

INITIATIVE MEASURE TO BE SUBMITTED DIRECTLY TO THE VOTERS

The County Counsel has prepared the following title and summary of the chief purposes and points of the proposed measure:

THE RURAL HERITAGE INITIATIVE

This measure requires majority voter approval of any amendments to the Sonoma County General Plan that redesignate land currently designated for agricultural or rural resource uses to another land use designation, or increase the density for such lands, except in limited circumstances. The General Plan establishes different land use designations and densities for property in the County as a “blueprint” for development. State law authorizes the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors (“Board”) to make changes to these designations and densities, or otherwise amend the General Plan, pursuant to a two-step public hearing process commencing with the Sonoma County Planning Commission. This measure removes the Board’s authority to make the noted changes for agricultural and rural resource lands through its voter approval requirement. This requirement would be effective until December 31, 2030.

This measure makes certain limited exceptions to its voter approval requirement, preserving the Board’s authority to amend the General Plan to: (1) decrease the density of agricultural or rural resource lands; (2) redesignate such lands to another land use designation that provides greater natural resource protection, including redesignating agricultural lands to rural resource lands; (3) redesignate or increase the density of such lands to the extent necessary to avoid an unconstitutional taking; (4) comply with state law affordable housing requirements, provided that the Board can make numerous specified findings; or (5) redesignate such lands to the public lands designation, but only for the following limited public purposes: (a) parks for non-intrusive recreational or educational uses, such as hiking or nature study; (b) public safety facilities, such as fire and police stations; and (c) other public facilities necessary to protect public health or safety, provided that the Board, by super-majority vote, makes specified findings relating to both the immediacy of the threat to public health or safety and the infeasibility of resolving such threat without redesignating to public lands. Except as specified, this measure would eliminate the Board’s existing authority to redesignate certain agricultural lands to public lands for public facilities, such as parks and sewage treatment plants, where an overriding public benefit exists. This measure imposes additional procedural requirements, such as a third public hearing in addition to the two currently required by law, before the Board may act on the foregoing amendments.

This measure freezes in place certain existing General Plan policies regarding growth monitoring, new development siting, and biotic resources until December 31, 2030, absent a voter approved change.

This measure also prohibits County approval of any subdivision, use permit, zone change, or other discretionary entitlement that is inconsistent with this measure.

This measure would require the reversal, as soon as possible, of any General Plan amendment adopted between the date it was submitted – March 3, 2000 – and the date it becomes effective to the extent the amendment is inconsistent with this measure. It exempts any project that has a vested right as of the measure’s effective date or certain redevelopment projects.

Voter approval is required to repeal or amend this measure.

NOTICE OF INTENT TO CIRCULATE PETITION

Notice is hereby given by the persons whose names appear hereon of their intention to circulate the petition within Sonoma County for the purpose of requiring, with limited exceptions, a vote of the people for changes to the County General Plan Agricultural or Resources and Rural Development land use designations and densities until the year 2031. A statement of the reasons of the proposed action as contemplated in the petition is as follows:

**WHAT IT DOES:** The Rural Heritage Initiative will prevent urban sprawl on about 80 percent of the County’s land area by implementing the “city and community-centered growth” policy of the General Plan. It applies to unincorporated land only and will not affect the ability of cities to decide how much land they want to annex and develop. The Rural Heritage Initiative will compliment the municipal Urban Growth Boundaries to focus projected growth in the cities, protecting the rural character and agricultural areas of our county.

**ASSURES PROTECTION OF OUR FUTURE QUALITY OF LIFE:** The Sonoma County General Plan already sets a goal of focusing growth within our urban areas. But under the enormous pressures for growth and technology-driven industrial development in the coming decades, we can’t be sure that future Boards of Supervisors won’t erode the General Plan’s Land Use Element, allowing increased sprawl into rural, agricultural and wildlife habitat areas. We’ve seen what can happen elsewhere: In Los Angeles, in Santa Clara and Contra Costa Counties. A development-oriented Board of Supervisors could easily start the cascade of sprawl that resulted in the disappearance of agriculture in the Santa Clara Valley. The Rural Heritage Initiative puts the power to decide such changes in the hands of voters.

