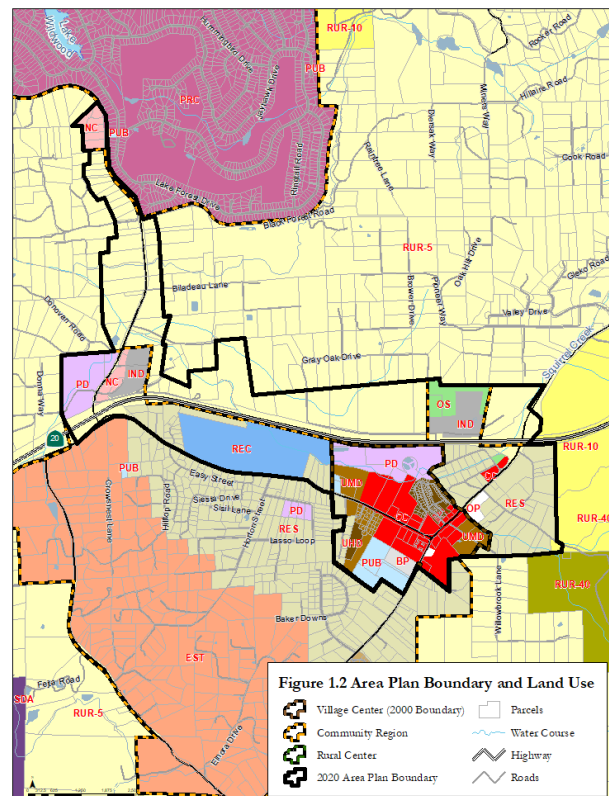


Figure 1.2 Area Plan Boundary and Land Use

set the distribution, location and extent of planned land uses consistent with the adopted Nevada County General Plan. The Plan makes only a very minor change to three quasi-governmental properties in Penn Valley to match the historical, existing and planned use of those properties. These properties are owned and operated by the Western Gateway Park District and the Nevada County Cemetery District. All other existing General Plan Land Use and Zoning designations remain unchanged as a result of the Plan. The authority for preparing Area Plans is founded in California Government Code §65301(b) which allows the general plan to be adopted as a single document or as a group of documents relating to subjects or geographic segments of the planning area, and in Government Code §65303 which allows the general plan to include any other elements or address any other subjects which, in the judgment of the legislative body, relate to the physical development of the county. Local authority is founded in the goals and policies of the Nevada County General Plan. The existing 2000 Area Plan has outlived its lifespan and as a result 2020 Area Plan was prepared at the direction of the County Board of Supervisors.

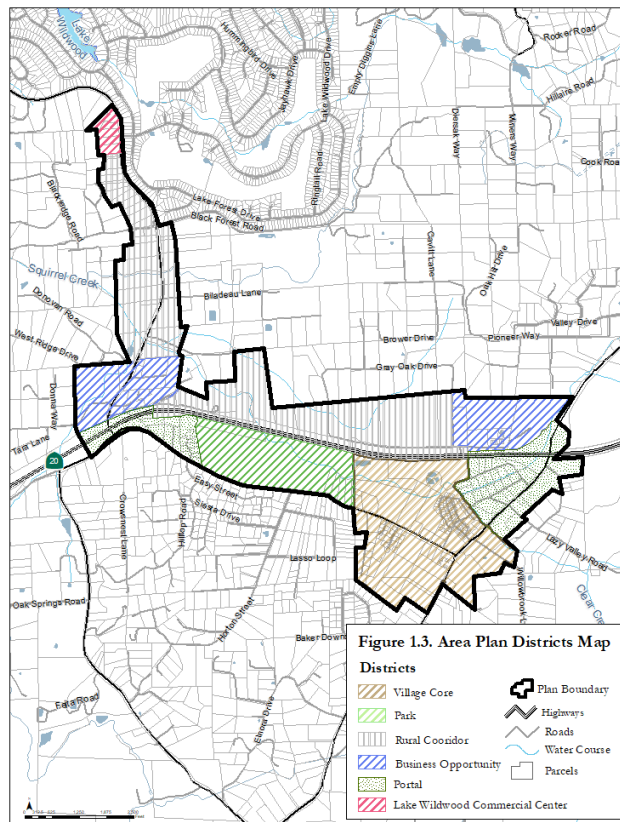
The 2020 Area Plan was developed consistent with California State law which permits cities and counties to adopt specific plans for the “systematic implementation of the general plan” (Government Code Section 65450 et. Seq.). The law requires the following:

- A specific plan shall include a text and diagram or diagrams which specify all the following in detail:
  - The distribution, location, and extent of the uses of land, including open space, within the area covered by the plan.
  - The proposed distribution, location, extent and intensity of major components of public and private transportation, sewage, water, drainage, solid waste disposal, energy, and other essential facilities proposed to be located within the area covered by the plan and needed to support the land uses described in the plan.
  - Standards and criteria by which development will proceed and standards for the conservation, development, and utilization of natural resources where applicable.
  - A program of implementation measures including regulations, programs, public works projects, and financing measures necessary to carry out the above referenced requirements.
  - The specific plan shall include a statement of the relationship of the specific plan to the general plan.

California Government Code Section 65452 provides that the specific plan may address any other subjects which in the judgment of the planning agency are necessary or desirable for the implementation of the general plan. As a policy document, the Area Plan supplements and becomes part of the County General Plan, providing a comprehensive framework for making land use decisions within the Penn Valley Village Center and influencing decisions in the surrounding geographic area. The goals, policies and building and site development standards contained within this Plan reflect Penn Valley unique characteristics, support the local community’s vision, and are consistent with the overall themes and goals of the General Plan. The County’s General Plan land use maps designate Penn Valley as a Village Center contained



within a Community Region, which is intended to provide for a mix of uses including residential, commercial, office, business park, industrial and public or institutional uses, grouped together and interrelated to form a functional and vibrant commercial center, and to create a visual identity related to the rural agricultural character of the region. The Penn Valley Community Region is surrounded by a larger rural region of predominately rural residential and agricultural uses. The existing 2000 Area Plan applied to land use and development within the Village Center only. The 2020 Area Plan, once adopted, will revise the applicable official maps of Nevada County and expand the limits of the Area Plan boundaries using a Community Design District (“District”) concept to establish development criteria specific to the applicable district. Individual districts are depicted in Figure 1.3, are summarized below and are discussed in greater detail within the Plan.



