

# **PENN VALLEY VILLAGE CENTER AREA PLAN**

**NEVADA COUNTY, CALIFORNIA**



**Adopted on January 25, 2000 by Resolution  
of the Nevada County Board of Supervisors.**

## **Acknowledgements**

### Nevada County Board of Supervisors

Peter Van Zant, District I, Chairman

Karen Knecht, District II

Bruce Conklin, District III

Elizabeth Martin, District IV

Sam Dardick, District V

### Nevada County Planning Commission

Lee Good-Fox, Chair

Steven Nicola

Sharon Boivin

Barbara Green

John Lorini

### Nevada County Planning Department

Mark R. Tomich, Planning Director

Robert Leggett, Interim Planning Director

Stephanie Wagner, Planner II

### Penn Valley Community Association

Janet Crain, Chair

Kurt Grundel

Jack Meeks

Clarence Goedicke

Colleen Keefe

Bob Swearingen

Mary Swearingen

### Penn Valley Chamber of Commerce

Ron Trunk, President

Marguerite Leipzig

Dana Ettlin

Chris Maxwell

Mike Pasner

# CONTENTS

	Page
<b>CHAPTER I. INTRODUCTION</b>	
Purpose	1
Plan Goals	1
Plan Organization	1
Plan Area Description	2
Area History	3
Land Use & Development	4
General Plan and Zoning Maps	5,6
Environmental Constraints	7
<b>CHAPTER II. PUBLIC FACILITIES</b>	
Sewage Disposal	8
Public Water Supply	8
Circulation	9
Fire Protection	9
<b>CHAPTER III. DESIGN GUIDELINES</b>	
Site Planning	10,11
Building Design	11,12,13
Signage	13
Multi-Family Residential	14
Lighting	14
Landscape Design	14
Circulation and Pedestrian Trails	15
<b>APPENDICES</b>	
General Plan Policies	17
Zoning ordinance implementing Area Plan	18
Zoning ordinance amending "SP" zoning	18
Zoning ordinance requiring Area Plan	19



**THE PENN VALLEY SHOPPING CENTER  
IN THE CENTER OF THE VILLAGE**

**RODEO GROUNDS IN THE SOUTHEAST  
CORNER OF THE VILLAGE CENTER**

**SQUIRREL CREEK FLOODPLAIN**  
**north of Mobilehome Park - November 1999**

## **CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION**

### **PURPOSE**

The Penn Valley Village Center Area Plan establishes the goals and guidelines that will guide development within the Penn Valley Village Center, through the year 2010. The direction and authority for the Penn Valley Village Center Area Plan (“the Plan”) is founded in Section L-II 36.7 of the Nevada County Land Use and Development Code, which provides for the comprehensive planning of the Penn Valley Village Center.

This Plan is the result of cooperative efforts by the Penn Valley Community Association, the Penn Valley Chamber of Commerce and the County of Nevada.

### **PLAN GOALS**

The intent of this Plan is to protect and enhance the rural and agricultural character of the Penn Valley Village Center. The Guidelines contained within the Plan are intended to promote development that harmonizes with existing development and with the natural environment. In addition, the Guidelines:

- Provide for consistent design review criteria that encourages development that is compatible with the rural character of the Penn Valley Village Center;
- Promote economic viability for the businesses in the Penn Valley Village Center;
- Identify public facilities and services that will serve new development;
- Identify and encourage protection of natural resources;
- Advocate the development of paths and trails, which will encourage a safe walkway for pedestrians and bicycles, and encourage patronage of village center businesses.

### **PLAN ORGANIZATION**

This document is arranged into three sections, including an introduction, an identification of public facilities, and design goals and guidelines. Maps are included within Chapters I and II with their related text. A description of the relationship of the Penn Valley Village Center Area Plan to the Nevada County General Plan is included as an appendix.

## **PLAN AREA DESCRIPTION**

At the base of the Sierra Nevada foothills, at an elevation of 1400 feet, Penn Valley is an unincorporated community in Western Nevada County. The Penn Valley Village Center is located 1.3 miles south of State Route 20, six miles west of Grass Valley and five miles east of the Nevada-Yuba County line. The Village Center is an area slightly greater than one-half square mile in size, encompassing 81 parcels. The Village Center boundaries are specifically mapped by the Nevada County General Plan land use map.

The Plan area is a relatively flat basin, bounded on the north 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 120-unit mobilehome 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. Adjacent to the Village Center boundaries is one of Nevada County's treasures, the 80-acre Western Gateway Park, a recreational park serving the entire region.



## AREA HISTORY

Penn Valley is rich in history. The territory was occupied by the Hill Nisenan, Native American peoples who are also referred to as “Southern Maidu”. Economic life for the Nisenan revolved around hunting and fishing and collecting of plant foods. The first trace of white men in the area is found in a letter written by Jonas Spect in 1848, in which he “went prospecting up Deer Creek, and just remember that I came to the finest kind of valley, which I think they afterwards called Penn Valley...”<sup>1</sup> The Penn Valley area is situated within the Rough and Ready Mining District and the drainages of both Squirrel and Deer Creeks, which were extensively placer-mined between 1850 and 1870. Some drift, or hard rock mining occurred in the area but most of the gold was extracted from gravels of the Tertiary Yuba River. Ranchers and farmers moved into the Penn Valley area shortly after the beginning of the Gold Rush.<sup>4</sup>