**ALLOWS US TO MEET AFFORDABLE HOUSING REQUIREMENTS AND TO PROTECT NATURAL RESOURCES:** The Rural Heritage Initiative allows the Board of Supervisors to approve changes in the use of land designated for Agricultural and Resources and Rural Development if they find the change is necessary to meet state affordable housing requirements under certain conditions, to avoid an unconstitutional taking of property, or to provide greater protection for natural resources. Other proposals for changing these land use designations may be placed on the ballot by the Board or by petition to be considered in a vote of the people.

**A PROVEN IDEA:** Voters in Napa County and Ventura County have approved measures very similar to the Rural Heritage Initiative, and the approach has been upheld by the California Supreme Court. The Rural Heritage Initiative extends protection to all unincorporated land designated for Agricultural or Resources and Rural Development use, ensuring that the beauty and special character of our region will be retained for the next generation.

**WHO’S BEHIND IT?** The Rural Heritage Initiative is sponsored by Citizens for Sonoma County’s Future, a coalition of concerned citizens and leading environmental organizations including Sierra Club, Greenbelt Alliance, Sonoma County Conservation Action, and Friends of the Russian River.

/s/ Peter Dell Ashcroft Sierra Club Sonoma Group Chair 745 Louisa Dr. Santa Rosa CA 95404	/s/ John A. Blayney Retired Planner 3350 White Alder Sonoma CA 95476	/s/ AnnaLis Dalrymple Greenbelt Alliance North Bay Representative 9094 Old Redwood Hwy. Cotati CA 94931	/s/ Jake MacKenzie Vice-Mayor City of Rohnert Park 1536 Gladstone Way Rohnert Park CA 94985
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THE RURAL HERITAGE INITIATIVE

**To the Honorable Registrar of Voters of the County of Sonoma:** We, the undersigned, registered and qualified voters of the County of Sonoma, hereby propose an initiative measure to amend the County of Sonoma General Plan. We petition you to submit this measure to the Board of Supervisors of the County of Sonoma for adoption without change, or for submission of the measure to the voters of the County of Sonoma at a general or special election. The measure provides as follows:

**The Rural Heritage Initiative**

The people of the County of Sonoma hereby ordain as follows:

**Section 1. Purpose and Findings.**

**A. Purpose:** The purpose of this Initiative is to protect Sonoma County’s rural heritage, including its forest, woodland, agricultural, open space, scenic, and biotic resources, and to ensure that resource lands are not prematurely or unnecessarily converted to other uses. The initiative amends the Sonoma County General Plan, as adopted on March 23, 1989 and amended through March 3, 2000 (“General Plan”), to restrict sprawling development on such lands.

**B. Preservation of Open Space:** The unique quality of Sonoma County results in large part from the attractiveness and diversity of its landscape. From its world-renowned and highly varied coastline, to the scenic beauty and agricultural richness of the Alexander, Dry Creek, Russian River, and Sonoma Valleys, to the Sonoma Mountains and rolling hillsides across large areas of the County, Sonoma County’s open space and natural resources provide vital contributions to the County’s identity, quality of life, and economy. The recreation and tourism industries, which contribute

nearly \$1 billion per year to the County's economy, depend heavily on these areas. Farmers also depend upon the County's open space and scenic attributes for marketing their agricultural products. Moreover, unlike many parts of the San Francisco Bay Area, Sonoma County has avoided corridor-style urbanization and has maintained separate, identifiable cities and communities.

**C. Threat of Sprawling Development:** Sprawling or "leapfrog" development poses an immediate and long-term threat to Sonoma County's future. Specifically, uncontrolled urban and rural development into agricultural land and open space areas threatens the public health, safety, and welfare by causing increased traffic congestion, air and water pollution, depletion of water resources, and increased conflicts between urban and rural land uses. Sprawling development also undercuts the viability of existing agriculture, and, according to the General Plan, generally results in more costly services than compact, community-centered growth. The Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District estimates that 60% of land in the County is at risk from urban sprawl. Growth pressures could overwhelm Sonoma County within the next 30 years. Northern Santa Clara County (Silicon Valley) is virtually built-out, leaving Sonoma County, with its huge supply of flat agricultural land, next in line for technology-driven growth.