### **THE AREA PLAN:**

The draft 2020 Penn Valley Area Plan was prepared with collaboration from the community of Penn Valley. The public process that helped develop the plan is discussed in more detail below. The foundation of this plan is based on the 2000 Penn Valley Area Plan, the 2000 Penn Valley Focused Economic Development Study and more recent information where available. The Board of Supervisors adopted 2016 Soda Springs Area Plan was used as template and overall format guide for the 2020 Penn Valley Area Plan to ensure consistency between County Area Plans. The 2020 Area Plan will build upon and supersede the 2000 Area Plan and augment the countywide General Plan for the purposes of land use regulation to provide management direction for all projects proposed within the Area Plan boundaries.

The community shaped and guided the Plan by developing a vision statement and guiding

principles that set the tone for the Area Plan. The vision statement is as follows:

*The Penn Valley area and particularly the Penn Valley community looks to the Area Plan to create physical, social, and economic links and policies that will improve the regions vitality and sustainability. The Area Plan seeks to guide development that embraces the sense of community while providing a healthy balance of commerce, employment, recreation, and livability. Penn Valley is a modern rural community providing quality of life for its residents. The community is welcoming to day-visitors to enjoy the year-round “down-home” attractions such as music in the park, rodeo competitions, farmers market and holiday events. This vision was created through input from the community which also supported by following Area Plan guiding principles.*

Nevada County, in response to key issues affecting the quality of life and future prosperity of the Penn Valley area, established the following central guiding principles with input and guidance of the community to provide the foundation for a more sustainable, economically prosperous, inclusive and environment-friendly future for Penn Valley:

- Develop a year-round economy that will foster local business;
- Preserve community character;
- Protect and restore natural resources;
- Value historic resources;
- Create community gathering places;
- Preserve the legacy of the Penn Valley Rodeo;
- Connect Penn Valley and the Lake Wildwood areas through multi-use trail systems; and
- Provide unique lodging and camping opportunities so day-visitors can stay longer.

These principles articulate the vision for Penn Valley and are the standard by which the appropriateness of the Area Plan's goals and policies are tested.

### **Plan Organization and Content**

The Area Plan is organized into seven chapters and an appendix containing design guidelines. Each chapter is summarized below.

- **Chapter 1 – Introduction**

The Introduction summarizes the Area Plan's purpose, preparation, background and area history, legal authority, relationship to the General Plan, organization, description of the plan area, and the plan's vision and guiding principles. Maps are included that show the Area Plan Boundary and Land Use Designations and the location of each community design district.

- **Chapter 2 – Land Use**

The Land Use Chapter is the most robust of all the Area Plan chapters. It provides detailed information on the number of parcels in the Plan boundaries by General Plan designation, how many properties have been added to the Plan boundaries based on community input, a discussion about potential development opportunities sites (vacant or underutilized properties with development potential) by General Plan designation and by district, the current commercial setting through a series of photos organized by district, a discussion on updates to the Plan's design guidelines, a brief overview of the Site Performance combining district, land use vision, land use goals and policies, and implementation including how design review applies to future development. Goals and policies are included that are intended to balance the preservation and enhancement of Penn Valley's rural agricultural identity, natural and built environments and promote appropriate development. These goals and policies were derived from the community input and resulted in four specific goals. These goals are supported by related policies that a meant to implement the vision of the community. The goals and supporting policies include the following:

▪ **Goal LU-1: Preserve the rural lifestyle of Penn Valley**

○ **Policy LU-1.1: Rural Setting**

Attract and accommodate growth in a manner that balances between the preservation of the existing rural setting and prepares for future considerations.

○ **Policy LU-1.2: Community Design Districts**

Provide appropriate land use opportunities to realize the intent and theme of each Community Design District at a similar size and scale as surrounding buildings. As a whole, Community Design Districts shall protect the rural character unique to each of the six identified districts.

▪ **Goal LU-2: Sustain a year-round community and economy**

○ **Policy LU-2.1: Zoning**

Provide the zoning and adequate space to accommodate a diverse mix of commercial, industrial, recreational, tourist accommodation, residential and public service uses distributed appropriately across the six different Community Design Districts.

○ **Policy LU-2.2: Uses**

Facilitate the following uses to locate and/or remain within the Area Plan: indoor and outdoor recreation; full-service community market; community center with gathering, meeting and classroom space; lodging; camping; retail; restaurants and cafes; agriculture support businesses; and professional offices.

○ **Policy LU-2.3: Shop Local**

Support local-owned, independent businesses that reflect the core values of Penn Valley, Lake Wildwood and residential and agricultural surroundings.

○ **Policy LU-2.4: Live-Work**

Encourage live-work opportunities within the Village Core, Lake Wildwood Commercial, Business Opportunity West, Portal East and West Community Design Districts with a diversity of jobs to provide greater economic stability and new opportunities for employment in Penn Valley.

○ **Policy LU-2.5: Special Events Areas**

Establish special event areas with the purpose of establishing community gathering places and to assist with permit streamlining for art shows, food and beverage tasting events, seasonal markets, athletic events and other community activities.

○ **Policy LU-2.6: Community Plaza**

Support the development of a permanent multiple-use community plaza with public restrooms.