The first settlement in Nevada County was made by John Rose who was engaged in trading with the miners and Indians. Rose built a large cattle corral at Pleasant Valley between Bridgeport and the Anthony House, early in 1849. Later he established a trading post there. Gradually, stock raisers and farmers came into the valley and built additional corrals for their livestock. ‘Pen Valley’ was so named from the fact that these pens or corrals were there, indicating that it was a valley of pens.<sup>1</sup> The 1867 Bean’s History and Directory of Nevada County describes the topography of the foothills saying there are “but few arable valleys of any considerable extent...the most extensive being Penn Valley lying three miles west of the village of Rough & Ready, containing nearly 2,000 acres of good soil, well watered, and originally timbered with magnificently grand and giant oaks, which have been almost entirely destroyed by the vandalism of a mistaken husbandry.” The valley was frequently called the “Pantry of the Northern Mines.” Rich in agriculture, beef and dairy cattle, and lying on the main road from the Sacramento-Marysville area to the Henness Pass Road, to the mines of the Comstock in Virginia City, Penn Valley pioneers supplied the freighters with fresh vegetables, fruit, and meat upon their stop-over up the grade from Marysville. A natural rest stop with livery and blacksmithing available, Penn Valley survived even the closing of the vast hydraulic mining operations to the northeast. It wasn’t until the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, however, that the surrounding residential development began, bringing more people and the need for services.

Community spirit has always been strong in Penn Valley, and this brought about the early founding of schools and a volunteer fire department. In 1917, the farmers of Penn Valley met to organize a “Farm Center,” which later became the Nevada County Farm Bureau. In 1978, the citizens of Penn Valley formed the Penn Valley Chamber of Commerce with over one-hundred charter members. In January of 1994, the Penn Valley Community Association formed for the purpose of providing a non-partisan forum for open discussions that benefit the health and welfare of community. As we near the turn of the century, Penn Valley is a vital community whose heart remains in it’s early agricultural beginnings. The community struggles to retain its rural beauty while providing the services needed by its growing population.

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<sup>1</sup> Thompson & West, pg. 89

## LAND USE & DEVELOPMENT

Parcels located within the Village Center vary in size from .02 acres (office condominiums) to 20.61 acres. All proposed development, including new construction, additions, remodels and rehabilitation projects, and land use, must be consistent with the zoning and General Plan designations, for each subject property, that are in effect at the time of proposed development. All projects must also comply with all Nevada County land use regulations and General Plan policies. All development is subject to environmental review unless specifically exempted by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). This section is intended to provide land owners and developers with basic information that will alert them to potential issues and concerns. It is always advisable to contact the Nevada County Planning Department prior to planning any significant change in the use or development of property.

## ZONING & GENERAL PLAN DESIGNATIONS

Within the Village Center are the following General Plan designations and corresponding zoning (General Plan and Zoning Maps follow this page):

### General Plan designations:

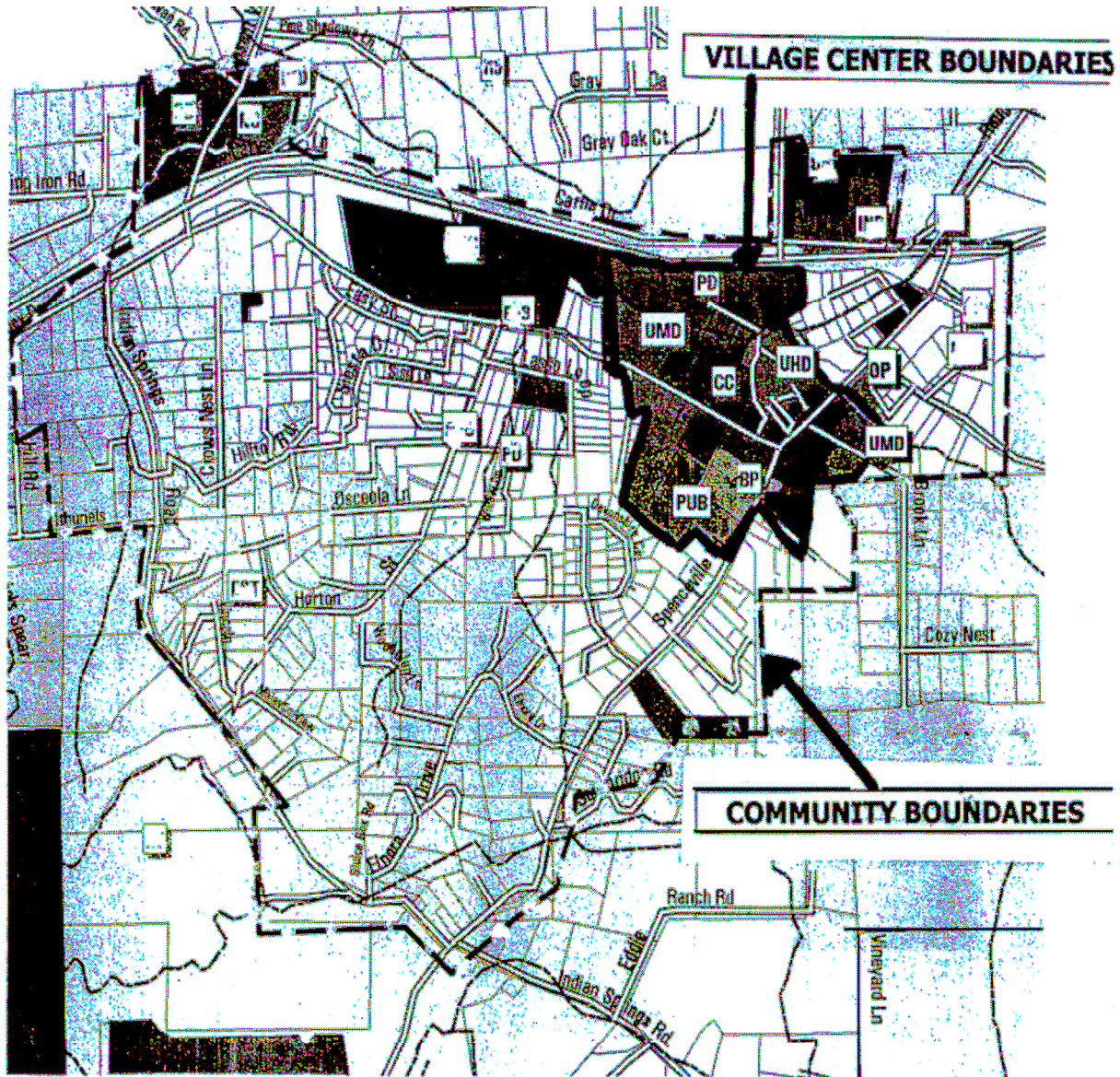
UMD	Urban Medium Density, allowing 6 dwelling units per acre
UHD	Urban High Density, allowing 20 dwelling units per acre
PUB	Public
OP	Office and Professional
BP	Business Park
CC	Community Commercial
PD	Planned Development, allowing 11 acres of UMD and 5 acres of OS, Open Space
PD	Planned Development allowing 26 acres of UMD and 8 acres of OS.