**D. Sonoma County's Agricultural Heritage:** The protection of existing agricultural lands is critically important to current and future residents of Sonoma County. Agriculture occupies nearly half of the County's land area and contributes \$3 billion annually to Sonoma County's \$15 billion economy. The annual production value of the County's approximately 1,300 full-time farms is the largest of the nine Bay Area counties. Sonoma County also retains an exceptional diversity of agricultural crops, including vineyards, orchards, dairies, forage crop, specialty crops, and livestock. These crops--many of which depend upon the County's unique combination of climate, topography, hydrology, and soils--create employment for thousands of people, both directly and indirectly, and generate substantial tax revenues to the County.

**E. Accommodating Housing Needs:** It is undisputed that Sonoma County's population will continue to grow steadily, with the resulting demand for housing. The General Plan recognizes the need for the County, as required by state law, to accommodate its fair share of future growth and has adopted goals, among other things, to: (1) locate future growth within the cities and unincorporated urban service areas in a compact manner, using vacant "infill" parcels and lands next to existing development at the edge of these areas; and (2) accommodate the major share of future growth within the existing cities and their expansion areas and within selected unincorporated communities which are planned to have adequate water and sewer capacities. This Initiative allows the County to continue to meet its housing needs for all economic segments of the population. Nothing in the Initiative will impede the development of needed farm-worker housing. This Initiative also supports the General Plan goals of compact, city-centered growth by directing residential development away from agricultural and natural resource lands and into city Urban Growth Boundaries, where services and infrastructure are more efficiently available.

**F. Resources Conservation:** The General Plan calls for preserving and restoring forest, woodland, and fishery resources, conserving plant and biotic communities, and protecting endangered species. By strengthening the General Plan's commitment to compact urban communities, this Initiative will limit potential urban development in wildlife corridors and riparian and woodland habitat.

**G. Effect of Initiative:** To ensure that the above-stated purposes are secured, this Initiative would amend the General Plan to require voter approval for any General Plan amendment that: (1) redesignates lands currently designated for agricultural or resource-dependent uses to another use; or (2) increases residential densities on agricultural or rural resource lands. This requirement would remain in effect until December 31, 2030, and would be subject to certain limited exceptions.

**H. Exhibits:** Certain portions of the General Plan are attached to this Initiative for reference. These include reduced copies of the "Sonoma County General Plan Land Use Plan Maps," Figures LU-5a through LU-5i, attached hereto as Exhibits A through I, which show the General Plan land use designations adopted by the County as of March 23, 1989; and the text of General Plan section 2.8.1, "Policy for Resources and Rural Development Areas," referenced below, attached hereto as Exhibit J. The Land Use Plan Maps, which are the most current version available from the County, have not been updated by the County since their adoption and thus do not show intervening General Plan changes. These exhibits are provided for illustrative purposes only. This Initiative does not adopt or amend any of the policies, designations, or text contained in the exhibits.

## Section 2. General Plan Amendments

### A. Limitations on Changes to Agricultural and Rural Resource Land Use Designations and Densities

**General Plan Land Use Element Text Amendments:** The Land Use Element of the County of Sonoma General Plan ("General Plan") adopted by the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors ("Board") on March 23, 1989, as amended through March 3, 2000, is hereby amended as indicated below. Text to be inserted into the General Plan is indicated in **bold** type.

1. The following new text is added immediately following Policy LU-8d in Section 2.1.8, entitled "Protection of Agricultural Lands," on page 42 of the General Plan:

### LU-8e Limitations on General Plan Amendments Related to Lands Designated as "Land Intensive Agriculture," "Land Extensive Agriculture," and "Diverse Agriculture"

1. Until December 31, 2030, any General Plan amendment that would amend the land use designation or increase the density of any lands that, as of March 3, 2000, are designated as "Land Intensive Agriculture," "Land Extensive Agriculture," or "Diverse Agriculture" shall require: (i) passage of a ballot measure approved by a majority of voters voting; or (ii) Board approval pursuant to the procedures set forth in subparagraphs (a) through (d), below:

a. The Board may amend the General Plan, pursuant to its usual procedures, to: (i) decrease the density allowed on any such lands; (ii) redesignate any such lands to the "Resources and Rural Development" land use designation or to another designation providing greater protection for natural resources than provided by the pre-existing designation; or (iii) redesignate any such lands to the "Public/Quasi Public" land use designation, provided that the General Plan amendment redesignating any such lands allows only for: (A) parks restricted primarily to non-intrusive recreational or educational uses such as hiking and nature study; (B) fire stations, police stations, and related public safety facilities such as those required for emergency telecommunications; or (C) other public facilities needed to protect the public health or safety, provided that the Board, by four-fifths vote, first finds, on the basis of substantial evidence, both that the failure to provide such needed public facilities would have a specific, immediate, adverse impact upon the public health or safety, and that there is no feasible method to satisfactorily mitigate or avoid the specific adverse impact without redesignating such lands;

b. The Board may amend the General Plan to redesignate land designated as "Land Intensive Agriculture," "Land Extensive Agriculture," or "Diverse Agriculture" to another land use designation, or to increase the density for such lands, if each of the following conditions is satisfied:

(i) Upon request of an affected landowner, and after considering all relevant facts and applicable legislative and judicial authority, the Board finds that, based on substantial evidence in the record, denial of the amendment would constitute an unconstitutional taking of the landowner's property for which compensation would be required; and

(ii) In permitting the amendment, the Board allows only the minimum additional land uses and minimum additional density of development necessary to avoid said unconstitutional taking.

c. The Board may amend the General Plan to redesignate land designated as "Land Intensive Agriculture," "Land Extensive Agriculture," or "Diverse Agriculture" to another land use designation, or to increase the density for such lands, in order to comply with state law regarding the provision of housing for all economic segments of the community. Such amendment may be adopted only if the Board makes each of the following findings based on substantial evidence in the record:

(i) Incorporation or annexation to a city or town is not appropriate or possible within the next five years, based on factors including, but not limited to, nearby cities' designated sphere of influence boundaries, city general plan limits and projections, and urban growth boundaries; and

(ii) There is no suitable land available in any designation other than "Land Intensive Agriculture," "Land Extensive Agriculture," "Diverse Agriculture," or "Resources and Rural Development" to accommodate the proposed development; and

(iii) The land that would be redesignated is immediately adjacent to areas already developed in a manner comparable to the proposed use or, if no suitable land is available that satisfies this criterion, the land that would be redesignated is the suitable land closest to existing comparably developed areas; and

(iv) The applicant for the redesignation has provided evidence that the agencies and districts responsible for providing fire protection, police protection, public works, water, and other public services have adequate capacity to provide the proposed development with adequate public services; and

(v) The development that would be authorized in connection with the redesignation is necessary to comply with state law requirements for provision of low and very low income housing; and

(vi) The proposed development or redesignation will not have direct, indirect, or cumulative significant adverse impacts to the area's agricultural viability; and

(vii) The proposed development is consistent with agricultural uses, does not interfere with accepted agricultural practices, and will not adversely affect the stability of land use patterns in the area (i.e., will not introduce or facilitate a use that is incompatible with adjoining or nearby uses or that would tend to promote additional redesignations in the area); and

(viii) The land proposed for redesignation is not prime agricultural

land, has not been used for agricultural purposes in the past two (2) years, and is unusable for agriculture due to its topography, drainage, flooding, adverse soil conditions or other physical reasons. For purposes of this subparagraph (viii), “prime agricultural land” means any of the following:

(a) All land that qualifies for rating as class I or class II in the Natural Resource Conservation Service land use capability classifications.

(b) Land which qualifies for rating 80 through 100 in the Storie Index Rating.

(c) Land which supports livestock used for the production of food and fiber and which has an annual carrying capacity equivalent to at least one animal unit per acre as defined by the United States Department of Agriculture.

(d) Land planted with fruit or nut-bearing trees, vines, bushes or crops which have a nonbearing period of less than five years and which will normally return during the commercial bearing period on an annual basis from the production of unprocessed agricultural plant production not less than two hundred dollars (\$200) per acre.

(e) Land which has returned from the production of unprocessed agricultural plant products an annual gross value of not less than two hundred dollars (\$200) per acre for three of the previous five years; and

(ix) The land redesignated does not exceed 40 acres for any one landowner in any five (5) year period. Landowners with any unity of interest are considered one landowner for purposes of this limitation.

d. Prior to amending the General Plan to redesignate land or to increase density pursuant to subparagraphs a, b, or c, above, the Board shall hold at least one noticed public hearing for the purpose of receiving testimony and evidence from the applicant and the public on the proposed amendment and any findings proposed in connection with such amendment. This hearing shall be in addition to any other public hearings regularly required for a General Plan amendment.

e. The General Plan may be reorganized, and individual provisions may be renumbered or reordered in the course of ongoing updates of the General Plan in accordance with the requirements of state law.