- **Policy LU-2.7: Rodeo Grounds**  
Recognize the Penn Valley Rodeo Grounds as a legacy land use that is compatible with the community's goals of preserving rural character and supporting the local economy.
- **Policy LU-2.8: Interim Development Reserves**  
Assess Interim Development Reserve (IDR) zoned areas within the area plan to identify uses that are compatible with community goals, surrounding uses and natural resources, and address current and future needs.
- **Policy LU-2.9: Economic Study**  
Support the preparation of an Economic Study, preferably through a public/private partnership, that evaluates the Penn Valley and Lake Wildwood area market in terms of its strengths, weaknesses and untapped opportunities to attract and support specific business sectors.
- **Policy LU-2.10: Village Core Business Improvement District**  
Actively support community efforts to create a Village Core Business Improvement District that creates investment strategies to support lighting, sidewalks, streetscapes, parking and gathering places.
- **Policy LU-2.11: Overnight Accommodations**  
Facilitate the development of small boutique lodging developments within the West/East Portal, West Business Opportunity, and/or the Village Core Community Design Districts.
- **Goal LU-3: Conserve existing community, landscapes and resource values**
  - **Policy LU-3.1: Community Setting**  
Promote uses and activities that complement the community setting and avoid impacts to the adjoining resources.
  - **Policy LU-3.2: Natural Resource Protection**  
Conserve, protect and enhance the existing natural resources within the Area Plan in order to both conserve the natural character and compliment the built environment.
  - **Policy LU-3.3: Open Space**  
Open space designation in the Area Plan is intended to protect water and riparian resources, provide habitat conservation and consider other resources within the landscape on individual parcels. Open space is a planning tool to be used to establish a buffer between uses that are traditionally incompatible in a rural setting such as industrial activities and adjoining residential zoning.
  - **Policy LU-3.4: Water Conservation**  
Recognize the impact of climate change on the region's landscape and resources. Incorporate water conservation components into the design, construction, and operation of new construction and major renovations.



- **Goal LU-4: Ensure housing choices and affordability**
  - **Policy LU-4.1: Housing Availability - Lifecycle**  
Increase the availability and affordability of quality housing opportunities that accommodates a diverse demographics of age, household size, and income providing lifecycle housing for a sustainable community.
  - **Policy LU-4.2: Housing Availability - Choices**  
Ensure zoning within the Area Plan facilitates housing choices that accommodates a wide range of community preferences appropriate for each Community Design District.
  - **Policy LU-4.3: Missing Middle**  
Identify opportunities to incentivize the development of housing which is affordable to the above-Moderate (Missing Middle) income range, 120 to 195 percent above Area Median Income.
  - **Policy LU-4.4: Mixed-Use**  
Locate quality mixed-use, commercial/residential, development within the Village Core Community Design District.
  - **Policy LU-4.5: Disadvantaged Community**  
Facilitate the identification of opportunities as a Disadvantage Community to secure funds for housing and community infrastructure needs.
- **Chapter 3 – Economic Development**

The Economic Development chapter includes a brief discussion about economic resources in Penn Valley, including existing economic conditions, and infrastructure assessment, economic strengths and challenges, economic goals and policies based on community input for economic prosperity and sustainability of the local economy and potential implementation strategies. The goals and supporting policies are as follows:

  - **Goal ED-1: Make Penn Valley a better place to live by providing more jobs and services for local residents**
    - **Policy ED-1.1: Local Services**  
Retain and expand existing landmark businesses that serve the needs of Penn Valley residents and the greater community.
    - **Policy ED-1.2: Sustainability**  
Encourage sustainable businesses that support development of clean industry, increased services and provide for higher paying jobs. To capitalize on the rural and agricultural character of the area, emphasis should be focused on growing businesses in agriculture, agricultural technology, industrial agriculture research and development, agricultural manufacturing, and agritourism, while also promoting economic diversity and prosperity for residents.

- **Policy ED-1.3: Character and Branding**  
Build the local economy on Penn Valley's strengths and uniqueness as a rural small town with agricultural values. Achieve a more diversified economy and employment base consistent with community character. Establish a recognizable brand of goods and products that represent Penn Valley that is based on the quality that the area provides (e.g. Free Range Beef, Wine, etc.).
- **Policy ED-1.4: Economic Gardening**  
Promote and keep small business local and in the community through collaboration and sharing of resources, such as creating local shared commercial spaces that can help building upon the agricultural resources and ingenuity of the local population. These facilities may include, but are not limited to, a refrigeration center, a certified USDA butchering facility, an agricultural centric makers or production space, a shared commercial or commissary kitchen to create value added agricultural products.
- **Goal ED-2: Achieve a sustainable local economy by building upon the area's existing business and commercial centers**
  - **Policy ED-2.1: Town-Center**  
Provide incentives and remove barriers to help establish a town center in the Village Core as the key focal place of Penn Valley. Focus uses toward commercial retail, dining, groceries, professional offices and services.
  - **Policy ED-2.2: Mixed-Use**  
Continue to establish the Village Core and Portal Districts as mixed-use, commercial, and residential hubs.
  - **Policy ED-2.3: Rural Identity**  
Protect Penn Valley's rural identity and character by discouraging commercial growth within the Rural Corridor, while promoting new commercial development in the Village Core, Business Opportunity, Portal and Lake Wildwood Commercial Center Districts to follow the established design guidelines of the Area Plan. Within the Portal District, community identification signage is encouraged to follow a western theme and be reflective Penn Valley's rural sense of place.
  - **Policy ED-2.4: Broadband**  
Encourage broadband internet availability throughout Penn Valley, with special emphasis on the Village Core and Business Opportunity Districts. Seek funding sources and innovative approaches to extending communications systems throughout Penn Valley.
  - **Policy ED-2.5: Regional Collaboration**  
Work collaboratively to promote regional economic development strategies to establish and implement a clear economic strategy that looks at Penn Valley and all its parts, including Lake Wildwood, Penn Valley Village Center, and the surrounding ranches and farms. Leverage Penn Valley's "natural capital" in

implementing economic development strategies and increase participation and coordination of local agencies.