### Zoning districts:

“RA-1.5”	Residential Agricultural with a 1.5 acre minimum parcel size
“R2”	Multi-Family Residential
“R3-MH-D”	Multi-Family Residential, with the Mobilehome and Design Combining Districts
“ P”	Public
“OP-D”	Office and Professional, with the Design Combining District
“BP-D”	Business Park, with the Design Combining District
“C2-D”	Regional Commercial, with the Design Combining District
“IDR”	Interim Development Reserve, providing for 5 acres of “OS”, Open Space, and 11 acres of “R2”
“IDR”	Interim Development Reserve, providing for 26 acres of R2 and 8 acres of OS.

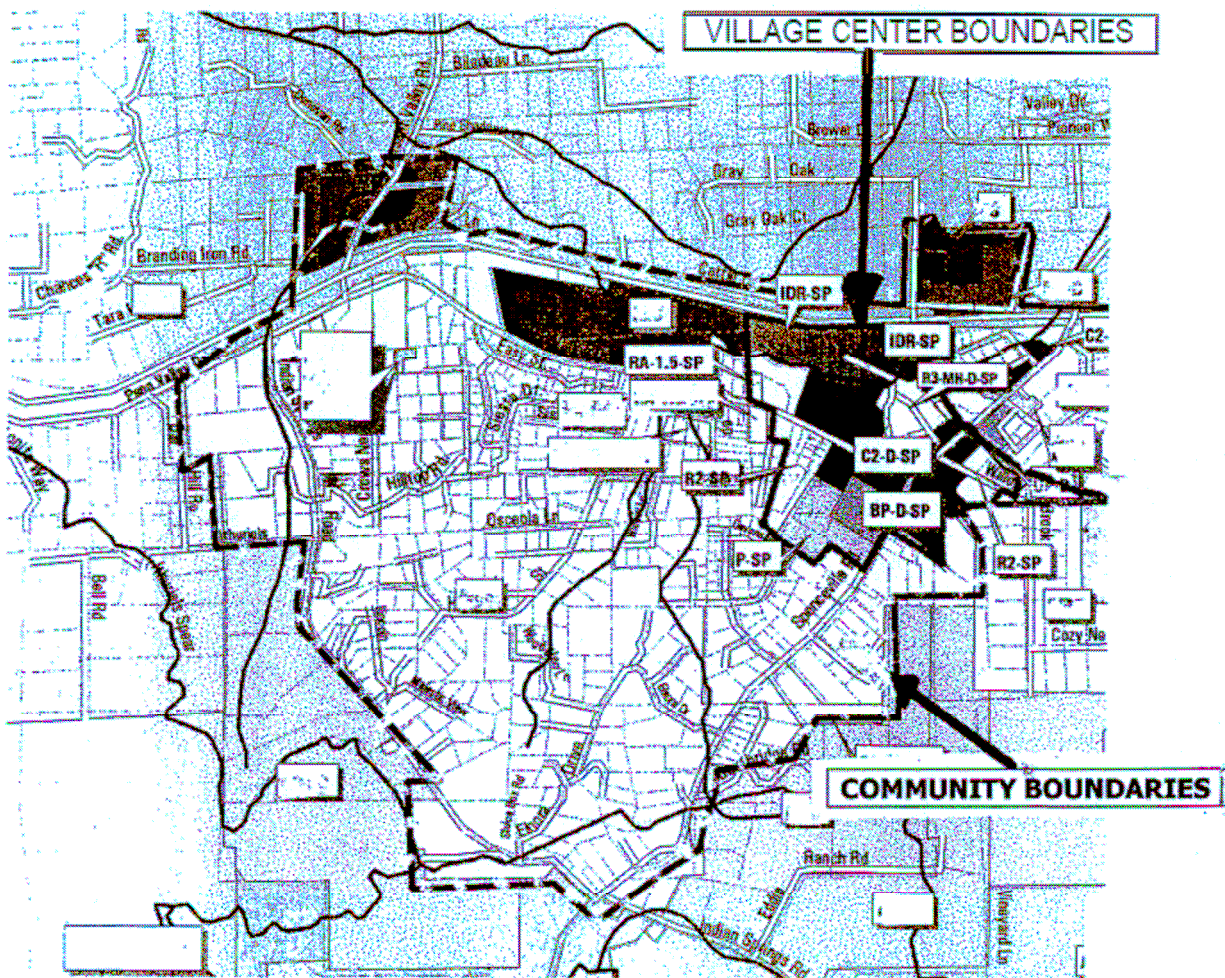
All parcels within the Plan area also have an “SP” Combining District, reflecting the requirement for preparation of an Area or Community Plan .

