

Figure 2-1: Concept View of Elkhorn Neighborhood - Looking West from Mason Road to Elkhorn Peak

2.0

PLAN PURPOSE AUTHORITY & CONTEXT

*Conservation means development
as much as it does protection.*
- Theodore Roosevelt



2.1 PURPOSE AND INTENT

This Specific Plan is a guide for the long-term realization of a series of connected and sustainable rural neighborhoods in the Middle Green Valley Special Study Area (SSA) of Solano County. The creation of this Specific Plan is the result of a community, landowner and County consensus-building odyssey that recognized the need to protect the unique rural qualities of the area, while providing the means for appropriate settlement patterns to take place.

This Specific Plan is intended to build upon the goal and policies set out in the General Plan for the Middle Green Valley SSA to provide a coherent road map, Development Standards and implementation strategies to achieve the intended outcome.

2.2 PLAN AUTHORITY

Solano County is authorized to adopt this Specific Plan under the provisions of California Planning and Land Use Law (Title 7, Chapter 3, Article 8, Sections 65450-65457) of the California Government Code, Section SS-1-1 of the General Plan.

2.3 RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER DOCUMENTS

This section describes the most important aspects of the relationship between this Specific Plan and other existing and future plans and documents.

2.3.1 2008 SOLANO GENERAL PLAN

The goals, policies, plans and programs outlined in the General Plan express a shared vision and commitment toward a more sustainable planning model that interconnects the themes of the environment, the economy and social equity. This shared vision at Middle Green Valley reflects collaboration between County staff, residents, advisory committees, commissions and the Board of Supervisors.

The General Plan identifies the Middle Green Valley SSA (or Plan Area) as an area that needs to focus attention on this area's particular concerns since it faces unique planning issues. To this end, this Specific Plan demonstrates compliance with the overarching sustainable vision of the General Plan as well as the particular goal and policies set out for the Middle Green Valley SSA.

The main goal, related policies and implementation programs for the SSA provided the framework for the creation of a comprehensive development plan. This goal and policies were crafted in an initial community envisioning process that took place in a series of community meetings in 2007. The main goal in the General Plan is as follows:

SS.G-1: Protect and maintain the rural character of Middle Green Valley while allowing opportunities for compatible residential development to occur.

(Page LU-54, Solano General Plan)

Related policies and concept plans in the General Plan describe the conceptual vision for the area and policies pursuant to the main goal, (pages LU-50 – LU-59). As part of the Implementation Programs, the General Plan directs the preparation of a Specific Plan, identifies the boundaries of the SSA, and the particular components and issues the plan is to address:

SS.1-1 Adopt a plan (either a specific plan or master plan) to implement these policies for Middle Green Valley.

(Page LU-58, Solano County General Plan)

The specific policies related to Regulation SS.1-1 and how they have been incorporated into the design and implementation of this Specific Plan are described throughout this document as well as the broader relevant General Plan goals and policies.

2.3.2 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT (EIR)

In conjunction with this Specific Plan a program level EIR has been prepared to study the environmental impacts the project may create. The purpose, policies, design and requirements of this Plan are to achieve a self-mitigated EIR to the extent possible. Refer to Chapter 4 - Implementation.

2.3.3 SOLANO COUNTY ZONING ORDINANCE

This Specific Plan is intended to establish the zoning and development pattern for the Plan Area. The Standards in this Specific Plan supersede the land use designations, public works standards and other applicable regulations of the the Zoning Ordinance and other applicable County regulations. To the extent that Standards or regulations are not specified in this Specific Plan and do not conflict with the implementation of the Specific Plan, the Zoning Ordinance shall continue to apply. This Specific Plan includes definitions in Appendix A that are intended to supersede the definitions in the Zoning Ordinance. To the extent this Specific Plan uses terms that are not defined in Appendix A, any applicable definitions in the Zoning Ordinance shall apply.



[1]



[2]



[3]

2.3.4 DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENT

Concurrent with this Specific Plan, the County Board of Supervisors (Board) shall approve a Development Agreement between the County and the landowners of Middle Green Valley. The Development Agreement provides the landowner’s obligations related to the provision of urban services for the Specific Plan Area (Plan Area), and other obligations that will be imposed by the County as conditions for development. It also provides the landowners with certain vested development rights, which are subject to the conditions in the Development Agreement.

2.3.5 FINANCING PLAN

The financing plan identifies the funding mechanisms required for the capital costs of private and public facilities infrastructure necessary to accomplish Plan Area build-out and funding for necessary public services for the project. Refer to Section 4.6 - Financing Plan.

2.3.6 DESIGN REVIEW

Design review process guidelines as presented in Section 5.9 of this document establishes the framework for the process and submittal requirements for projects within the Middle Green Valley SSA. This process includes design review by the Conservancy Design Review Committee (CRC) and administrative review with the County.