- **Policy ED-2.6: Funding**  
Utilize and leverage funding from a variety of public and private services.
- **Policy ED-2.7: Create Interest**  
Create public plazas, gathering spaces, attractive street and sidewalk lighting, and active streetscapes to promote a lively market.
- **Policy ED-2.8: Special Events**  
Promote the development of additional festivals and cultural events, such as the Rodeo, with emphasis on producing multi-day events that will keep visitors in Penn Valley longer.
- **Policy ED-2.9: Visitor Experience**  
Improve the visitor experience by creating attractive and inviting community gateways within the west and east Portal District, allowing for signage to identify the community and encouraging commercial development in the Portal and Business Opportunity District to reflect the small-town character of Penn Valley.
- **Policy ED-2.10: Stay and Play**  
Encourage the development of tourist accommodations in the Village Core, Business Opportunity and Portal Districts.
- **Chapter 4 – Public Services and Infrastructure**  
The Public Services and Infrastructure chapter addresses the public services and facilities that serve development within the Area Plan boundaries. It reviews existing public services and their capacity to serve the future of Penn Valley. The chapter provides a discussion on the area's roadways, transit services, pedestrian improvements, sewage disposal/wastewater, water supply, solid waste, the post office, emergency services including fire and law enforcement, electricity/propane, schools and the library, goals and policies and strategies for the implementation of the goals and policies. The goals and policies are intended to support the future needs of the community to allow Penn Valley to grow and prosper. The specific goals and policies are as follows:
  - **Goal PS-1: Provide safe and efficient multi-modal circulation**
    - **Policy PS-1.1: Safe Connectivity**  
Provide for safe movement of vehicles, pedestrians, bicyclists and equestrians, as well as to accommodate various transportation modes, safe highway, street and road crossings are encouraged throughout the Penn Valley and the Lake Wildwood area.
    - **Policy PS-1.2: Multi-Purpose Paths**  
Commercial and multi-family residential development with frontage along Penn Valley Drive, Pleasant Valley Road or Spenceville Road, and both public and

development-related road improvements should include the construction of multi-purpose paths.

- **Policy PS-1.3: Path System**  
Develop an integrated path and trail system that considers pedestrians, bicyclists, equestrians and, where appropriate, golf carts to provide access from the surrounding Penn Valley and Lake Wildwood communities to the Village Core promoting safe routes to school, connectivity and healthy lifestyles.
- **Policy PS-1.4: Co-Locate Public Parking Facilities**  
Locate appropriate public parking facilities in commercial areas that add pedestrian/bicycle traffic and serve as a catalyst for private development, provided they do not detract from commercial activity.
- **Policy PS-1.5: Wayfinding**  
Design and implement an integrated wayfinding signage program throughout the Area Plan and to other attractions in the region, to support businesses and efficiently direct residents and visitors on foot, bike, horse or vehicle to recreation, commercial, lodging, public services, transit and parking.
- **Policy PS-1.6: Circulation**  
Access within the Area Plan to neighboring commercial sites should occur easily and safely without the need to re-enter the street. Encourage shared-use parking facilities with agreements between businesses to support this policy.
- **Policy PS-1.7: Bicycle Racks**  
Commercial and services located within the Area Plan are encouraged to install bike racks to support their cyclist patrons.
- **Goal PS-2: Promote energy efficiency**
  - **Policy PS-2.1: Alternative Energy**  
Encourage new and remodeled structures to incorporate design techniques to reduce energy consumption and or produce power through alternative renewable sources.
- **Goal PS-3: Provide communications and infrastructure utilizing the best available technology**
  - **Policy PS-3.1: Broadband**  
Promote readily accessible distributed broadband internet service through the developed portion of the Plan area.
- **Goal PS-4: Protect the public health and safety by maintaining infrastructure and facilities that serve Penn Valley**

- **Policy PS-4.1: Sanitary Sewer**  
To protect the public and the environment, ensure sanitary sewer facilities, both collection and treatment are sufficient to serve the Plan area's proposed density of residential, commercial, industrial and public uses.
- **Policy PS-4.2: Fire Protection**  
Consider public safety issues, including defensible space to reduce fire risk in all aspects of development design in the Area Plan.
- **Policy PS-4.3: Fire Protection**  
Maintain and grow the Penn Valley Fire Protection District services and capacity to meet the needs of the Area Plan residents and the entirety of the Fire District.
- **Chapter 5 – Recreation**  
The Recreation chapter is intended to recognize the importance of how having safe, fun and accessible physical activities available locally help improve not only physical and mental health of individuals but also provides social benefits in support of a community's sense of place and overall has been proven to strengthen a community. Further recreation amenities help draw in visitors to the area, which supports the economic wellbeing of a community. The Recreation chapter highlights the importance of Western Gateway Park both locally and regionally, as well as focusing on other local and regional recreational resources, such as but not limited to Lake Wildwood, the Penn Valley Rodeo, the South Yuba River State Park at Bridgeport and the Spenceville Wildlife Area. This chapter discusses existing recreation activities such as trails and paths, developed facilities and provides the recreations goals and policies to support the community's recreation vision, with potential strategies for maintaining and enhancing recreation opportunities in Penn Valley. The specific goals and supporting policies of the Recreation chapter are as follows:
  - **Goal REC-1: Provide opportunities for a range of dispersed and developed outdoor recreation activities**
    - **Policy REC-1.1: Trail Network**  
Prepare a Trails Master Plan that includes preserving existing path and trail networks and expand with the goal of connecting the Area Plan to residential areas, Western Gateway Park, Lake Wildwood and other recreation opportunities.
    - **Policy REC-1.2: Special Events**  
Promote special events in Penn Valley that highlight recreational opportunities and natural, historical or cultural heritage including those that honor the agricultural values of the community. Support the development of a Penn Valley Community Center to accommodate indoor activities.
    - **Policy REC-1.3: Western Gateway Park**  
Promote the year-round recreational opportunities found within Western Gateway Park. Support the maintenance, expansion and improvements of the facilities that assist the park in achieving its Master Plan objectives.