# Penn Valley Village Center General Plan Designations





# Penn Valley Village Center Zoning Districts



## ENVIRONMENTAL CONSTRAINTS

A variety of sensitive environmental resources occur within the Plan area, including native oaks, wildlife habitat, wetlands, two perennial streams with extensive floodplains, and riparian areas. In addition, the Penn Valley area is rich in cultural resources, including both historic and prehistoric resources. Numerous General Plan policies protect such resources and development must be designed to avoid or minimize impacts to any such features.

**Biologic Resources:** Penn Valley is characterized by its abundance of native trees, including Valley Oaks, Blue Oaks, Live Oak, White Oaks, ponderosa pine, ash, alder and willows.<sup>2</sup> Magnificent oaks line the roadways, define building areas and dominate Western Gateway Park. Perennial grasses and pastureland occur in portions of the Plan area that have not been developed. Within the floodplain of Squirrel Creek exists a landmark oak grove of valley oak riparian forest, a sensitive natural community. Squirrel Creek has been noted as the best example of valley oak riparian forest in Nevada County<sup>3</sup>.

**Riparian areas:** Riparian areas are those lands adjacent to perennial and intermittent streams, delineated by the existence of plant species normally found near fresh water. Within the Plan area, riparian areas occur along the banks of both Squirrel Creek and Clear Creek. Riparian areas provide important habitat for animal species and must be protected during development.

**Floodplains:** Squirrel Creek and Clear Creek are both mapped by the Federal Emergency Management Agency as having extensive floodplains<sup>4</sup>. Approximately ten parcels within the Village Center are affected by those floodplains. Nevada County zoning regulations require a minimum 100 foot setback from floodplains and prohibit the placement of fill within floodplains.

**Cultural Resources:** With its lower elevations, relatively mild winters, and abundance of water and natural food sources, Penn Valley is an area of high sensitivity for both historic and prehistoric cultural resources. Numerous cultural surveys reveal that Native American activity occurred within and around the Village area, both for short and long-term encampments. Historic roads and irrigation ditches were constructed, and mining activity is known to have occurred in the general area.<sup>5</sup>

**Noise:** The 1995 Nevada County General Plan encourages an environment free of unnecessary and annoying noise, providing policies to ensure that noise impacts are minimized. Maximum noise limits are established for all ministerial and discretionary projects. Noise readings at two locations within the Plan area were conducted in 1985 and in 1993, indicating a low or very low ambient noise level. Land use projects will be evaluated for compliance with General Plan noise standards and policies.

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<sup>2</sup> Biological Inventory prepared by Susan Sanders in July 1991 for Casilli subdivision

<sup>3</sup> Important Natural Areas of Nevada County study prepared in 1998 for the Nevada County Conservation Alliance by E&P, Environment and Planning.

<sup>4</sup> Flood Hazard Map #060210 0583B, prepared by FEMA, 1983

<sup>5</sup> Archaeological Inventory Survey conducted by Jensen & Associates in April 1991 for the Fultz Subdivision

## **CHAPTER II. PUBLIC FACILITIES**

### **Sewage Disposal**

The Nevada County Department of Transportation and Sanitation's Wastewater Division administers, operates and maintains a sewage collection system and treatment facility for the Penn Valley area, Zone 6 of Nevada County Sanitation District #1. The majority of properties within the Plan area are located within the boundaries of Sanitation District #1 and are eligible for connection to the sewer system. Several parcels north of Penn Valley Drive are located within the Sphere of Influence of the Sanitation District and are also eligible for sewer connection. Sewer capacity is measured by Equivalent Dwelling Units (EDUs), the capacity required by the average single family dwelling. Service connections for new development is allocated based on available EDUs.<sup>6</sup>

Prospective developers should always check with the County Department of Transportation and Sanitation to confirm sewer availability.

### **Public Water**

All properties within the Plan area are located within the boundaries of the Nevada Irrigation District (N.I.D.). While all properties within the Plan area have access to piped, treated water, not all properties are connected to public water. Water is available on a first come, first served basis. Domestic water and water used for fireflow purposes is provided by both individual wells and by piped, treated water. The Penn Valley Mobilehome Park is served by a community water system that utilizes a 10,000 gallon water tank served by an on-site well. The Penn Valley Shopping Center is also served by a community water system that utilizes a storage tank served by an on-site well.

While there is adequate capacity to serve the Plan area, existing facilities do not currently provide adequate pressure for fireflow purposes. The N.I.D. pipes to the Village Center from the Lake Wildwood treatment plant, which derives water from the Newtown Canal. The N.I.D.'s 1983 Domestic Water System Master Plan for Penn Valley indicates that the Penn Valley System is not capable of delivering large fire flows during maximum day demands. Two water storage tanks, with a total capacity of 350,000 gallons, are located on Horton Ridge, west of the Village Center. The N.I.D. advises that an additional storage tank in Penn Valley could alleviate pressure constraints.<sup>7</sup>

Prospective developers should always check with the Penn Valley Fire Protection District and the Nevada Irrigation District to confirm adequate fireflow capability for a proposed project.

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<sup>6</sup> Sphere of Influence Plan for Nevada County Sanitation District No.1, prepared by Lee Jordan, Asst. Engineer, dated October 1995, revised October 7, 1998.

<sup>7</sup> Nevada Irrigation District 1996 Operation Maps

## **Circulation**

The primary access to the Penn Valley Village Center is from State Highway 20. The two primary roads traversing the Penn Valley Village Center, Penn Valley Drive and Spenceville Road, are two-lane, County-maintained roads, classified as major collectors, and operating at a Level of Service A<sup>8</sup>. At General Plan buildout the Level of Service projected for this intersection is F. A right turn lane on southbound Spenceville Road at Penn Valley Drive has been identified as the preferred method to reduce the Level of Service to D.<sup>9</sup> The Nevada County General Plan identifies LOS D as an acceptable level of service within a Community Boundary. Reconfiguration of the intersection is listed in the County Department of Transportation Development Fee Program, however, no specific schedule for construction has been projected.

