



Section

1

The Ukiah Valley Area Plan

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The Ukiah Valley Area Plan (UVAP) represents a commitment to a comprehensive and long range inter-jurisdictional planning document that represents the vision and foresight of the people who live and work in the Ukiah Valley. This Plan is an element of the Mendocino County General Plan governing land use and development on the unincorporated lands in the Ukiah Valley.

History

The UVAP process began in 1990 when the City of Ukiah began an extensive and spirited planning process to formulate a “Ukiah Valley General Plan and Growth Management Program.” The City process spanned five years and incorporated City and County interests via Citizen Advisory Committees. These efforts resulted in the eventual adoption of the Ukiah Valley General Plan in December 1995. The County of Mendocino took over the process in January 1996, drawing from the City’s adopted plan for the Valley.

The initial draft of the UVAP was released January 2000 and was followed by several more years of document revisions and public hearings in front of the Planning Commission and Board of



View of the City of Ukiah and surrounding area from eastern hills

Supervisors. This culminated in the June 2003, “Tentative Adoption” of the Ukiah Valley Plan and initiation of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR). Although the EIR was released in 2005, no further action was taken on it as the Board of Supervisors directed staff to redo the draft Plan and EIR to reflect numerous changes and concerns voiced from a number of Valley residents over the direction and content of the 2003 Plan.

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Note:

For additional policies that may apply, please see the County of Mendocino General Plan, adopted August 2009.

One of the many community workshops held on the Ukiah Valley Plan.

The UVAP reassessment process commenced in 2006 and included several public meetings with all elected officials and planning commissioners from both the County of Mendocino and City of Ukiah. These meetings helped shape the document and its land use choices and that were presented to the Board of Supervisors for further direction. On August 21, 2007, the Board formally selected a Preferred Land Use Alternative for study by the EIR consultant. Also studied were two other land use alternatives that represent other visions for the future development of certain parcels within the study area, as well as a policy-only alternative which would retain the existing (1982) General Plan Land Use Designations. From 2007 to 2010 staff and other consultants prepared the various studies and documentation required by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) in order to bring the project to public hearings in the spring of 2011.

1.1 The Role of an Area Plan

California law requires each City and County to adopt a comprehensive and long-term General Plan to define how the planning area will develop over the planning period. The UVAP provides the comprehensive, long term policy direction for growth and development by refining and supplementing the policies in the County General Plan to focus on issues of importance in the Ukiah Valley. Please see the County of Mendocino General Plan, adopted in 2009, for additional policies that apply to the planning area.

The UVAP is intended to meet the needs of the County, as well as shared needs of the City, by addressing the important issues that affect how the area will grow as determined by those who live and work in the Valley. To provide the legal mechanism to convert a shared vision into reality, these individual vision statements are converted to statements called goals. The aspirations become

statements of achievement called policies. The instructions for carrying out the goals and polices are called implementation measures.

Goals: Goals are broad statements that provide the blueprint for the future. Each goal establishes what the community desires to achieve over the life of the plan.

Policies: Each goal is further defined by the policies. The policies provide direction to staff, the public, and decision-making bodies as to how projects are to be reviewed or programs are to be accomplished. A policy breaks the goal into achievable segments.

Implementation measures: In order to put the plan into effect on a day to day basis, implementation measures define programs, standards, regulations, actions, and other means to review projects or carry out policy. For the most part, implementation measures are measurable standards and are time-specific, which assists jurisdictions in the budget process. The UVAP provides guidance in analyzing and acting on all private and public development and is the foundation upon which development and land use regulations are based. In turn, the regulatory program—encompassing the zoning and subdivision ordinances, other development related codes or guidelines, and the County's capital improvement program—implements the goals and policies of the UVAP and directly controls development.

The UVAP emphasizes issues and actions which the County has the ability to influence directly through its decisions, funding, or support, or indirectly through cooperative planning and action. The UVAP also provides direction on programs not directly

related to the land use development process, but which are important in achieving overall County and City objectives. For example, a coordinated comprehensive Valley-wide approach to emergency service provision safeguards health and safety, as well as enhancing governmental efficiency.

1.2 The Elements of the Ukiah Valley Area Plan

While State law requires that a General Plan contain certain elements, each addressing a specific set of issues, the UVAP focuses on issues and elements of importance to the future growth and development of the Ukiah Valley. The UVAP addresses the following topics: land use, community design, transportation, water management, health and safety, open space and conservation, historical and archaeological preservation, and parks and recreation. The policies in the Mendocino County General Plan Housing and Noise Elements will apply in the Ukiah Valley and are not addressed specifically in the UVAP. Policies in other County General Plan elements may supplement those in the UVAP, but citizens and decision makers will rely most heavily on the UVAP for guidance on issues of importance in the Ukiah Valley. The UVAP also contains the land use classifications and land use maps which apply to the Ukiah Valley.