- **Policy REC-1.4: Western Gateway Park**  
Expand the regional exposure to the amenities and recreational opportunities Western Gateway Park provides.
- **Policy REC-1.5: Future Trends**  
Anticipate and accommodate future trends in outdoor recreation.
- **Policy REC-1.6: Campgrounds and Camping**  
Support existing recreational events and opportunities and accommodate visitors whom would like to experience Penn Valley beyond a daytrip, develop a campground which compliments Penn Valley's character and natural landscapes in close proximity to existing recreational amenities.
- **Policy REC-1.7: Rodeo Grounds and Events**  
Continue to support the rodeo grounds and the events conducted there as both recreational and cultural activities that support the ranching history of Penn Valley.
- **Policy REC-1.8: Funding for Recreation**  
Identify and secure adequate and equitable funding to maintain and operate public recreation.
- **Policy REC-1.9: Developer-Built Recreational Amenities**  
Where legally appropriate and efficient, encourage developer-built recreation amenities.
- **Policy REC-1.10: Partnerships in Recreation**  
Work with sports leagues, the school district, other public agencies, non-profits and the private sector as partners in the provision of shared recreational facilities and team sports fields.
- **Chapter 6 – Historic, Cultural & Natural Resources**  
Penn Valley has a rich historical background and is surrounded by rural development and open range lands that are reflective of quintessential California oak woodlands and rolling hills of the northern Sierra Nevada foothills. The purpose of the Historic, Cultural and Natural Resources chapter is to celebrate the area's diverse natural and cultural resources that promote public enjoyment of the area and to protect those resources for future generations. The chapter provides a brief overview of natural, historic and cultural resources in the area, goals and policies and strategies for protecting these resources as a keystone to the community. Some of the resources in the area include but are not limited to streams, ponds, riparian areas and wetlands, oak woodlands and native grasslands, agricultural heritage and important farmlands, Native Americans and early settlers of western Nevada County, the Rodeo Grounds, Buttermaker's Cottage, and Bridgeport. The specific goals and supporting policies that are intended to further the community's vision as it relates to protecting these resources and are as follows:



- **Goal RP-1: Protect Penn Valley’s Natural Resources**
  - **Policy RP-1.1: Natural Drainage Patterns & Wetlands**  
Project development should not change natural drainage patterns nor reduce the area of wetlands.
  - **Policy RP-1.2: Preserving Natural Landscapes**  
Development should be sited in a manner that preserves significant views, vegetation and surrounding natural landscapes.
  - **Policy RP-1.3: Riparian Corridors**  
Riparian corridors shall be maintained in their natural state as much as possible to protect their natural resource values including watershed/floodplain functions and as a wildlife habitat corridor.
  - **Policy RP-1.4: Biological Resources – Squirrel Creek**  
Avoid development impacts to Squirrel Creek and its floodplain where landmark oak groves of valley oak riparian forest create a sensitive natural community.
  - **Policy RP-1.5: Biological Resources – Hardwood Tree Groves and Landmark Oak Trees**  
Avoid, minimize or compensate the loss of hardwood tree groves containing a minimum or greater than 33% canopy and landmark oak trees of 36”dbh or greater as a result of development within the area plan.
  - **Policy RP-1.6: Water Quality**  
Develop Best Management Practices program for stormwater runoff from public and private properties in the Area Plan.
- **Goal RP-2: Protect Penn Valley’s significant cultural and historic resources to the maximum extent possible.**
  - **Policy RP-2.1: Cultural Resources**  
Emphasize protection and stabilization of existing cultural resource sites and features.
  - **Policy RP-2.2: Historical Resources**  
Encourage retention, integration and adaptive reuse of significant historical resources.
  - **Policy RP-2.3: Historic Landmarks**  
Encourage the listing of historical sites or structures, such as the Bridgeport covered bridge, on the Nevada County, State Register of Historic Landmarks, and /or National Register of Historic Landmarks.
  - **Policy RP-2.4: Places of Interest**  
Encourage informational signage in the Penn Valley area for educational purposes regarding specific cultural and historical places of interest.

- **Chapter 7 – Implementation**

The Implementation chapter recaps some of the key challenges and strategies for achieving the community’s overall vision for the future of Penn Valley. The chapter is short but provides direction for the future implementation and update of the Area Plan. Specifically, the Implementation Chapter goals and supporting policies are as follows:

- **Goal I-1: The Nevada County Board of Supervisors or their designee shall have the responsibility to guide the Plan’s implementation**

- **Policy I-1.1: Lead Agency**

Nevada County shall assume primary responsibility for project review and approval consistent with this plan and the County’s General Plan pursuant to the conditions and limitations outlined in the Land Use chapter of this plan.

- **Policy I-1.2: General Plan Consistency**

No project may be approved unless it is found to comply with the General Plan and with any ordinances, rules and regulations enacted to effectuate the General Plan and the Area Plan.

- **Goal I-2: Fund public section improvement projects, and planning coordinate activities through a variety of funding sources**

- **Policy I-2.1: Funding**

Actively pursue funding to implement this Plan from federal, state, and local grant sources, and public/private partnerships.

- **Goal I-3: Continuously review and update the Area Plan to reflect current technology, regulation, policy, community direction and the environment**

- **Policy I-3.1: Plan Revisions**

Revisions to the Area Plan shall be approved by the County Board of Supervisors.

- **Goal I-4: Fulfill the specific implementation actions identified at the end of each of the individual Area Plan chapters.**

- **Appendix A – Design Guidelines**

The 2000 Area Plan Design Guidelines have helped shape the community design that exists in Penn Valley today. An overall western theme is encouraged, and recent projects have been directed to utilize the Area Plan when designing their projects and are strongly encouraged to reflect the existing built environment. Though community input it was determined that the existing design guidelines are an effective tool and subsequently the Area Plan update primarily adds to the existing design guidelines based on the ideas expressed during community design preference discussions through interviews, an online survey and community workshops. Some of the new guidelines include but are not limited to streetscape landscaping with pedestrian improvements such as art, places to sit and gather; trash/recycling bins; walkability improvements such as paths and sidewalks where none exist; and uniform street lighting. Photos examples reflecting the community’s design preferences have been added to Appendix A to assist developers and

Planning staff implement the guidelines. The guidelines are intended to serve as an informational tool for property owners and decision makers proposing commercial, industrial, multi-family and public use development within the 2020 Plan boundaries. While they focus on the Village Center or Village Core, the design guidelines are also applicable to discretionary development that occurs outside the Village Core District to ensure a uniform and integrated design throughout the community. Where appropriate the existing and added guidelines specify which community design district they are applicable too. For example, Design Guideline S.5, is specific to the Portal Districts and encourage inviting community identification signage that reflects the overall rural character and small town feel of Penn Valley. Such signage shall not include advertisements for specific business or goods and services. The purpose of this guideline is to encourage the passerby to stop into Penn Valley to support the economic vitality of the region by shopping at local shops and restaurants.