2. The County and its departments, boards, commissions, officers and employees shall not grant any general plan amendment, rezoning, specific plan, tentative or final subdivision map, conditional use permit, or any other discretionary entitlement, which is inconsistent with this Policy LU-8e. Nothing in this policy LU-8e shall preclude the Board from applying or adopting, without voter approval, Area Plan or other policies that further restrict densities or uses on lands designated “Land Intensive Agriculture,” “Land Extensive Agriculture,” or “Diverse Agriculture.”

2. The following new text is added immediately following Section 2.8.1 “Policy for Resources and Rural Development Areas” on page 53 of the General Plan:

## 2.8.2 Limitations on General Plan Amendments Related to Lands Designated as “Resources and Rural Development”

1. Until December 31, 2030, any General Plan amendment that would amend the land use designation or increase the density of any lands that, as of March 3, 2000, are designated as “Resources and Rural Development” shall require: (i) passage of a ballot measure approved by a majority of voters voting; or (ii) Board approval pursuant to the procedures set forth in subparagraphs (a) through (d), below:

a. The Board may amend the General Plan, pursuant to its usual procedures, to: (i) decrease the density allowed on any such lands; (ii) redesignate any such lands to another designation providing greater protection for natural resources than provided by the pre-existing designation; or (iii) redesignate any such lands to the “Public/Quasi Public” land use designation, provided that the General Plan amendment redesignating any such lands allows only for: (A) parks restricted primarily to non-intrusive recreational or educational uses such as hiking and nature study; (B) fire stations, police stations, and related public safety facilities such as those required for emergency telecommunications; or (C) other public facilities needed to protect the public health or safety, provided that the Board, by four-fifths vote, first finds, on the basis of substantial evidence, both that the failure to provide such needed public facilities would have a specific, immediate, adverse impact upon the public health or safety, and that there is no feasible method to satisfactorily mitigate or avoid the specific adverse impact without redesignating such lands;

b. The Board may amend the General Plan to redesignate land designated as “Resources and Rural Development” to another land

use designation, or to increase the density for such lands, if each of the following conditions is satisfied:

(i) Upon request of an affected landowner, and after considering all relevant facts and applicable legislative and judicial authority, the Board finds that, based on substantial evidence in the record, denial of the amendment would constitute an unconstitutional taking of the landowner’s property for which compensation would be required; and

(ii) In permitting the amendment, the Board allows only the minimum additional land uses and minimum additional density of development necessary to avoid said unconstitutional taking.

c. The Board may amend the General Plan to redesignate the land designated as “Resources and Rural Development” to another land use designation, or to increase the density for such lands, in order to comply with state law regarding the provision of housing for all economic segments of the community. Such amendment may be adopted only if the Board makes each of the following findings based on substantial evidence in the record:

(i) Incorporation or annexation to a city or town is not appropriate or possible within the next five years, based on factors including, but not limited to, nearby cities’ designated sphere of influence boundaries, city general plan limits and projections, and urban growth boundaries; and

(ii) There is no suitable land available in any other designation to accommodate the proposed development; and

(iii) The land that would be redesignated is immediately adjacent to areas already developed in a manner comparable to the proposed use or, if no suitable land is available that satisfies this criterion, the land that would be redesignated is the suitable land closest to existing comparably developed areas; and

(iv) The applicant for the redesignation has provided evidence that the agencies and districts responsible for providing fire protection, police protection, public works, water, and other public services have adequate capacity to provide the proposed development with adequate public services; and

(v) The development that would be authorized in connection with the redesignation is necessary to comply with state law requirements for provision of low and very low income housing; and

(vi) The proposed development or redesignation will not have direct, indirect, or cumulative significant adverse impacts to the area’s habitat or scenic resources; and