[1] Existing Vineyards on eastern side of Green Valley Road

[2] View from Green Valley Road looking West

[3] View of Western foothills



Figure 2-2: Aerial of Study Area

2.4 PROJECT LOCATION AND CONTEXT

2.4.1 REGIONAL CONTEXT

The Middle Green Valley Specific Plan Area (Plan Area) is located on Green Valley Road, in unincorporated Green Valley, near the western boundary of Solano County; north of I-80, Jameson Canyon, and the Hidden Meadows subdivision (City of Fairfield); south of existing unincorporated subdivisions and the Green Valley Country Club in upper Green Valley; west of Suisun Valley and the Rockville Hills; and northwest of the Eastridge subdivision (City of Fairfield).

The Middle Green Valley SSA is approximately 1,905 acres of land in the western portions of Solano County as described in Figures 2-2 and 2-3. The major roads serving the Plan Area are Green Valley Road and Rockville Road (to the north). A number of smaller country roads and unpaved two lane roads exist within the Plan Area as well. The most prominent are Terminal Reservoir Road along the southern boundary and Mason Road which runs east-west in the more central area of the site.

The Plan Area is comprised of a mixture of cultivated and fallow agricultural lands and north/south drainage features (Hennessy and Green Valley Creeks) on the valley floor. The oak wooded foothills on the east and west sides of the valley consist predominately of undeveloped grazing lands, oak woodlands, rural residential estate development, dirt roads, and pond and drainage features.



Figure 2-3: Regional Context

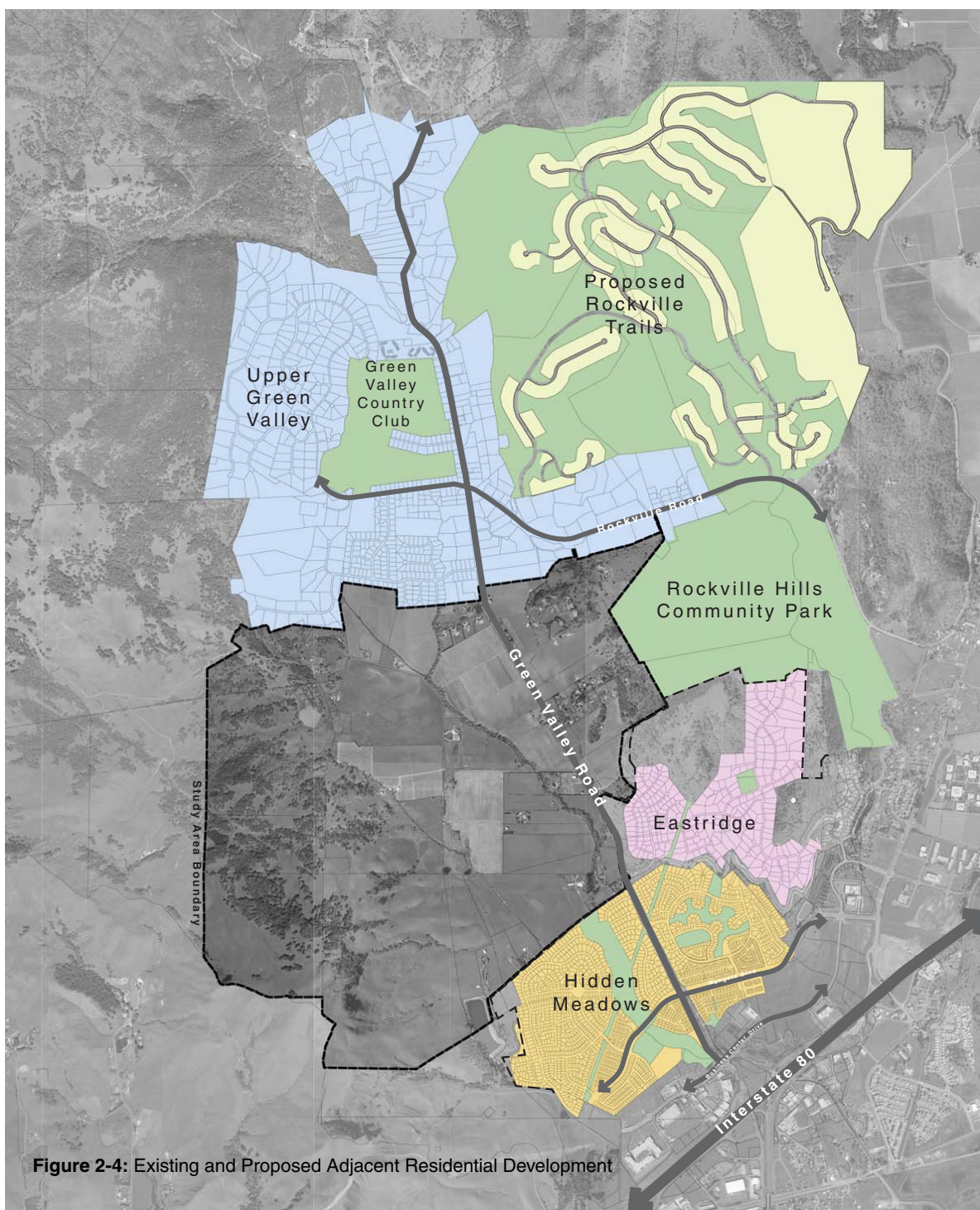






Figure 2-4: Existing and Proposed Adjacent Residential Development

Legend

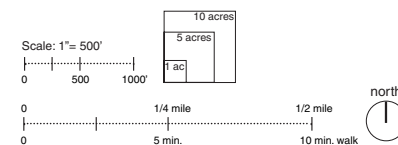
-  Hidden Meadows
-  Eastridge
-  Proposed Rockville Trails*
-  Upper Green Valley