**Community Design Districts:** The 2000 Area Plan was specific to the Village Center only however as a result of public input, the 2020 Area Plan will expand the applicability of the Plan boundaries, establishing six unique Community Design Districts for the “Village Core,” “Park,” west and east “Portal,” west and east “Business Opportunity,” the Highway 20 and Pleasant Valley Road “Rural Corridor,” and the “Lake Wildwood Commercial Center” (*shown in Figure 1.3 above*). The 2020 Area Plan seeks to retain the function of the Village Core as the focal point of the larger community but through the expansion of the Area Plan boundaries the aforementioned Community Design Districts were created to ensure an integrated approach to future development and growth of the greater Penn Valley area. Additionally, the expanded Plan boundaries are intended to help recognize the influence these outlying areas have on the Village Core and are meant to bridge the physical divide between the Village Center and Lake Wildwood. A quick summary of each District and its purpose is provided below. A more detailed description regarding each individual District is contained with the Area Plan

- The Village Core District follows the same boundaries of the existing 2000 Area Plan which is synonymous with the Village Center designation established by the Nevada County General Plan. The Village Core District, also referred to locally as “Penn Valley Proper” provides many of the commercial amenities of Penn Valley.
- The Park District is intended to highlight the importance of Western Gateway Park to Penn Valley and regionally. It primarily includes Western Gateway Park and a couple of smaller parcels that are immediately adjacent to the Park.
- The Portal District includes both the west and east entrances to the Penn Valley Village Center. It is intended to recognize the importance of entry points into the community and ensure uniformity in future directional signage or development that enhances the rural feel and sense of community in Penn Valley.
- The Business Opportunity District includes existing commercial and industrial development and zoning on Cattle Drive/Highway 20 (East) and Commercial Avenue/Pleasant Valley Road (West). It is intended to recognize the importance of local employment opportunities and intends to provide for limited growth in a manner consistent with existing development patterns and style.

- The Rural Corridor District follows both Highway 20 and Pleasant Valley Road. The intention of the Rural Corridor District is to protect the rural agricultural character of these properties which are visually important to maintaining the agricultural and rural identity of Penn Valley.
- The Lake Wildwood Commercial Center District has been included to recognize the symbiotic relationship between the Penn Valley Village Center, the surrounding area and the Lake Wildwood residential community.

**Area Plan Public Process:** To help guide development of the Area Plan, former Nevada County Senior Planner, Coleen Shade made significant efforts to engage the Penn Valley community, business owners and residents in the Area Plan public planning process. This included over thirty interviews with local officials and residents, an online survey and facilitating five evening public workshops between November 2018 and August 2019. The overarching goal of this outreach was to develop key strategies to be implemented to maintain a rural quality of life while encouraging investment and sensible growth of the area. Prior to commencing the community workshops and interviews, Senior Planner Shade on August 16, 2018 presented an “Overview of the Area Plan” to the Penn Valley Municipal Advisory Council (PVMAC). The purpose of this discussion was to educate the members of the PVMAC about the value of the Area Plan, to engage them and encourage them to be “champions” for the Area Plan process, to network with the community and to develop a list of potential interviewees. Following this meeting, interviews were conducted and key concepts, common themes and guiding principles began to develop.

On November 1, 2018, the first of five workshops was held at the Seventh Day Adventist Church in Penn Valley. Following an introduction and welcome by since retired District IV Supervisor Hank Weston, Senior Planner Shade with assistance from other members of the County Planning Department went through the meeting agenda, which included establishing the purpose, objectives, guidelines and schedule for upcoming workshops. She then went into what an area plan is and what it is not, and what the individual rules and responsibilities were for developing the Plan. Later in the meeting, the participants were put to work on defining the “identity” of Penn Valley, creating the “vision statement” for the Plan, and setting the “geography” for the plan (e.g. should the plan boundaries be expanded?). After breaking out to individual groups to discuss these three concepts, a report out was made by each group and the participants were given a homework assignment of reviewing the 2000 Penn Valley Area Plan and bringing photos to the next workshop that “most reflects Penn Valley” and a photo that represents what Penn Valley could be. This meeting was well attended with approximately 75-participants.

The second workshop was conducted on the evening of January 23, 2019 at the Ready Springs Elementary School gymnasium. The format of the meeting was similar to workshop one, with a brief introduction by the District IV Supervisor Susan Hoek, a short presentation by Senior Planner Shade and then the group was broken into three individual breakout groups with each table facilitated by County staff. The focus of workshop number two was to dive into the vision, identity and desired land uses in Penn Valley. Through this meeting, it was determined that the entire region would benefit by expanding the boundaries of the Area Plan to help bridge the gap between the Penn Valley Village Center and Lake Wildwood. Discussions focused around how far to expand the boundaries, what future uses are desired by the community and what other

amenities and features are desired in Penn Valley, such as better path systems and uniform lighting in the Village Center. As a result of these discussions, it became clear that there needed to be a way to distinguish between different areas of the community that had differing desires or required more attention than others. For example, uniform lighting might be appropriate in the Village Core, but not so important in other areas of Penn Valley. Through these meetings the Community Design District concept began to come to life. While workshop number two had slightly less participants than the first meeting, around 50, the discussion was robust and lively, the community that showed up was engaged and the Planning Department left feeling like it was a very productive meeting. Following this meeting, Senior Planner Shade attended the February 21, 2019 PVMAC meeting to provide an update on the progress of the Area Plan.

Community workshop number three, was hosted on the evening of March 23, 2019 again at the Ready Springs School gymnasium. The focus of workshop was primarily public services and infrastructure and to a lesser extent recreation and cultural/historical resources. After a brief welcome and introduction, a panel of local experts representing the Penn Valley Community Foundation, the Nevada County Department of Public Works-Sanitation Division, the Nevada Irrigation District, the Penn Valley Fire Protection District and the Western Gateway Park District provided an overview of their organization, current infrastructure and services in the area and any future plans for enhanced service in the area. This was followed by a question and answer session. After the panel discussion, the participants were broken into groups to review potential versions of the expanded Area Plan boundaries and to review and vote on the draft land use goals and policies that had been prepared based on input received at workshop number two. Approximately 45-members of the public attended workshop number three. Based on the input received, Planning staff prepared draft goals and policies for public services and infrastructure, recreation, and historic, cultural and natural resources to be presented to, vetted and voted on at the next community workshop.

