

# Issues & Alternatives Report

## Lake County General Plan



July 2004

Lake County

# General Plan Issues and Alternatives Report

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*submitted by*

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# Issues and Alternatives Report

## Document Overview

In 2002, Lake County began an update to its General Plan. As designed, the General Plan will address the following topic areas:

- Demographics and Fiscal Conditions
- Land Use
- Housing
- Public Facilities and Services
- Transportation and Circulation
- Health and Safety
- Noise
- Open Space, Conservation, and Recreation
- Clear Lake
- Geothermal

To gain a better understanding of the planning needs in the County, the General Plan team met with individuals and groups from throughout the County to discuss Lake County's future. This included input from:

- Public workshops held in Lucerne, Middletown, and Kelseyville
- Interviews with Board of Supervisor and Planning Commission members
- Interviews with key County staff
- Six workshops held with the Citizens Advisory Committee

These interviews and workshops helped identify a broad range of opportunities and issues to be addressed in the update to the General Plan. While all input will be used in the formulation of the General Plan, nine key issue areas were identified based on the input received. These nine key issue areas are used in this report to frame critical policy choices and to present alternatives to address these issues. The nine key issues are:

- A. Clear Lake
- B. Quality of Life
- C. Jobs/ Economic Development
- D. Water Resources
- E. Traffic
- F. Natural Resources
- G. Agriculture

- H. Tourism
- I. Land Use

Response options were generated with input from the public, the Citizens Advisory Committee, and County staff. Not all of the response options are feasible and some may be mutually exclusive, however, they are included in the Alternatives Report to generate discussion. Final recommendations from the consultant and the Citizens Advisory Committee are identified by a check mark (✓) next to the option in this report. Additional recommendations from the consultants and County staff are identified by a star (★).

## General Plan Overview

One objective in updating the Lake County General Plan is to make the plan user-friendly. To accomplish this objective, the General Plan has been divided into several documents that clearly distinguish different types of information. As a result, the plan's goals and policies can be easily referenced, while detailed background and environmental information is also easy to find and use. The core documents of the General Plan – the Goals and Policies Report, Background Report, and Environmental Impact Report – use the same numbering system so that readers can easily find corresponding discussions in each of the reports. For example, if someone wanted information on biological resources that exist in the County today, they can turn to Section 9.4 of the Background Report. If they want to know the County's policies related to biological resources, they can refer to Section 9.4 in the Goals and Policies Report.

The following is a summary of the component documents that comprise the Lake County General Plan. The documents marked with a link symbol (§) are linked to each other by using the same internal organization and numbering system described above.

**General Plan Summary.** This document provides an overview of the General Plan and its component documents. It describes the Planning Area, summarizes the General Plan's goals and policies, provides an overview of existing conditions, summarizes the issues raised during the preparation of the General Plan, and identifies the environmental impacts associated with the General Plan.

§ **Background Report.** This report provides a detailed description of the conditions that existed within the Planning Area prior to adoption of the General Plan.

**Issues and Alternatives Report.** This report discusses the major planning issues facing the County and alternative approaches to address these issues. The report distills the input of the public, advisory committees, members of the Lake County Board of Supervisors and Planning Commission, and County staff.

§ **Goals and Policies Report.** This report is the essence of the General Plan. It contains the goals and policies that will guide future development within the County. It also identifies a full set of implementation measures that will ensure the policies of the Plan are carried out.

§ **Environmental Impact Report.** The environmental impact report (EIR) prepared for the General Plan will meet the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors will use the EIR during the process of considering the draft General Plan in order to understand the potential environmental implications associated with implementation of the General Plan update.

## Report Organization

The remainder of this document is organized around the nine key issue areas. For each issue, the following information is presented.

- **Background.** Information on existing conditions is summarized for each issue in order to provide the reader with some general background on the issue. Additional details on existing conditions can be found in the Background Report.
- **Key Questions.** Working with the Citizen's Advisory Committee, a set of key questions was developed for each issue. These questions help define the issue or they relate to Lake County.
- **Possible General Plan Responses to Key Questions.** This section lists some potential General Plan responses for each key question. Following the list of potential responses, the report provides information on policies found in the current General Plan as well as recommendations and programs made in other County plans and programs (e.g., Economic Development Strategic Marketing Plan). A discussion of the implications of each response option is then provided.

For some issues, the responses presented may be mutually exclusive (i.e., one selection makes the other choices infeasible). For others, two or more of the responses listed (or even all of the responses listed) could be selected.