Pedestrian facilities are required within all Community boundaries by General Plan policies 4.27, 4.32 and 4.34 (see Appendices). Construction of an eight-foot wide, 0.8 mile long, asphalt bike and pedestrian path along Penn Valley Drive began in the summer of 1999. The path extends westerly from the Spenceville Road/Penn Valley Drive. The path runs along the south side of Penn Valley Drive for about half its length, then crosses to the north side where it concludes along the front of Western Gateway Park, opposite Horton Street.

## **Fire Protection**

Fire protection in the Penn Valley area is provided by the Penn Valley Fire Protection District, in coordination with the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CDF). District headquarters are housed in a commercial center within the Village Center, on Penn Valley Drive, and Station #43 is located on Spenceville Drive near its intersection with Penn Valley Drive.

The District employs three full time Fire Apparatus Engineer/paramedics and approximately 20 part-time, Paid-Call firefighters. In addition, a full time CDF Battalion Chief and one administrative Captain are available to serve the Plan area. The District is funded by a combination of property taxes and development fees. All new construction within the boundaries of the Plan area will be required to pay impact fees at an established per-square foot rate. Fireflow (pressurized water available for fire protection purposes) is currently provided within the Plan area via hydrants connected to either the public or community water supply. The Fire District operates an advanced life support ambulance service.

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<sup>8</sup>The 1995 Nevada County General Plan, Vol. 2, identifies existing Levels of Service (LOS). LOS A indicates a relatively free flow of traffic with little or no limitation on vehicle movement or speed; LOS D is the level where traffic nears an unstable flow; LOS F describes an unsatisfactory stop-and-go traffic characterized by traffic jams and stoppages of long duration.

<sup>9</sup> The Nevada County Transportation Commission's 1995 SubArea Traffic Study for Penn Valley

## CHAPTER III. DESIGN GUIDELINES

These 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 Village Center. They enhance zoning regulations while providing a framework for site planning and project design. Zoning regulations are contained in Chapter II of the Nevada County Land Use and Development Code.

### **Site Planning**

**SP1. Development of a new site should be considered as part of the cohesive whole of the Village Center.** Development should show each project's relationship to adjacent development.

**SP2. Pedestrian and auto access to neighboring sites should occur easily without the need to re-enter the street.**

**SP3. Buildings should be sited in a manner that preserves significant views, vegetation and existing surroundings.**

Views from the following three viewpoints are critical in the siting of buildings: the site from other locations; from the site to other locations; and from key places within the project. Projects should be designed so that they complement, rather than dominate, the natural landscape. Views should also be considered in the preparation of the landscape plan, particularly where plant material will be considerably larger at maturity.

**SP4. Site design should not change natural drainage patterns.**

The natural contour of the site is an important characteristic of the site. New buildings should minimize alterations to the perceived slope of the area. Site grading should be sensitive to existing landforms and topography, so that the natural setting may be preserved to the greatest extent possible. The stockpiling of materials, equipment and equipment storage should occur only within those areas approved for disturbance. Abrupt grade changes at property lines should be avoided.

**SP5. The alignment of roads and driveways should follow the contours of the site.**

By permitting roads to follow landforms, it is possible to minimize cuts and fills, preserve natural drainage patterns, and produce roads that are easily navigated. Roads should not be constructed perpendicular to contours.

**SP6. Riparian corridors should be maintained in their natural state as much as possible.**

The two creeks within the Penn Valley Village Center are Squirrel Creek and Clear Creek. Encroachment for trails or bridges are acceptable in riparian areas if they are designed to create minimal disturbance.

**SP7. New commercial and industrial buildings adjacent to residentially zoned property should step down to a height and scale to be compatible with abutting residential structures.**

This step-down in size and scale can help to minimize shading of adjacent residential structures during winter months and create a smooth transition between the two districts.

**SP8. High intensity commercial uses are discouraged adjacent to residential development.**

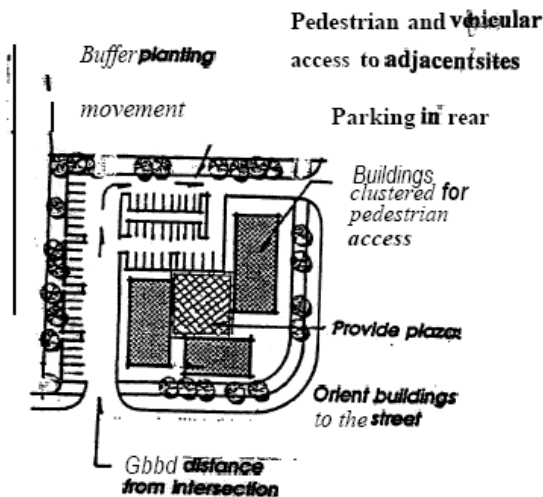
**SP9. Development of public property and easements should be encouraged to conform to these guidelines.**

Trees along and within rights-of-way, especially oaks, should be preserved.

**SP10. Site design should facilitate pedestrian circulation and bicycle use.**



Visitors and residents should be able to leave their cars and walk from shop to shop without crossing vehicular parking spaces. Pedestrian walkways should be separate from bike paths and roads. They should be at least 4-feet wide and constructed of material that will be wheel chair accessible. Bicycle racks are encouraged.



**SP11. On-site parking should be located to the rear of the building whenever site conditions make it possible.** Buildings set closer to the road encourage pedestrian use and increase the visual appeal of the site.

**SP12. Site design should consider the placement and screening of utilities, storage areas and auxiliary structures.**

Utility meters and service functions should not be visible on the primary facades of buildings. Auxiliary structures should be architecturally compatible with the rest of the site development. Where storage and/or service areas are visible from any public view, they should be screened, using landscaping, fences, or earth berms.