Workshop number four, was held on May 30, 2019 at the Ready Springs School and followed a similar format as the three prior workshops. The focus of the workshop was to finalize the land use goals and policies created from workshops number one and two, to review and discuss the draft public services and infrastructure, recreation, and historic, cultural and natural resources goals and policies and to begin discussing community design and character as well as to introduce potential visual character preferences of the community. The number of participants were less at this meeting than the prior workshops, but an actual count was not available or found when preparing this staff report. Photos of places that were similar in character to Penn Valley were provided to the meeting participants to begin focusing the visual preference for the future aesthetic character of Penn Valley. Meeting participants were given direction to return to the next workshop prepared to discuss which types of amenities or public features were desired in Penn Valley.

The final public community workshop was hosted on August 29, 2019 at Ready Springs School and followed a similar format described above. The overall focus of community workshop number five was economic development and a panel of experts in economic development, ranching and agriculture and local food security lead the discussion. Following a question and answer session, the group of approximately 20 attendees were broken into two groups one focused on economic development and the other focused on community design. Because the panel discussion ran longer than anticipated, the breakout groups did not switch from one topic to the other as they had in prior workshops. Through the input received during these workshops,

the Planning Department drafted goals and policies for each individual chapter, except economic development, which was the topic for the evening. Throughout the workshop process, goals and policies for each chapter were developed between meetings and then presented and discussed by the participants at the next meeting. This process was meant to ensure that the community had “buy-in” on the development of the Plan. After community meeting number five, the Planning Department set out to draft the plan. Due to staffing changes, the development of the Plan took longer than anticipated but gained momentum in 2020.

In 2020, the PVMAC held three public meetings in April, May and June to review the Plan, take public comment and provide feedback to the Planning Department. On April 16, 2020 at a regularly scheduled meeting, the PVMAC reviewed and commented on four draft Area Plan chapters including Chapter 1. Introduction, Chapter 4. Public Services and Infrastructure, Chapter 5. Recreation, and Chapter 6. Historic, Cultural and Natural Resources. The individual PVMAC members and the public asked questions about the plan and the primary feedback was related to fixing typos and other minor grammatical errors. On May 28, 2020 at a special meeting, the PVMAC and the public reviewed and commented on remaining three individuals draft chapters, including Chapter 2: Land Use, Chapter 3. Economic Development, Chapter 7. Implementation and Appendix A. Design Guidelines. Comments and questions were asked of staff about the content of the plan, the applicability of the design guidelines and how the Area Plan is applied. While comments were generally positive, one member of the PVMAC felt the concepts of the Plan were good but the draft had too many typos and grammatical errors. Following this meeting, staff diligently went through the Plan to address clerical, formatting and grammatical errors prior to releasing the document for public review and comment.

The complete public draft was released in early June when over 350 notices were mailed out to individuals and agencies, approximately 100-emails were sent to those who requested notification, a news blast was included on the Planning and PVMAC webpages, and a “Friday Memo” was included in the County CEO’s “Nevada County News” page. The noticing had the dual purpose of advertising the release of the public draft of the Area Plan and to solicit public participation at the upcoming special meeting of the PVMAC. Finally, on June 25, 2020 at a special meeting, the complete Area Plan was presented to the PVMAC and community members present. The feedback received was positive and PVMAC and the community expressed appreciation for the fact that the completed Area Plan truly followed the input, guidance, and vision provided by the community through community outreach efforts made in 2018/2019. Following taking public comment and making comments on the Plan, the PVMAC voted unanimously to recommend approval of the 2020 Penn Valley Area Plan (*Attachment 7*).

**General Plan Land Use Map and Zoning District Map Amendments:** While the proposed Area Plan does not recommend any significant changes to land use designations or zoning, nor does it allow for the intensification of any existing lands uses, the implementation of the Area Plan will result in a few minor land use changes as follows:

General Plan Land Use Map Amendment: APN: 051-220-015 Western Gateway Park property (7.11-acres) from Residential (RES) to Recreation (REC).

Zoning Map Amendment: Site-specific rezoning of APN: 051-220-015 (7.11-acres). Western Gateway Park property (7.11-acres) from Residential Agricultural-1.5 (RA-1.5) to Recreation (REC) and APNs: 051-120-005 and 051-120-013 Nevada County Cemetery



District properties (1.23 and 0.52-acres) from RA-1.5 to Public (P). These properties already have a Public (PUB) General Plan Land Use designation.

The intention of these changes is to make these properties, both owned by quasi-governmental agencies, consistent with their existing, long-term and planned land uses. APN: 051-220-015 has been a part of the Western Gateway Park since the creation of the adjacent Valley Oaks Subdivision (County File No. FM03-006) recorded in 2005. It was donated to the park in lieu of the payment of recreation fees, has been used for park purposes since that time and is a part of the approved overall Park Master Plan last updated in 2017. The General Plan Amendment and Rezoning will essentially “clean-up” the zoning on this parcel, which should have occurred prior to the park accepting the land donation. No other entitlements are authorized for this parcel as a part of the rezoning. The Western Gateway Park Board has voted unanimously to support this action. The Nevada County Cemetery District Parcels, APNs 051-120-005 and -013 are developed as a cemetery and have an existing General Plan Land Use Designation of Public (PUB) but are zoned as Residential Agricultural 1.5-acre minimum densities (RA-1.5), which is both inconsistent with the underlying General Plan Land Use designation as well as with its longstanding use as a public cemetery.

The project also includes adding the Site Performance (SP) zoning combining district to parcels that have been added to the Area Plan boundaries as a result of community input. It is the County’s practice to add the SP district to parcels that are subject to the standards and requirements of an Area Plan. The SP district is intended to provide direction to County Planning Staff when reviewing a development project to review and apply the policies and standards of the Area Plan. The SP combining district does not change any permitted land uses, relax any laws or regulations applicable to development and land uses, nor does it change the base zoning for a parcel.