(vii) The proposed development does not interfere with the “purposes and definitions” of the “Resources and Rural Development” land use designation listed in section 2.8.1, “Policy for Resources and Rural Development Areas,” does not interfere with any accepted agricultural practices, and will not adversely affect the stability of land use patterns in the area (i.e., will not introduce or facilitate a use that is incompatible with adjoining or nearby uses or that would tend to promote additional redesignations in the area); and

(viii) The land redesignated does not exceed 40 acres for any one landowner in any five (5) year period. Landowners with any unity of interest are considered one landowner for purposes of this limitation.

d. Prior to amending the General Plan to redesignate land or to increase density pursuant to subparagraphs a, b, or c, above, the Board shall hold at least one noticed public hearing for the purpose of receiving testimony and evidence from the applicant and the public on the proposed amendment and any findings proposed in connection with such amendment. This hearing shall be in addition to any other public hearings regularly required for a General Plan amendment.

e. The General Plan may be reorganized, and individual provisions may be renumbered or reordered in the course of ongoing updates of the General Plan in accordance with the requirements of state law.

2. The County and its departments, boards, commissions, officers and employees shall not grant any general plan amendment, rezoning, specific plan, tentative or final subdivision map, conditional use permit, or any other discretionary entitlement, which is inconsistent with this subsection 2.8.2. Nothing in this subsection 2.8.2 shall preclude the Board from applying or adopting, without voter approval, Area Plan or other policies that further restrict densities or uses on lands designated “Resources and Rural Development,” or from applying “RRDWA Resources and Rural Development (Agricultural Preserve)” zoning to lands designated for “Resources and Rural Development” in the General Plan.

## B. Reaffirming General Plan Provisions Relating to Growth Monitoring System

The Rural Heritage Initiative hereby reaffirms and readopts, until December 31, 2030, Land Use Policy LU-1d and Land Use Objective LU-4.1, as set forth respectively on pages 31 and 36 of the General Plan, which read in full as

follows:

LU-1d: Establish a growth monitoring system which measures the amount of building activity within the major use categories for each of the nine planning areas and for lands within the boundaries of each urban service area. Submit summary reports annually to the Board of Supervisors. Include in the monitoring system periodic assessments whether or not public services and infrastructure have kept pace with development.

LU-4.1: Assure that development occurs only where physical public services and infrastructure, including school and park facilities, public safety, access and response times, water and wastewater management systems, drainage, and roads, are planned to be available in time to serve the projected development.

### C. Reaffirming General Plan Provision Protecting Biotic Resources

The Rural Heritage Initiative hereby reaffirms and readopts, until December 31, 2030, Land Use Goal LU-9 as set forth on page 43 of the General Plan, which reads in full as follows:

LU-9: The uses and intensities of any land development shall be consistent with preservation of important biotic resource areas and scenic features.

### D. Conforming Amendments

In light of the General Plan amendments set forth above in Sections A through C of this Initiative, the Sonoma County General Plan adopted on March 23, 1989, as amended through March 3, 2000, is hereby further amended as set forth below in order to promote internal consistency among the various elements of the General Plan. In this Section, text to be inserted into the General Plan is indicated in ***bold italic***; text in standard type currently appears in the General Plan and remains unchanged by this Initiative. The language adopted in the following amendments may be further amended as appropriate without a vote of the people in the course of future updates and revisions to the General Plan.

#### 1. Land Use Element Policy LU-8d on page 42 is hereby amended as follows:

LU-8d: Deny general plan amendments which convert lands outside of designated urban service areas with Class I, II, or III soils (USDA) to an urban or rural residential, commercial, industrial, or public/quasi public category unless all of the following criteria are met:

- 1) The use is not in an agricultural production area and will not adversely affect agricultural operations.
- 2) The supply of vacant potential land for the requested use is insufficient to meet projected demand.
- 3) No areas with other soil classes are available for non-resource uses in the planning area.
- 4) An overriding public benefit will result from the proposed use.
- 5) ***For lands designated “Land Extensive Agriculture,” “Land Intensive Agriculture,” “Diverse Agriculture,” or “Resources and Rural Development,” the amendment conforms to the substantive and procedural requirements of Land Use Element Policies LU-8e and 2.8.2.***

Amendments to recognize a pre-existing use are exempt from this policy. Public uses such as parks and sewage treatment plants may be approved if an overriding public benefit exists, ***subject to the substantive and procedural requirements of Land Use Element Policies LU-8e and 2.8.2.***