## **Building Design**

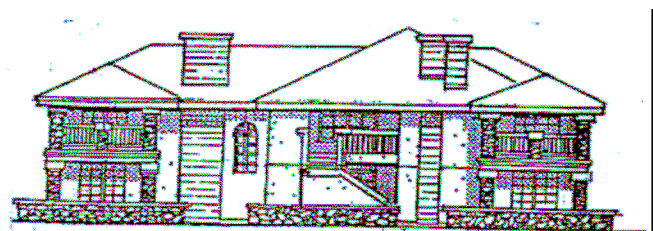
**BD1. New development should be of an architectural style that melds and harmonizes with the overall character of the Village Center.**

There is no single architectural style associated with the buildings in the Village Center. Stark, reflective or modernistic buildings are discouraged. The use of varied architectural elements is encouraged. Businesses that emphasize personal service as their primary product should reflect personal service by using an architectural design that provides an intimate, people-oriented scale.



*Detail such as individually paned windows, natural materials and varied roof planes add visual interest.*

**BD2. Building facades should be designed to provide visual interest and relief.** Buildings should not be overpowering or monotonous. A change in the planes of walls or variety in the roof form provides diversity and interest. Relief can be provided by framing around windows and doors, creating interesting shadow lines. New buildings should be clustered to avoid long, monotonous rows of buildings.



*Building provides variety of forms/shapes, setbacks, and offset roof pitches.*

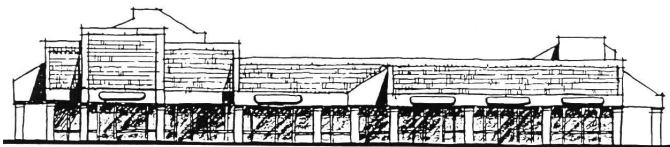
**BD3. Covered walkways should be incorporated into project design.** They invite shoppers, protect window displays and shield windows from heat.

**BD4. Commercial structures should not exceed a height of 35 feet or two stories.**

**BD5. Rooflines should be designed to be compatible with surrounding building forms.**

Clashes in roof styles should be avoided. The objective in determining roof formation is to establish a visual order to building clusters. The use of similar roof materials provides a strong link that unifies the varying architectural features of the buildings. Untreated aluminum or metal (copper or terne metal may be an exception) and brightly colored roofing materials, are discouraged.

**BD6. Multi-unit structures should emphasize the individuality of units by variations in rooflines or walls.** Large building masses should be broken up into smaller scale units. Differentiating the facades and roofs of buildings softens the institutional image that often accompanies large buildings. The form and massing of Penn Valley's original buildings should provide direction for the form of new buildings.



**BD7. Exterior wall colors should harmonize with the site and surrounding buildings.**

The predominant color on exterior walls should be in earthy hues, such as tans, grays or browns. Harshly contrasting color combinations should be avoided. Brilliant, luminescent or day-glow colors are inappropriate in the Village Center.

**BD8. Structural features should be proportionate to the building.**

Building components such as windows, doors, eaves and parapets should be in proportion to the building and should be located in a manner that complements the design of the building as well as serving their intended functions. Blank end and side walls should be avoided, however, wall design features should not be overly decorative

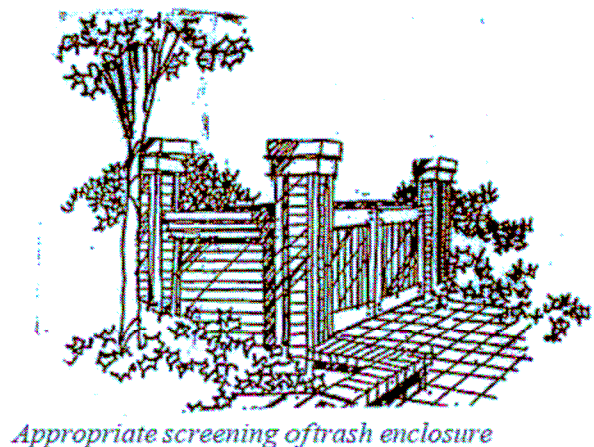
**BD9. Windows should be simple and uncluttered.**

Windows should reflect a distinction between uses that occur within the building. Individual panes, kickplates below windows, and transom windows are encouraged. Full-length plate glass and darkly tinted glass are discouraged

**BD10. Natural building materials should be used.**

Materials that blend with the site's natural surroundings, e.g., wood, stone or brick, are encouraged. Other building materials will be considered on a case-by-case basis, e.g., synthetic materials that simulate the textures or patterns of natural materials, such as wood textured concrete, may be used. Reflective materials are discouraged.

**BD11. Trash enclosures should be fully enclosed with materials compatible with building materials used on site.**



**BD12. Mechanical equipment and utility hardware should not be visible from public view.**

Rooftop access, stairways, elevator shafts, vent shafts, mechanical equipment areas, antennae, etc., should be confined within the roof or within roof dormers. Exterior equipment should be screened with materials harmonious to the building.

**BD13. Skylights and solar panels should be designed in an unobtrusive manner.**

Skylights and solar panels should be designed to fit flush with the roof surface or up to a maximum of 2 feet above the surface of the roof. No reflective materials should be used, unless the materials are thoroughly shielded to prevent reflection onto adjoining or nearby properties. The use of alternate energy sources is encouraged; however, the hardware associated with these features should be incorporated as an integral part of the building's design, rather than as an add-on that will detract from the building and its surroundings.