Finally, the project will amend the County Land Use and Development Code Section L-II 4.2.3: Design Guidelines to update the existing reference to the prior Area Plan and the applicability of the standards and design guidelines provided within the Plan.

### **GENERAL PLAN AND ZONING CONSISTENCY:**

The Penn Valley Area Plan supports, furthers and augments the Nevada County General Plan. It is drafted to help support the economic and social well-being of the Penn Valley Area as it grows overtime. It is intended to act as a policy guide for which future development projects will be tested for consistency with the Area Plan goals and policies. The Nevada County General Plan has several goals that are directly applicable to the Penn Valley Village Center, Community and Rural Region. These goals are supported and implemented through a series of policies and programs that are contained within the individual chapters of the General Plan. While the General Plan applies countywide, below is a list of General Plan goals that have been identified to clearly apply to the Penn Valley region that guided the Area Plan. The goals are as follows:

**Goal 1.2** allows for a range of land uses that preserve the qualities of each Community region.

**Goal 1.4** provides for an adequate supply and broad range of residential, employment generating, and cultural, public and quasi-public uses located for convenience, efficiency, and affordability while protecting and enhancing communities and neighborhoods.

**Goal 1.5** ensures that development reflects a small-town character.

**Goal 1.6** allows for growth while protecting, maintaining and enhancing communities and neighborhoods.

**Goal 1.9** identifies and recognizes public facility and service needs in Legacy Communities.

**Goal 2.1** provides for a strong economic base while protecting communities and neighborhoods.

**Goal 3.1** provides for public facilities and services commensurate with development type and intensities.

**Goal LU-4.1** coordinates existing and future circulation systems with existing and future land use patterns.

**Goal LU-4.4** balances development of the circulation system with land use and development.

**Goal LU-4.7** provides for road and street systems that are consistent and compatible with local land use patterns and street networks.

**Goal MV-4.1** provides for the safe and efficient movement of people and goods that respects the regions rural character.

**Goal 6.1** encourages land use patterns and site development to reflect open space values.

**Goal AH-8.1** encourages retaining of existing affordable housing.

**Goal EJ-8.1** encourages healthy and affordable housing opportunities for all residents of Nevada County.

**Goal 16.2** promotes a strong and sustainable local agricultural economy.

**Goal 18.1** promotes aesthetic design in new development that reflects existing character.

To ensure consistency with the General Plan and Zoning Regulations proposed amendments are a part of the project to ensure internal consistency. These include removing references to the 2000 Area Plan within Chapter 1: Land Use Element of the General Plan that are contained within the Planning Supporting Documents and Planning for Legacy Communities sections, Policies 1.3.13, 1.4.3 and 1.9.2 and Section L-II 4.2.3: Design Guidelines of the Land Use and Development Code. The approach taken for the proposed General Plan Text Amendment, as shown in *Attachment 2* is to remove all date specific references to all Area Plans so when future Area Plans are updated or adopted it will not require additional General Plan policy or text amendments. These sections and policies of the Land Use Element still include a reference to the Area Plan and its applicability, but no longer include a specific date for when they were adopted.

For the Zoning Text Amendment, staff took a more surgical approach and only addressed the Penn Valley Area Plan, by removing the reference date to the year 2000.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW:**

The Penn Valley Area Plan and its associated actions were reviewed in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines. A draft Initial Study and proposed Negative Declaration were prepared for the project and routed for public review between June 19, 2020 and July 9, 2020. The draft CEQA document is intended to provide a program-level review of the Penn Valley Area Plan while disclosing any foreseen environmental impacts that may occur as a result of the project's General Plan Land Use Map and Zoning District map amendments. The analysis determined that the project would not result in a negative environmental impact because the project does not issue any entitlements or authorize physical disturbance of the environment. Future project-level environmental review within the Plan boundaries would be based on consistency with the County General Plan, Land Use and Development Code, applicable local, state and federal laws and regulations and the Penn Valley Area Plan. No specific development projects are proposed at this time or were analyzed as a part of this project. Subsequently staff has determined that the proposed Negative Declaration (EIS20-0007) is the appropriate level of environmental review for this project.

### **SUMMARY:**

The proposed Penn Valley Area Plan was developed based on a community input provided through series of interviews and public community meetings held in 2019 and 2020. The Plan serves as the comprehensive land use and zoning plan for the Penn Valley region and community of Penn Valley. It embodies the expressed goals of residents, business owners, and elected officials and establishes concrete and achievable actions. The drafting of the Area Plan is a tool to advance the goals and policies for the Nevada County General Plan while benefitting the local community. The Area Plan provides long-term guidance that is intended to improve the prosperity of Penn Valley in a way that supports a healthy economy, environment, protects the rural quality of life and the social fabric for the residents and general public.

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### **RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends the Planning Commission take the following actions:

- I. Environmental Action: Recommend the Board of Supervisors approve the attached Resolution for the Negative Declaration (EIS20-0007) for the Area Plan and associated actions pursuant to Section 15074 of the California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines making the findings contained within the draft Resolution (*Attachment 1*).
- II. Project Actions:
  1. Recommend the Board of Supervisors approve the attached Resolution for General Plan Text Amendment (GPT20-0001) to adopt the Penn Valley Area Plan and amend the General Plan Land Use Element for internal consistency (*Attachment 2*).

2. Recommend the Board of Supervisors approve the attached Resolution for the General Plan Land Use Map amendment (GPA20-0001) as described in the project description (*Attachment 3*).
3. Recommend the Board of Supervisors adopt the attached Ordinance for the amendments to Zoning District Map described in the project description including adding the “SP” Site Performance Combining District parcels that have been included in the expanded Plan boundaries making the findings contained within the draft Ordinance (*Attachment 4*).
4. Recommend the Board of Supervisors approve the amendment to Sec. L-II 4.2.3 of the Nevada County Zoning Ordinance to update the reference to the applicability of the Penn Valley Area Plan making the findings contained with the draft Ordinance (*Attachment 5*).

Respectfully submitted,

ORIGINAL SIGNED

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Brian Foss, Director of Planning