#### 2. Land Use Element Policy LU-12d on pages 60-62 is hereby amended as follows:

LU-12d: Use the following criteria for consideration of amendments to add “Recreation and Visitor Serving Commercial” designations:

- 1) the amendment is consistent with the Agricultural Resources Element ***and with Land Use Element Policies LU-8e and 2.8.2.***
- 2) the use involves the restoration of a designated county landmark and does not require new structures or major building additions or the use is an improved campground or guest ranch located near a major recreation area.
- 3) uses other than historic restorations are incidental to and compatible with the primary resource use of the parcel.
- 4) the use does not adversely impact adjacent agricultural or other resource uses.
- 5) project traffic will not adversely impact the level of service or interfere with the movement of farm equipment, and
- 6) adequate law enforcement, fire protection services, and water supply for fire suppression and domestic use are available.

#### 3. Land Use Element Policy LU-13h on pages 65-66 is hereby amended as follows:

LU-13h: Outside urban service area boundaries, consider new recreation

and visitor serving commercial uses in the “Resources and Rural Development” category ***only to the extent permitted under Land Use Element Policy 2.8.2 and*** subject to the following criteria:

- 1) the use is located close to a major recreational area such as the Russian River.
- 2) the use is compatible with the primary resource use of the parcel.
- 3) where practical the use will retain existing redwood trees and will not result in substantial damage to the redwood ecosystem.
- 4) the use would not adversely affect adjacent agricultural lands.
- 5) the use would not adversely affect the level of service on roadways.
- 6) adequate water supply is available for fire suppression and domestic use.
- 7) adequate police and fire protection are available, and
- 8) the use will not have an adverse visual impact on a scenic corridor or scenic landscape unit.

### Section 3. Implementation

**A. Effective Date.** Upon the effective date of this Initiative, the provisions of section 2 of the Initiative are hereby inserted into the County of Sonoma General Plan as an amendment thereof, except that if the four amendments of the mandatory elements of the General Plan that are permitted by state law for any given calendar year have already been utilized in the calendar year in which the Initiative becomes effective, this General Plan amendment shall be the first amendment inserted in the County’s General Plan on January 1 of the next year. At such time as this General Plan amendment is inserted in the County of Sonoma General Plan, any provisions of the County of Sonoma Zoning Ordinance, as reflected in the ordinance itself or the County of Sonoma Zoning Map, inconsistent with this General Plan amendment shall not be enforced.

**B. Interim Amendments.** The County of Sonoma General Plan in effect at the time the Notice of Intention to circulate this Initiative measure was submitted to the County of Sonoma Registrar of Voters (March 3, 2000, “submittal date”), and that General Plan as amended by this Initiative measure, comprise an integrated, internally consistent and compatible statement of policies for the County of Sonoma. In order to ensure that the County of Sonoma General Plan remains an integrated, internally consistent and compatible statement of policies for the County as required by state law and to ensure that the actions of the voters in enacting this Initiative are given effect, any provision of the General Plan that is adopted between the submittal date and the date that the General Plan is amended by this measure shall, to the extent that such interim-enacted provision is inconsistent with the General Plan provisions adopted by section 2 of this Initiative measure, be amended as soon as possible and in the manner and time required by State law to ensure consistency between the provisions adopted by this Initiative and other elements of the County’s General Plan.

**C. Other County Ordinances and Policies.** The County of Sonoma is hereby authorized and directed to amend the General Plan, all specific plans, the zoning ordinance, and other ordinances and policies affected by this Initiative as soon as possible and in the manner and time required by any applicable state law to ensure consistency between the goals, objectives and policies adopted in section 2 of this Initiative and other elements of the County’s General Plan, all specific plans, the zoning ordinance, and other County ordinances and policies.

### Section 4. Exemptions for Certain Projects.

This Initiative shall not apply to any of the following: (1) any project that has obtained as of the effective date of the Initiative a vested right pursuant to state or local law; and (2) any area contained within a Redevelopment Plan that, under California law, is beyond the power of the local voters to affect by the initiative power reserved to the people via the California Constitution. Nothing in this Initiative precludes the use of density bonuses in accordance with state law.