## A. Clear Lake

### BACKGROUND

Clear Lake, the largest, natural freshwater lake entirely in California, is the County's biggest tourist attraction. With over 43,000 surface acres and 62 public access points, including 11 boat ramps, Clear Lake offers a range of recreational opportunities, including fishing, motorboating, sailing, swimming, para-sailing, and waterskiing. Several businesses around Clear Lake rent fishing boats, ski boats, personal watercraft, kayaks, pedal boats, and rowboats. There are also a number of County parks around Clear Lake and two state parks. Activities in these parks include hiking, bicycling, and geologic interest areas.

The Clear Lake viewshed provides awe-inspiring vistas from and around the lake and is an additional attraction to hikers, road travelers, and boaters. Mount Konocti, which rises to an elevation of 4,300 feet, provides a key visual reference from the lake and also dramatic views of the lake and other surrounding mountains.

### KEY QUESTIONS

The following key questions have been posed regarding the protection of Clear Lake.

- 1. Clear Lake Management Quality.** How can the management and quality of Clear Lake as a natural resource and economic tool be maintained and improved?
- 2. Clear Lake Water Rights and Management.** Should the County obtain water rights from the Yolo County Flood Control and Water Conservation District to increase local control over Clear Lake water and shore line access?
- 3. Recreation/Tourism.** What can be done to increase recreation and tourism associated with Clear Lake?
- 4. Viewsheds.** How can the Clear Lake viewshed (vistas from and around Clear Lake) be enhanced and preserved?

## POSSIBLE GENERAL PLAN RESPONSES TO KEY QUESTIONS

### 1. Clear Lake Management Quality - Response Options

- ✓ 1.a. Continue to support the Resource Management Committee.
- ✓ 1.b. Expand policies or programs that guide or limit urbanization along Clear Lake's shoreline to preserve and enhance the natural environment.
- ✓ 1.c. Establish policies and programs to reduce pollution, erosion, and exotic plant intrusion.
- ✓ 1.d. Establish policies and programs aimed at eliminating urban blight around Clear Lake.
- ★ 1.e. Adopt a Clear Lake Basin Management Plan.

#### **Relationship of Response Options to Existing Plans and Programs**

The current General Plan does not contain any policies addressing Option 1.a. However, the General Plan should contain a policy calling for the County's continued support of the Resource Management Committee and defining their role relative to this issue. The General Plan does contain policies and implementation measures that address Option 1.b. For example, the General Plan states that Resource Conservation overlay zones with specific development regulations should be established in critical habitat areas. As a result of this General Plan policy, Lake County has created combining districts that are addressed in the Zoning Ordinance. In regards to Option 1.c., the County is planning on adopting the Clear Lake Integrated Aquatic Plant Management Plan in early 2005, which addresses issues related to pollution, erosion, and exotic plant intrusion. The Lake County Grading Ordinance and the Lake County Stormwater Management Plan both address erosion and pollution of Clear Lake. The Lake County Economic Development Strategic Marketing Plan (EDSMP) also contains a recommendation for continued clean-up efforts to reduce exotic plant intrusion. These recommendations should be incorporated as policies into the General Plan with implementation measures added to enhance implementation. In regards to Option 1.d., there are four redevelopment project areas (Upper Lake, Glenhaven/Clearlake Oaks, Lucerne, and Nice) that exist along the lake with goals for eliminating or mitigating blighted conditions or factors that contribute to blight around Clear Lake. Recommendations found in these plans pertaining to urban blight should be incorporated as policies in the General Plan. The General Plan can also be used to frame the overall objectives for the redevelopment areas and better describe how these activities support the overall fabric of the

local communities and the County. Option 1.e. would adopt a Clear Lake Basin Management Plan, which is in preparation, but has not been completed yet. Issues that this plan could cover include water reuse options as a Clear Lake management tool, preservation of animal and plant habitats along the lake, and protecting viewshed along the lake.

## **Implications of Each Response Option**

The management of Clear Lake as a natural and economic resource is critical for the County. Option 1.a. would strengthen the existing public-based approach to address the issues facing the lake. Option 1.b. would specifically focus on the shoreline of the lake as a means of protecting its quality and resource viability. This could be accomplished through special shore districts for recreation, redevelopment, and/or habitat preservation. Option 1.c. would set specific standards within the General Plan to address the ecological issues the lake is facing. This option emphasizes preserving the environment of Clear Lake as a natural resource, focusing on maintaining the lake's natural ecosystems and limiting human impacts such as development and pollution. Option 1.d. would focus on further reducing the existing urban blight in communities around the lake to increase its viability as a tourism/recreation resource and enhance the overall visual appeal of Clear Lake. This could be accomplished through joint city/county programs to focus on redeveloping shoreline property or returning severely dilapidated sites to their pre-development environment. Option 1.e. would promote adoption of a Clear Lake Basin Management Plan, which would cover many issues and concerns that are centered around the management of Clear Lake.