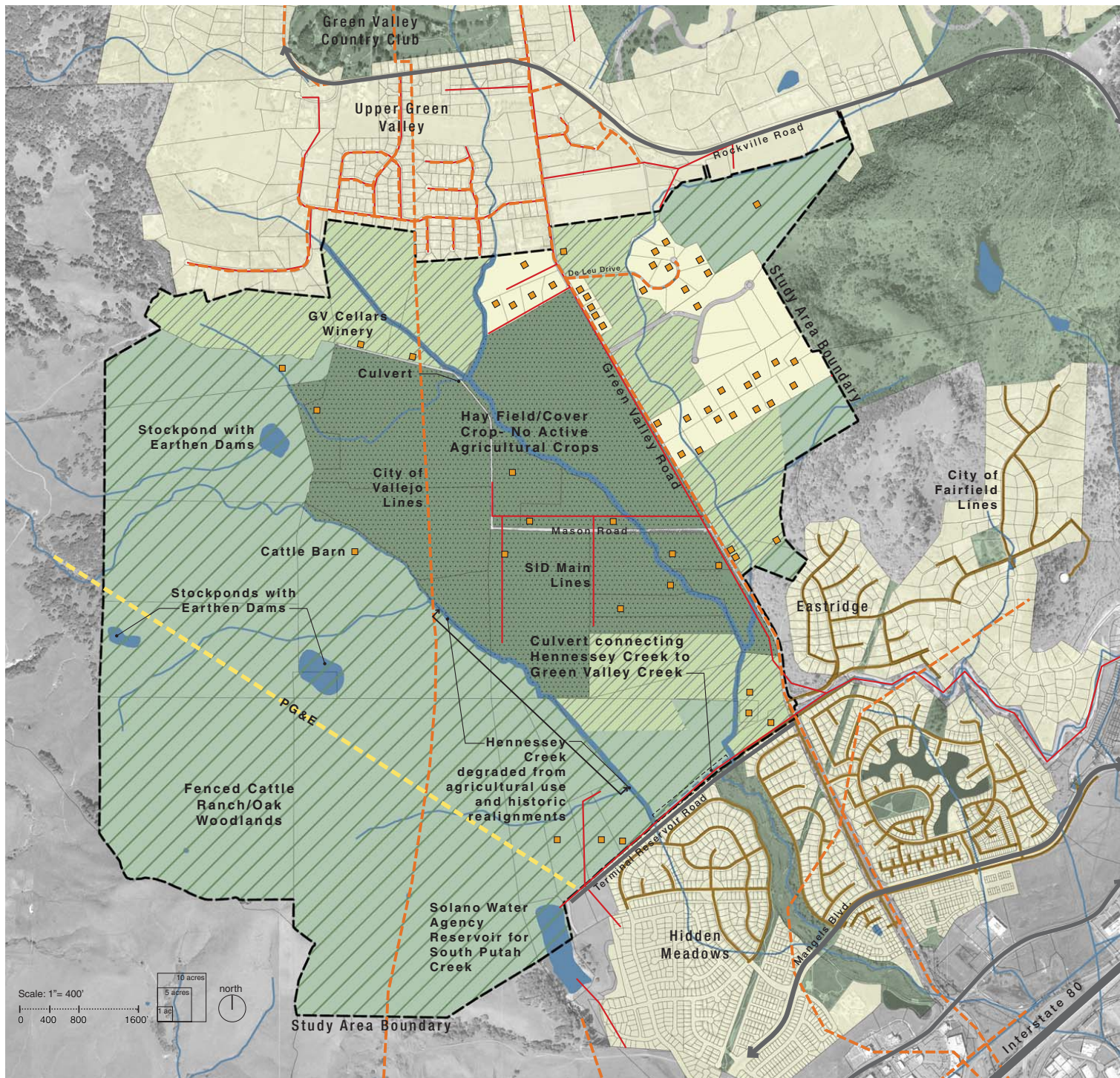
2.4.2 EXISTING LAND USES

Primary land use in the area has historically been agriculture, ranching and large lot rural residential. Approximately 55 single family homes and ancillary agricultural structures exist within the Plan Area boundaries. Agricultural and ranching activities have included vineyards, orchards, grazing land and areas devoted to field crops. In some areas the lands have lain fallow for several years. Currently there are over 200 acres in active agriculture, which are primarily vineyard lands.