**BD14. The use of awnings should be consistent.**

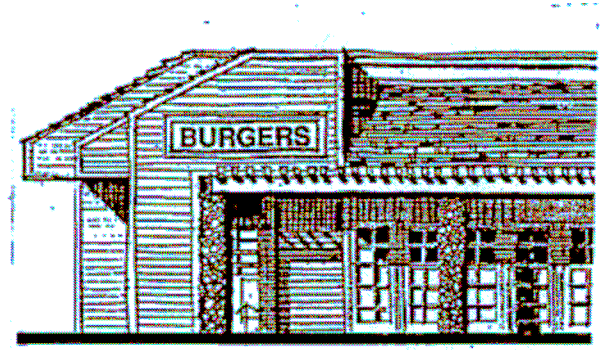
The use of awnings along a row of contiguous buildings, should be limited, using the same design and placement. Signage on awnings should be painted on.

**BD15. Retaining walls and fences should be compatible with the design of nearby buildings.**

Fencing along roadways is discouraged. Where outdoor storage requires fencing, it should be located to the rear of the building. Where fencing or walls are appropriate, they should be designed to be as "invisible" as possible. The scale, color and materials used should complement the site and nearby buildings. Solid walls or fences exceeding five feet in length should include variations in design, i.e. offsets or staggering of fence sections, the use of fence caps, using split-face blocks or the scoring of blocks to create shadows and patterns. Retaining walls over 4-feet tall should be stepped to form a number of benches that can be softened with landscaping.

**Signage**

**S1.** All signs should reflect the architectural style of the buildings on the site on which they are located. Sign placement should not overpower the architecture of the building.



*Harmonious proportions and balance*

**S2.** Signs should establish a visual continuity with adjacent store fronts.

**S3.** The size and character of the sign should be oriented to it's use, whether to catch the eye of the passing motorize or a strolling pedestrian.

**S4.** Monument signs displaying identification of more than one tenant, should use the same design style, materials and colors for each tenant

**S5.** Shrubs should be planted around the base of any freestanding sign to integrate the sign with the ground. Freestanding signs should be low profile wherever site and visibility allow.

**S6.** Internally lit signs are discouraged except for small, informational neon signs, which are located inside windows.

**S7** Plastic or vinyl banners are inconsistent with the character of the Village Center and should not be used.

**S8.** Sign colors and materials should reflect the overall character of the Village Center and complement the design of the site's development. Colors should be selected to contribute to legibility and design integrity. Contrast between the background and the letter or symbol colors will make the sign easier to read. Too many different colors should be avoided.

**S9.** Encouraged materials for signage includes carved or sand blasted wood signs, painted wood signs, and wood/masonry combinations for the base of freestanding signs.

**S10.** Miscellaneous signs attached to primary signs, such as credit card or plaques, are discouraged.

### **Lighting Design**

Well-designed exterior lighting of public areas not only provides for site security and public safety but attracts customers to a business site. Properly designed lighting reduces nighttime light pollution.

**L1.** Lighting design should consider roadways, walkways, parking areas, entrances, traffic control devices and other circulation areas.

**L2.** The aesthetics of an area are often enhanced when the landscaping or architectural elements are softly illuminated.

**L3.** The height and style of exterior lighting fixtures should be considered as part of the overall site design.

### *Freestanding light fixture designs*

**4.** Yellow sodium lights and floodlights are discouraged.

### **Landscape Design**

Landscaping contributes to the character of established neighborhoods and commercial properties. The overall effect of landscaping should be natural rather than formal, and consistent with the rural appearance of the Village Center. Landscaped areas should be planned as an integral part of the project and not simply located in leftover space. New plantings should blend with the existing landscape so that within several years all traces of site disturbance have disappeared.

**LD1. All elements of the landscape should be considered in preparing a landscape plan.**

Existing trees and shrubs, particularly mature trees, should be preserved and incorporated into landscape plans when feasible. Creeks, rock outcrops, views and other similar features unique to the site should be incorporated into project plans.

**LD2. Nuisance plants with messy and/or slippery droppings, toxic parts, nuts or thorns, should not be planted next to public areas.**

**LD3. Drought tolerant and fire resistant plants are encouraged.**

**LD4. Groundcover should consist of live plants.** The use of rocks for groundcover is inappropriate.

**LD5. Landscaping should be designed to preserve native oak trees.**

Landscape and irrigation plans should minimize watering within the dripline of native oaks. Drip irrigation is encouraged.

**LD6. Landscape plans should be prepared by a qualified landscape architect or contractor.**



### **Circulation, Pedestrian and Bicycle Trails**

To provide for the safe movement of pedestrians and bicyclists, as well as to accommodate various modes of transportation, the development of off-street pedestrian/bicycle paths are strongly encouraged.

**C1.** Paths or trails are encouraged to link open space areas to community service areas. Development of paths should preserve natural features, such as trees and rocks, and they should meander to create a rural appearance.

**C2.** Development of a path system should be prioritized for high pedestrian/bicycle usage areas, including the length of roadway along Spenceville Road, and from that intersection to Highway 20.

**C3.** Wherever county right-of-way exists along Spenceville Road and Penn Valley Drive, both public and development-related road improvements should include the construction of pedestrian paths.

**C4.** Commercial and multi-residential development with frontage along the bicycle/pedestrian path, should incorporate landscaping to buffer the path from parking and/or active use area on the site to be developed.