## **2. Clear Lake Water Rights and Management - Response Options**

- 2.a Continue with the current water management system.
- ✓ 2.b. Investigate water supply options.
- ✓ 2.c. As needed, secure additional water rights from the Yolo County Flood Control and Water Conservation District for use in Lake County.
- ✓ 2.d. Create a County Water Use Committee to help address Clear Lake management issues.
- ★ 2.e. Protect existing rights to Clear Lake waters.

**Relationship of Response Options to Existing Plans and Programs**

General Plan policies address Option 2.b. by encouraging the development of additional water sources through the expansion of water storage reservoirs, increased utilization of Clear Lake, and promotion of water conservation programs. General Plan policies also address Option 2.c. by encouraging discussion between the water agencies of Lake County and Yolo County to promote development of joint water projects and other efforts to expand water supply. However, there are no specific policies regarding obtaining water rights from the Yolo County Flood Control and Water Conservation District. There are no County plans or programs that address Options 2.a or 2.d. Option 2.e. addresses the existing water rights to Clear Lake waters. Currently, the County itself does not have water rights to Clear Lake, but a number of water districts that supply water to County residents do, hold water rights. Policy should be added to help protect these water rights for the benefit of County residents.

**Implications of Each Response Option**

Despite being located in Lake County, Clear Lake’s water is owned and sold to those within the County by the Yolo County Flood Control and Water Conservation District. Option 2.a. would continue with the current water management system and purchase water from the Yolo County Flood Control and Water Conservation District as needed. Option 2.b. would be an investigation into the County’s options for additional water supply sources. This could include water “banking;” additional wells; or river, stream, or lake waters. Option 2.c. would be to obtain additional Clear Lake water rights. This choice would likely be controversial and costly to Lake County. Option 1.d. would be to establish a committee to oversee water use in the County and act as a lobby to gain more access to Clear Lake’s water. Option 2.e. would protect the existing water rights that the local water districts have.

**3. Recreation/Tourism – Response Options**

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*See Section H,  
Tourism, for  
additional tourism  
options that apply to  
the County as a  
whole.*

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- ✓ 3.a. Work with cities to expand public access to the lake.
- ✓ 3.b. Work with cities to increase recreation and tourism activities.
- ✓ 3.c. Expand transportation services to improve access to recreation activities and tourism in the County.
- ✓ 3.d. Expand and enhance countywide efforts and funds to promote Clear Lake and the County.
- ✓ 3.e. Focus on developing the Northshore of Clear Lake for tourism.

## **Relationship of Response Options to Existing Plans and Programs**

The General Plan addresses Option 3.a. to some extent by calling for the maximization of opportunities for Clear Lake access through the preservation and maintenance of publicly owned lands on the shoreline. However, the policies do not specify working with local communities and cities to achieve this. This should be indicated in the policies and implementation measures for the General Plan. There are no General Plan policies that address Options 3.b., 3.c. and 3.d. For Option 3.e., the EDSMP does contain a recommendation to develop a promenade on the northshore of Clear Lake in the community of Lucerne in order to increase tourism and recreation opportunities. This recommendation can be carried forward as a potential policy for the General Plan. In regards to Option 3.e., the Northshore Redevelopment Plan was prepared in 2001 to address this area. The plan's main focus is to eliminate blight in the Northshore area and improve the town centers; community buildings; frontage propriety; and social, cultural, and recreation opportunities in the area. Measures found in this plan should be developed into policies for the General Plan.

## **Implications of Each Response Option**

Option 3.a. would encourage a city/county joint effort to provide additional public access to the lake. This could be focused at the edge of city limits where land may exist to provide new access or as an expansion of existing access areas. To best utilize Clear Lake's recreational and tourism resources, Option 3.b. would place an emphasis on cities of Lakeport and Clearlake. Joint city/county efforts to increase Clear Lake's tourism could include pooling of resources and maintaining natural areas of the lake free from urban encroachment. Option 3.c. would focus on transportation to Clear Lake as a means to bolster the existing recreational activities by providing access for all residents to the Lake. This option could be accomplished through new public transit options or take the form of water related transit/recreation. Option 3.d. would bring state, federal, county, city, and private groups together who rely on tourism and recreation around the lake to develop a means of effectively publicizing Clear Lake as a recreational/tourist attraction. This option would combine various separate interests to ensure all features of the lake are promoted. Additionally, this option can create boat launch fees to generate funds for the promotion of Clear Lake and the County. For Option 3.e., the General Plan needs to provide a policy framework that supports existing redevelopment efforts.