Adjacent uses in the area consist of grazing, large and small lot rural residential and residential estate development. Refer to Figure 2-4 for Existing and Proposed Adjacent Residential Development and Figure 2-5 for Existing Context.

* Rockville Trails is an approved residential community with 371 detached residential units and associated access and utility improvements.





LEGEND

-  Cattle Ranch
-  Cover Crops (No Active Agriculture)
-  Existing Vineyards
-  Wetlands and Drainages
-  City of Vallejo Water Mains
-  SID Water Mains
-  City of Fairfield Water Mains
-  PG&E Line
-  Existing Residential
-  Developed Areas

EXISTING BUILDING AND INFRASTRUCTURE INVENTORY

- 10,000 sf commercial winery (GV Cellars)
- 5000 sf refrigerated wine storage facility
- 3 livestock feed barns
- 2 livestock corrals
- approximately 20 miles of fencing including a significant portion of 8' high fencing designed for vineyard protection from deer
- 2 cell towers
- approximately 6 miles of overhead power and phone lines
- 3 stock ponds with earthen dams
- over 25 different agricultural barns and sheds
- approximately 12 productive private wells
- approximately 10 miles of roads ranging from paved county roads to privately maintained pervious ranch roads
- over 6 miles of water mains (City of Vallejo) and irrigation trunk lines (Solano Irrigation District)
- a reservoir built by Solano Water Agency for the South Putah Canal (Terminal Reservoir)
- over 200 acres of existing vineyard

Figure 2-5: Existing Context

Scale: 1" = 400'
 0 400 800 1600'
 10 acres
 5 acres
 1 acre
 north

2.4.3 PHYSICAL, NATURAL & CULTURAL SETTING

This Specific Plan is based on a review and compilation of the cultural and natural setting at Middle Green Valley to craft a development plan based on resources. Below is a brief overview of the main components of the existing setting, which is analyzed in detail in the accompanying Program EIR for this Specific Plan. Refer to Figure 2-6 for the Combined Constraints mapping.

Slope and Topography

The central part of the site is characterized by a valley area, with slopes ranging from 5% to 10%. The surrounding foothill areas range from 450 to 800 feet in elevation. Slopes generally range from 8% in the foothill areas up to 40% in the upper southwestern foothills.

In keeping with the General Plan's desires to minimize disturbance in the foothill areas as well as to preserve Heritage Trees, Section 3.3.2 provides that slopes greater than 30% are designated unsuitable for development. Only minor road crossings and/or utility improvements may occur in these areas.

Drainage and Hydrology

Green Valley Creek is the principal surface drainage feature located in the central area of the Study Area. Two upper tributaries of Green Valley Creek drain the north Green Valley area and converge within the north portion of the Plan Area. Other surface water features include two large stock ponds within the western foothill areas. A smaller drainage feature, Hennessey Creek, that runs along the base of the western foothills drains the upper tributaries of the western foothills, to eventually meet up with Green Valley Creek at the southern boundary. This drainage has been heavily altered and realigned over the past 100 years due to agricultural activities and contributes to downstream water quality issues. Another unnamed north/south drainage feature which runs on the east side of Green Valley Road also occurs in the Plan Area. Terminal Reservoir is located at the southern boundary of the Plan Area.

Potential impacts of placing housing within a 100-year flood hazard area as mapped on the federal Flood Hazard Boundary map were also analyzed. This analysis also includes potential flooding as a result of the failure of a levee of the dams on Lakes Frey and Madigan in the Vallejo watershed area at the headwaters of Green Valley Creek. See Figure 2-6 for a depiction of these dam inundation areas.

As provided in Sections 3.3.2 and 3.3.3, generous vegetation buffers have been planned along each of the on-site drainages to allow for wildlife movement, filter and detain water and preserve and restore degraded slope banks and drainages. Strategies for restoring and protecting the drainage corridors, as well as minimizing flood potential are outlined in Sections 3.3 and 4.3.

Biology

The western foothills are comprised of mixed oak woodland forest, non-native grassland and some pockets of native grassland areas. The valley floor consists of cultivated agriculture, fallow lands and vineyards. The foothills to the east of Green Valley Road consist of vineyards with mixed oak woodland forest and non-native grassland in the upper foothill areas.