**C5.** Public transportation stops should be located within walking distance of the pedestrian pathways.

### **Multi Family Residential Development**

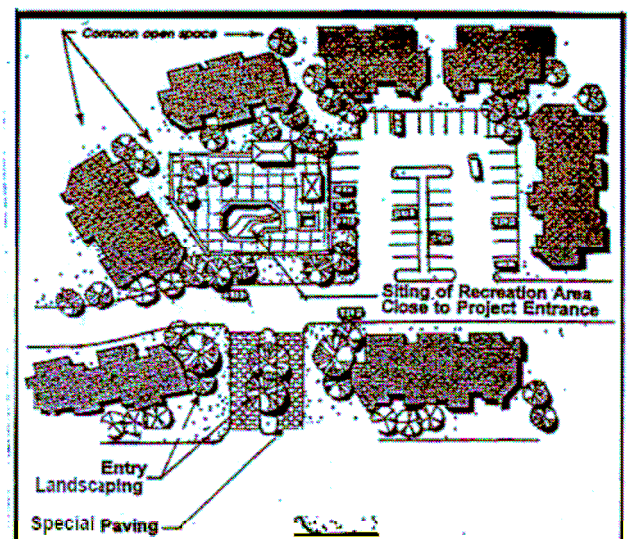
Although flexibility in multi-family residential site planning is desirable, the aggregate effect of residential development that is unrelated to each another, and the community as a whole, often produces isolated “compounds” that have limited considerations towards the concerns of the public’s environment.

**MF1 Residential development surrounded by high walls, parking lots and rows of carports along public streets is discouraged.**

**MF2 Colored-textured paving treatment at entry drives is encouraged, however, pavers are discouraged within the public street rights-of-way.**

**MF3 Activity spaces that provide a setting for informal games, gatherings and other activities are desirable.**

These areas should be varied in size and shape and should be woven into the overall open space concept. Activity spaces may be visually accessible to the public, but are only to be used by the project’s residents and their invited guests.



## **APPENDICES**

## GENERAL PLAN POLICIES

The 1995 Nevada County General Plan provides for the preparation of area-specific design guidelines within Community Regions. This Area Plan is consistent with the following General Plan Policies:

**Policy 18.2** The County may adopt Specific Design Guidelines for areas within *Community Regions, Rural Places, and Rural Centers* to provide for the maintenance of community identity, scenic resources and historic sites and areas.

The Specific Design Guidelines may include, but not be limited to standards which:

- a. Reflect the distinctions among and transitions between different areas within *Community Regions*;
- b. Reflect and retain the historic character of the area by requiring designs consistent with historic buildings, areas and sites related to a project;
- c. Reflect and retain the rural and small-town character of the County;
- d. Address building height and bulk at locations of sensitivity;
- e. Encourage consistent thematic use of building materials and design elements appropriate to the visual and scenic qualities of specific areas;
- f. Encourage cluster-type development of office, commercial uses, and residential uses to enhance open space;
- g. Encourage office and commercial development provide safe, functional and attractive pedestrian connections and, where appropriate, social places (e.g. seating, landscaped patio areas, etc.);
- h. Locate parking areas out of view from road traffic where conditions permit and provide measures to reduce the impacts of large paved areas;
- i. Encourage building designs which provide customer entrance from pedestrian and parking areas, with customer-friendly store fronts facing pedestrian areas; and
- j. Provide uniform criteria for project design review.
- k. Encourage landscape treatment to enhance the built environment, including the preservation, long-term maintenance, and use of drought-tolerant native species.

Specific Design Guidelines shall be implemented through the regulations of the "D" Design Combining District of the County zoning ordinance.

In addition, this Plan is consistent with the following Policies:

**LAND USE Policy 1.17** which identifies environmentally sensitive resources.

**CIRCULATION Policy 4.32** which encourages frontage improvements, including sidewalks, for non-residential projects within, Community Regions

**AESTHETICS Policy 18.11** which requires the use of lighting that minimizes night time light pollution.

### Section L-II 3.51 Area Plan for Penn Valley Village Center

Pursuant to Policy 18.2 of the Nevada County General Plan, an Area Plan has been adopted for the Penn Valley Village Center, establishing Design Guidelines for the maintenance of community identity and design.

- A. Purpose. The purpose of the Penn Valley Village Center Area Plan is to develop design guidelines that provide consistent design review criteria that encourages development that is compatible with the rural character of the Penn Valley Village Center; to identify public facilities and services that will serve new development; to identify and encourage protection of natural resources; to advocate the development of paths and trails; and to sustain the rural environment and encourage patronage of village center businesses.
- B. Application. The Penn Valley Village Center Area Plan Guidelines shall be considered in the review of all discretionary, and ministerial permit projects, and administrative permits that require design review, within the boundaries of the Penn Valley village Center as mapped on the 1995 Nevada County General Plan land use maps.

Amendment to the “SP” Combining District for the subject properties

(Note SP96-01) An Area Plan has been adopted for the Penn Valley Village Center, establishing Design Guidelines that shall be considered in the review of all discretionary and ministerial projects, and administrative permits requiring design review, within the Village Center, including but not limited to, commercial, business park, multi-family residential and public development projects.



**Section L-II 36.7**  
**as adopted by Ordinance 1923 on January 7, 1997,**  
**providing direction for the Penn Valley Village Center Area Plan**

Sec. L-II 36.7

Zoning Regulations

“SP” District (Note 96-01) – Penn Valley Village Center:

An Area Plan/Community Plan shall be prepared for the Village Center. The intent of the Plan is not to forestall or otherwise alter General Plan implementation. Rather, it shall be to provide comprehensive planning for:

- Community identify and design including site planning, landscaping, protection of natural and historic features, architecture, signage, and recognition of environmental constraints including traffic, noise, steep slopes, and floodplains.
- Project design ensuring the community’s character and distinctiveness, promoter visual continuity and cohesiveness in style, encourage visual relief, ensure varied architectural forms, patterns, and styles unified through landscaping and selected architectural features, protect historic quality, protect natural resources, and ensure consistent community design features including but not limited to scale, height, bulk, materials, and the preservation of privacy.
- Circulation, including pedestrian and bicycle facilities, and internal circulation within and between individual properties.
- Provision for public facilities, particularly water, sewer, and drainage, as well as interim facilities to address such needs.