### Section 5. Severability and Interpretation.

This measure shall be interpreted so as to be consistent with all federal and state laws, rules, and regulations. If any section, sub-section, sentence, clause, phrase, part, or portion of this Initiative is held to be invalid or unconstitutional by a final judgment of a court of competent jurisdiction, such decision shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions of this Initiative. The voters hereby declare that this Initiative, and each section, sub-section, sentence, clause, phrase, part, or portion thereof would have been adopted or passed even if one or more sections, sub-sections, sentences, clauses, phrases, parts, or portions are declared invalid or unconstitutional. If any provision of this Initiative is held invalid as applied to any person or circumstance, such invalidity shall not affect any application of this Initiative that can be given effect without the invalid application. This Initiative shall be broadly construed in order to achieve the purposes stated in this Initiative.

### Section 6. Amendment or Repeal.

Except as otherwise provided herein, this Initiative may be amended or repealed only by the voters of the County of Sonoma at a County election.

### Exhibit List

Exhibits A through I:	Reduced copies of the Sonoma County General Plan Land Use Plan Maps, Figures LU-5a through LU-5i.
Exhibit J	Sonoma County General Plan Land Use Element section 2.8.1, “Policy for Resources and Rural Development Areas,” excerpted from pages 52 and 53 of the General Plan.

## 2.8.1 POLICY FOR RESOURCES AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT AREAS

**Purposes and Definition:** This category allows very low density residential development and also is intended to:

1. protect lands needed for commercial timber production under the California Timberland Productivity Act.
2. protect lands within the Known Geothermal Resource Area (KGRA).
3. protect lands for aggregate resource production as identified in the Aggregate Resources Management Plan.
4. protect natural resource lands including, but not limited to watershed, fish and wildlife habitat and biotic areas.
5. protect against intensive development of lands constrained by geologic hazards, steep slopes, poor soils or water, fire and flood prone areas, biotic and scenic areas, and other constraints.
6. protect lands needed for agricultural production activities that are not subject to all of the policies of the Agricultural Resource Element.
7. protection of County residents from proliferation of growth in areas in which there are inadequate public services and infrastructure.

It is further the intent of this category that public services and facilities not be extensively provided in these areas and that development have the minimum adverse impact on the environment.

**Permitted Uses:** Single family dwellings, resource management and enhancement activities including but not limited to the management of timber, geothermal and aggregate resources, fish and wildlife habitat, and watershed. Livestock farming, crop production, firewood harvesting and public and private schools and churches are included. Lodging, campgrounds, and similar recreational and visitor serving uses provided that they shall not be inconsistent with the purpose and intent of this category. The extent of recreational and visitor serving uses may be further established in planning area policies.

The category also allows resource related employee housing, processing facilities related to resource production as well as incidental equipment and materials storage, provided that the use is consistent with any applicable resource management plans. Geothermal uses are limited to the primary KGRA. Aggregate resource uses are limited to those consistent with the Aggregate Resources Management Plan.

**Permitted Residential Densities and Development Criteria:** Residential density ranges from 20 to 320 acres per unit as shown on the land use maps. In general the higher densities are applied in areas with relatively less constraints, better access, closer proximity to some services, and existing parcels in that range. Lower densities are generally applied in areas with more severe constraints, high sensitivity to impacts, poor access, greater distance to services and/or high resource development potential. Minimum parcel size for new parcels is 20 acres, except that clustered development may be approved with a protective easement or other restriction on the remaining large parcel which indicates that density has been transferred to the clustered area from the remaining large parcel. Standards and densities for resource related employee housing shall be established in the zoning ordinance.

Public schools must meet the minimum criteria set forth in policy LU-6e on page 38. Private schools and churches must meet the minimum criteria set forth in LU-6f on page 41.

**Designation Criteria:** Amendments to add this designation must meet one or more of the following, in addition to any applicable planning area policies:

1. lands with severe constraints such as steep slopes, areas with faults or landslides, "high" or "very high" fire hazard, marginal or unproven water availability, or limited septic capability.
2. lands with natural resources.
3. lands with vulnerability to environmental impact.
4. to add lands for geothermal power generation facilities, the following criteria must be met:
  - a. agricultural lands or other land uses will not be adversely affected.
  - b. the natural resources of the area will be protected.
  - c. adequate public services, including roads, will be available.