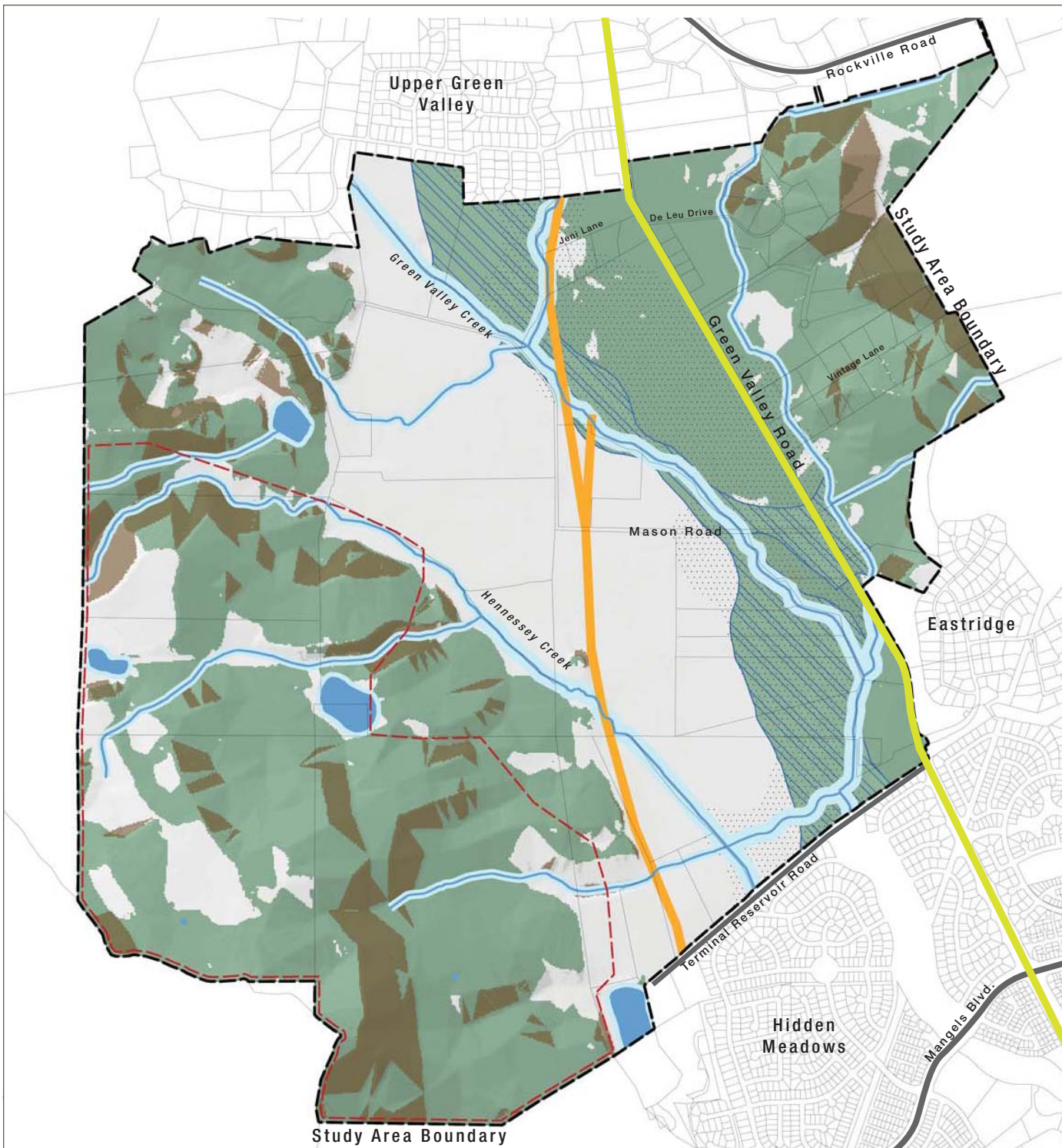
The Middle Green Valley area is included in the proposed Solano Multi-Species Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) which establishes a framework for complying with federal and state regulations for endangered species while accommodating ongoing urban activities and future urban growth. Vegetation and animal species with potential habitat to occur in the Plan Area include the California Red Legged Frog, Swainson's Hawk, and the Callippe Silverspot Butterfly. A detailed summary and discussion of this HCP is included in the Program EIR.

Scenic Viewsheds









In addition to the environmental constraints, Green Valley Road is designated a "scenic roadway" in the General Plan, (Policy RS.P-37) as well as specifically addressed in the policies for the SSA in policy SS.P-1, which states to:

"maintain the rural character of Middle Green Valley while still allowing development to be guided into areas screened from Green Valley Road because of natural contours in the land, woodland vegetation, and/or riparian vegetation. Locate upland development in areas screened by landforms or vegetation."

As depicted in Figure 2-6, Combined Constraints, a visual analysis was completed that identified those areas obscured from Green Valley Road. As described in Section 3.2, development areas have been directed to these areas to retain this scenic viewshed.



LEGEND

-  Land Visible from Green Valley Road
-  100 year Flood Hazard Area
-  Wetlands, Drainages, and Buffer Areas
-  Dam Inundation
-  Green Valley Fault with 50' Setback
-  Steep Slopes (30%+)
-  Potential California Red-legged Frog Critical Habitat (HCP*)
-  Solano County Scenic Roadway

* Mapping was completed as part of the 2007 draft Solano County Multispecies Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP).