All elements in the Mendocino County General Plan and UVAP rank in equal importance and must be internally consistent with the other elements.

If policy or implementing action is in conflict with the adopted General Plan, the policy or implementing action from the UVAP shall take precedence over the General Plan.

1.3 The Planning Areas

The Ukiah Valley is located approximately 30 miles east and inland from the Pacific Ocean. The Ukiah Valley runs north-south for about 9 miles, with a maximum width of about 3 miles. With an average elevation of about 630 feet, the hills surrounding the Valley range up to about 3,000 feet. The Russian River enters the Valley at the north end and runs south along the Valley floor. Soils are composed of fertile alluvium, and many pear orchards and vineyards flourish along the east side of the river. Residential and commercial land uses predominate on the west side of the river. The railroad right-of-way and Highway 101 also parallel the river through the Valley.

Ukiah is located within an area known as the Yokayo Rancho, one of several Spanish land grants in Alta, California. The Yokayo grant that makes up the majority of the Ukiah Valley took its name from the Pomo word meaning, “deep valley”. It was also the basis for the city name, as Ukiah was an anglicized form of Yokayo.

There are several distinct planning areas within the Ukiah Valley relevant to this plan. Please refer to Figure 1.1 for more information:

Planning Area: The area encompassed by the UVAP. The UVAP has legal land use authority over the unincorporated lands in the Planning Area governed by the Mendocino County Board of Supervisors.

City of Ukiah: Lands within the incorporated City boundaries. Lands in the City of Ukiah are governed by the Ukiah City Council.

City of Ukiah Sphere of Influence: The “ultimate probable boundaries” of the City as may be adopted by the Local Agency Formation Commission; the area which is logical for annexation to the City (as determined by the City) within approximately twenty years. The proposed sphere of influence map in Figure 1.1 is included for information and does not imply endorsement by the County. The County has land use authority within this area.

Federally Recognized Tribal Lands: These areas are considered sovereign and are not under the jurisdiction of the County of Mendocino or the City of Ukiah. Note: some parcels within the Pinoleville Rancheria and the Lands of the Yokayo Band of Indians have not been placed into Trust status. Those particular parcels are subject to the UVAP.

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California law requires that the Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) adopt a sphere of influence for each city. Any land proposed to be annexed to the City must be in the adopted sphere of influence. To date, the City has not pursued an aggressive annexation policy; however, the sphere identifies areas in which the City has determined that it can logically serve the businesses and residents. Mendocino County will continue to control land use within the sphere of influence until specific parcels are annexed by the City. It is especially important for a smooth transition that the County and City coordinate land use planning and infrastructure in the sphere of influence.

Population and housing figures for Mendocino County, the City of Ukiah, and the Ukiah Valley are shown in Table 1.1 and 1.2.

Table 1.1 - Population and Housing				
Population and Housing: 1990, 2000, and 2010				
	<i>Mendocino County</i>	<i>City of Ukiah</i>	<i>Ukiah Valley (Unincorporated Area)</i>	<i>Ukiah Valley Total</i>
Population: 1990	80,345	14,599	12,846	27,478
Population: 2000	86,265	15,497	13,463	28,960
Population: 2010	87,841	16,075	--	--
Housing Units: 1990	33,649	5,841	5,041	10,882
Housing Units: 2000	36,937	6,137	4,977	11,114
Housing Units: 2010	39,846	6,403	--	--

Table 1.2 - Population Projections: 2015 - 2030				
	2010	2020	2030	2040
Mendocino County	87,841	102,017	111,151	121,780

Source for Table 1.1 and 1.2: U.S. Bureau of the Census, April 1990, 2000, and 2010. Ukiah Valley estimate based on Census Block figures; area does not precisely correspond to Planning Area. California Department of Finance, June 2007, County Population Projections for July 2020-2040.

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Development patterns in the City of Ukiah are anticipated to generally follow historical zoning and development patterns, maintaining a north-south pattern following the major transportation corridors. The area within the City limits is approaching build-out and a relatively significant level of urban development has occurred in portions of the sphere of influence. The UVAP generally maintains the development patterns of the Valley, allowing expansion of The Forks Rural Community, and along the U.S. 101 corridor, as well as limited growth in the eastern hills.



Calpella, a community within the UVAP area.

1.4 The Planning Period

The UVAP is a policy document used to direct development over a long time period in a comprehensive manner. The life of the UVAP is twenty years. During that time, the UVAP may be updated through the adopted amendment process and procedures. Implementation of the UVAP may be carried out over a series of planning periods:

- Short-term: Years 1 - 5
- Intermediate-term: Years 6 - 10
- Long-term: Years 11- 20



City of 10,000 Buddhas in Talmage, another community within the planning area.