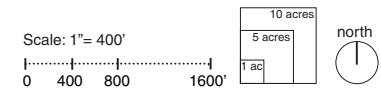
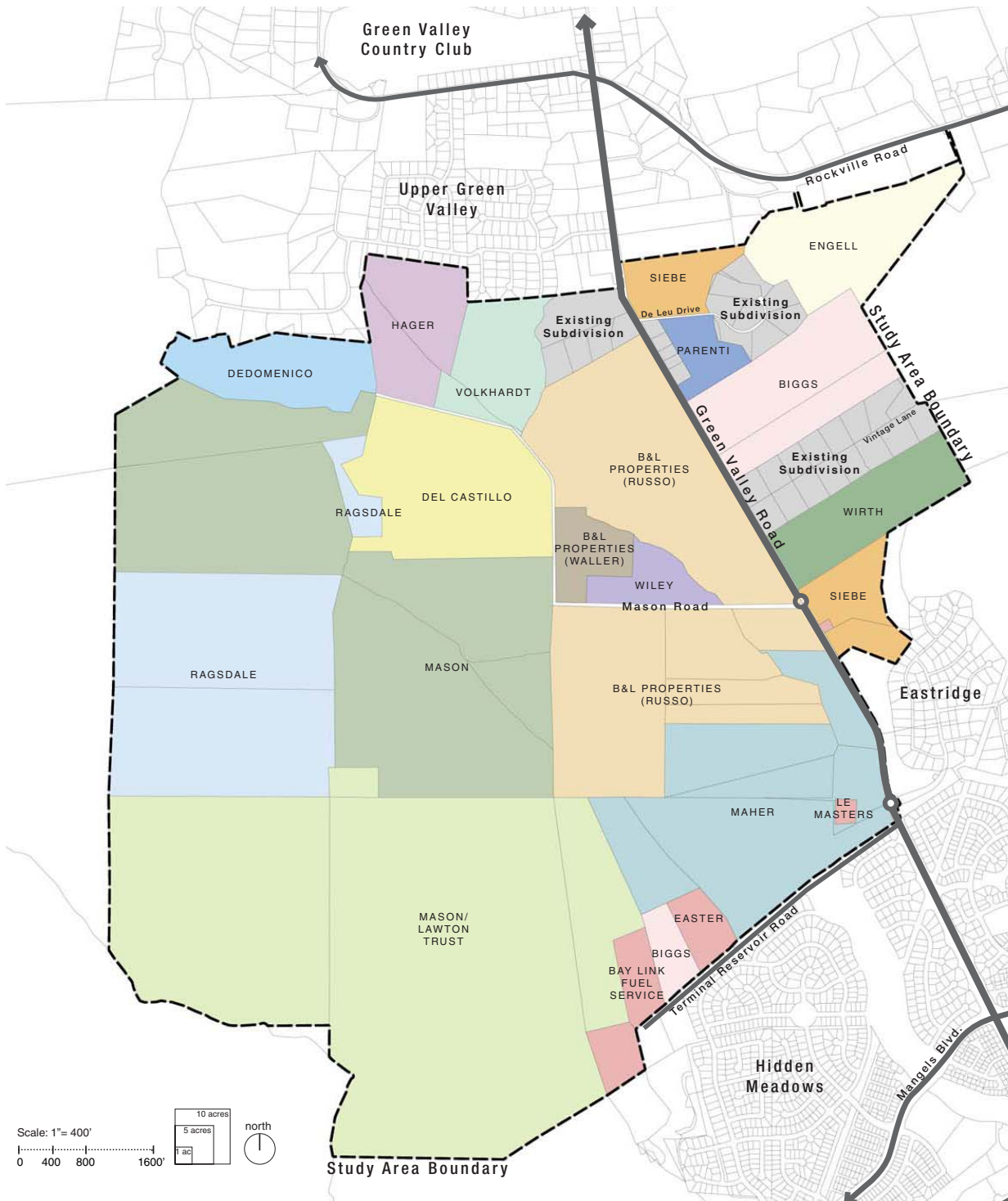


Figure 2-6: Combined Constraints Map



LEGEND

	a. Existing Subdivision	
	b. Engell	52.26 ac
	c. Biggs*	61.61 ac
	d. Wirth/Siebe/Parenti	95.42 ac
	e. Wiley	15.55 ac
	f. B+L Properties (Russo)	235.70 ac
	g. B+L Properties (Waller)	17.33 ac
	h. Maher	146.75 ac
	i. Ragsdale	168.56 ac
	j. Mason	295.95 ac
	k. Mason/Lawton Trust	476.09 ac
	l. Del Castillo	82.41 ac
	m. Dedomenico	40.56 ac
	n. Hager	40.20 ac
	o. Volkhardt	35.24 ac

* Property east of Green Valley Road has an approved tentative map on file with Solano County for 6 new lots. These lots are included in the maximum 400 unit count for this Specific Plan.

2.4.4 SPECIAL STUDY AREA OWNERSHIP

The Middle Green Valley SSA is comprised of over 80 separate parcels and over 15 separate landowners, refer to Figure 2-7 Ownership Map. This Specific Plan is the culmination of bringing together this group of landowners as well as members of the larger Green Valley community to craft an equitable consensus plan and transfer of development rights program (TDR). This Specific Plan describes the specific agreed upon implementation, unit distribution and design initiatives that reflect the conclusions and recommendations of this group as summarized in Section 2.5. See Section 4.2.3 for the transfer of development rights program and unit distribution.

Figure 2-7: Ownership Map

{ *There is no power for change greater than a community discovering what it cares about* }

- Margaret Wheatley

2.5 PROJECT BACKGROUND – ESTABLISHING A SHARED VISION

This Specific Plan has been formulated through an interactive community based design process involving community members, landowners, architects, planners, political officials, County staff, and specialized consultants since early 2007. Through this process, a compelling and rich story of the past, present and future of Middle Green Valley has been developed.

2.5.1 INITIAL COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS

Beginning in 2007 a series of Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) workshops were held to study the future of Middle Green Valley with the purpose of focusing on several issues, including maintaining rural character, serving the area with water and wastewater, and keeping agricultural viable while coming up with equitable alternatives for landowners. The conclusions and recommendations of these meetings were then reviewed by the Planning Commission and the Board of Supervisors (Board).

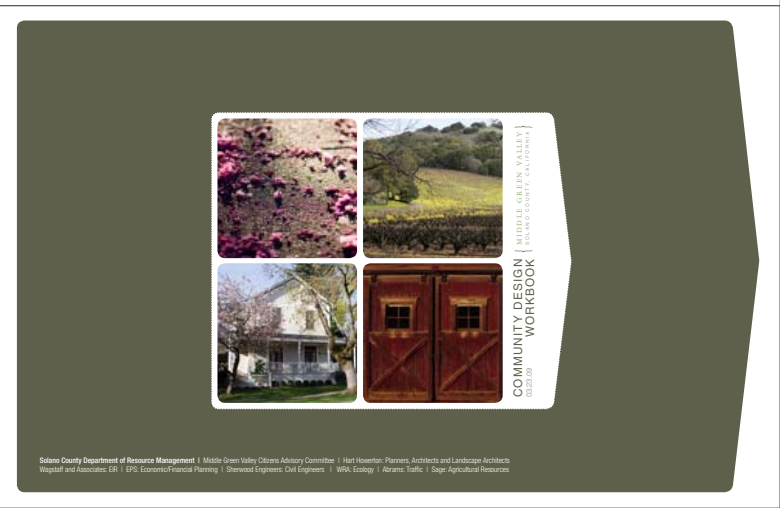
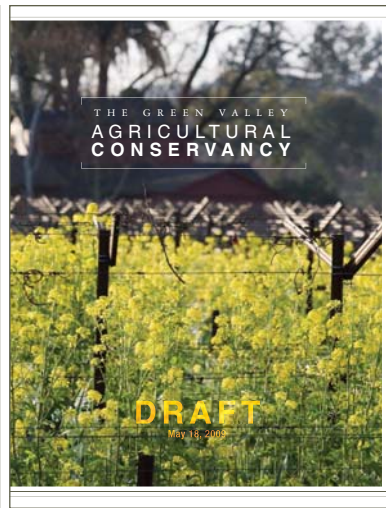
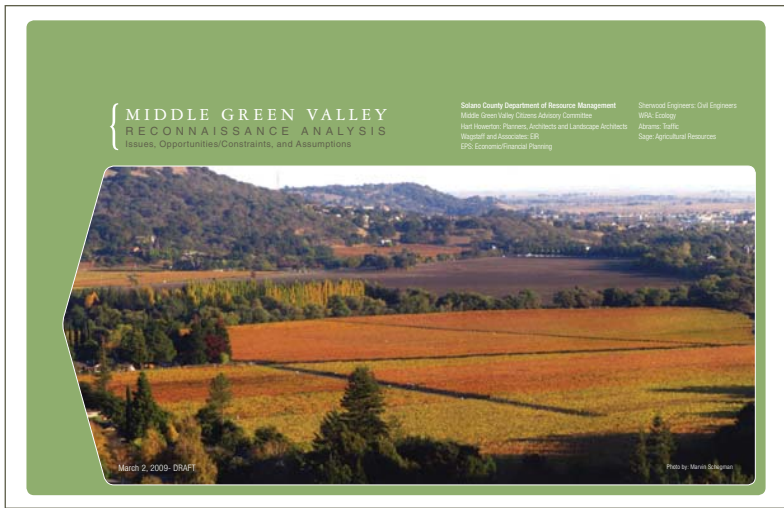
2.5.2 COUNTY ESTABLISHES SPECIAL STUDY AREA (SSA)

As part of the 2008 General Plan update, the community vision crafted by the initial CAC process was incorporated into the General Plan to create a SSA for the Middle Green Valley area. A goal and policies were developed based on this community vision to provide a “*framework for implementing the future vision of a rural community with compatible residential development*” (Solano County General Plan – Page LU-54). This included the provision to prepare a Specific Plan that should address this overarching vision.

2.5.3 FOLLOW-UP COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS

Following the approval of the 2008 General Plan, a series of CAC workshops were completed to craft a long term, equitable and sustainable development plan for this area in the Winter and Spring of 2009. This series of meetings focused on responding to the goal and policies set out in the General Plan, the on-going evolving aspirations of the community, and a full understanding of the land and context. The resulting plan is based on these main precepts of community based planning:

- **A Consensus Built Plan** – The development plan is based on a shared vision and understanding of priorities so that all participants in the design process take ownership and are full advocates of this Specific Plan.
- **A Resource Based Plan** – The design is based on an understanding of the land, resources, opportunities and constraints.
- **A Pattern of Settlement and Conservation** – Proven community design concepts and development incentives are incorporated to maintain the rural aesthetic, preserve resources and create a strategic and sustainable agricultural plan.
- **A Plan Consistent with General Plan Goals and Policies** – The Plan builds on the underlying policies of the General Plan that emphasize maintaining rural quality in open spaces and viewsheds while allowing for appropriate community development.
- **A Plan that Works** – The development plan reflects the realities of strategic financing and phasing concepts as well as integrating other county-wide implementation policies.



This plan compliments the area and is one I can be proud of. I would not have settled for anything less. It is unique in its conservation and in its architecture. It offers a little "something for everyone" in the varied style, size of homes and the lots it offers. More than that, it actually brought two opposing groups together in their acceptance and appreciation of a plan, and caused others to understand, respect and appreciate the land and those who earn their living from it...

Sarah Lindemann – Landowner and CAC Member

I believe the truly unique aspects of Middle Green Valley have yet to be realized. While the plan facilitates some very desirable outcomes, the breakthrough is cultural, and is yet to come. It is human interaction with nature and the production of food that is elemental and necessary to a sane life.

Bill Mayben – Neighbor and CAC Member

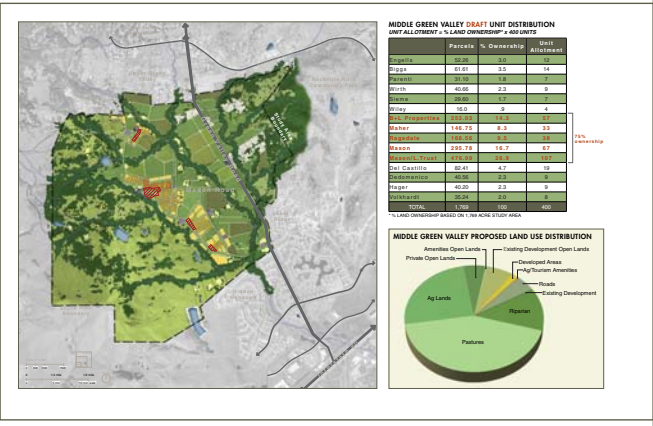
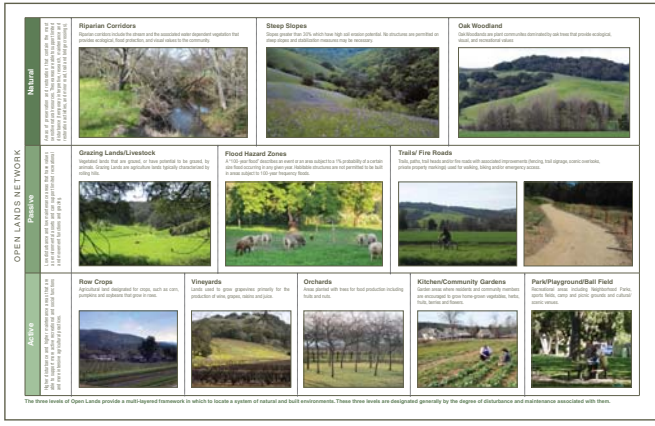
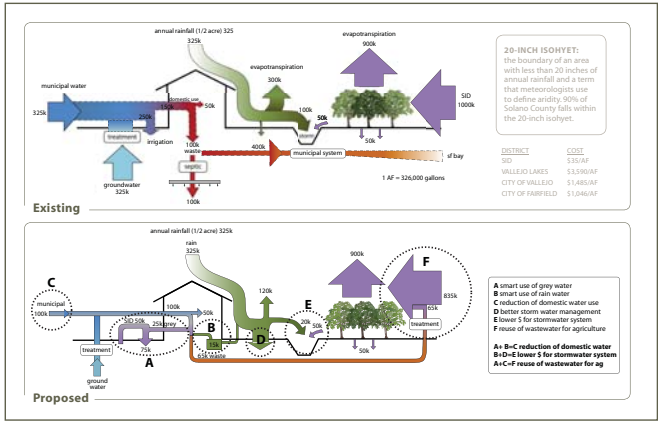


Figure 8-8: CAC Meeting Materials and Handouts



Figure 3-1: The Neighborhood Pattern: View Looking South to the Main Green at Elkhorn Neighborhood