## 4. Viewsheds and Visual Quality – Response Options

- ✓ 4.a Establish policies and guidelines for protecting the entire Clear Lake viewshed.
- ✓ 4.b Establish polices and programs to protect and provide scenic access to wetland areas around Clear Lake.

### **Relationship of Response Options to Existing Plans and Programs**

The current General Plan contains policies that address Option 4.a. For example, the General Plan states that development regulations should prevent further blockage of lake views from shoreline roadways and restore viewsheds from roadways. There is no General Plan policy that addresses Option 4.b.

### **Implications of Each Response Option**

The Clear Lake viewshed is key to the natural appeal of Clear Lake and the way in which these resources are utilized can have a major impact on the overall appeal of Clear Lake. Option 4.a. would establish policies to protect the entire Clear Lake viewshed. This option could provide general policies and programs around the entire lake that limit development in vista areas, expand/protect views from roadways , or provide new vista points. In the General Plan Update, the focus would be providing a higher level of detail on how views can be protected. Option 4.b. would identify and place an emphasis on wetlands as an interest point. This option could involve the use of paths and scenic vista points in and around wetlands for public use.

## B. Quality of Life

### BACKGROUND

Lake County is home to two incorporated cities, Clearlake and Lakeport, and 18 unincorporated communities, each with its own unique qualities. Each community is located in one of eight community planning areas. The County currently has a community plan for each of these eight areas, including a few that are currently under revision. Within each community plan are policies and programs that are geared toward enhancing the unique qualities of each area. These policies and programs are adopted to provide the citizens of those areas with opportunities to enjoy the quality of life they expect (e.g., employment opportunities, affordable/adequate housing, access to infrastructure, community identity).

The settings and lifestyles of these communities are distinct from one another. Several of the communities are located near Clear Lake or other smaller lakes in the County. The proximity to the lakes helps to define their community identity and character. Other communities, located in the mountainous terrain of the western part of the County, are focused on resort-residential developments. A number of communities are located in the rich valleys and are focused around agriculture.

In spite of these basic differences, all of Lake County's unincorporated communities can be characterized by their "small-town" atmosphere. The character and identity of these communities can, however, be further enhanced. Care must be taken with future development in these communities, if not planned properly, can also threaten rather than enhance, the character and identity of these communities, therefore diminishing their overall quality of life.

### KEY QUESTIONS

The following key questions have been posed regarding the quality of life.

1. **Community Identity.** How can the County maintain unique community identities of each community?
2. **New Development.** How can the County ensure that communities are not overbuilt?

## POSSIBLE GENERAL PLAN RESPONSES TO KEY QUESTIONS

### 1. Community Identity - Response Options

- ✓ 1.a. Establish an identification program to enhance community image.
- 1.b. Establish and maintain community “Quality of Life” commissions in each community plan area to report issues to the Board of Supervisors.
- ✓ 1.c. Enhance the property maintenance ordinance to address abandoned buildings.
- ✓ 1.d. Use recreational activities and festivals to bolster community pride and identification.
- ✓ 1.e. Provide the ability to establish unique design themes for development within the communities.

#### **Relationship of Response Options to Existing Plans and Programs**

The General Plan contains policies that cover some of the items related to community identity by requiring services to meet public needs for education, recreation, cultural entertainment, protection of public safety and health, and civic pride. The policies state that the physical, mental, social, and material well being of a community is largely influenced by the availability of high quality schools, cultural facilities, recreation, fire protection and law enforcement services, public utilities, and other community services. The General Plan policies do not specifically address alternative options for maintaining community identity.

Several recommendations in the EDSMP address Option 1.a. by suggesting new and revised signage for unincorporated communities and cities. Option 1.b. is currently being accomplished through the business councils in the County. The EDSMP also addresses Option 1.c. by recommending funding and programs for property abatement, revitalization, and cleanup. The County has hired additional code enforcement officers to aid in this effort. Finally, the EDSMP specifically recommends a funding program that could facilitate Option 1.d. through an event grant program geared specifically toward community/County festivals and expositions. There are no County policies or programs that address Options 1.d. or 1.e.

#### **Implications of Each Response Option**

To strengthen community identities, the County can act as a catalyst to maintain and encourage higher quality of life standards. Option 1.a.

would utilize an advertising approach to improve the perception and identification of Lake County communities. Television, newspaper, and website advertisements could also be used to promote the identities of each community. Option 1.b. would provide community residents an opportunity to address issues affecting the community's image and report them to their County representatives for assistance. A "Quality of Life" commission could provide each community a forum to discuss issues and solutions to improve their quality of life. This would also encourage ongoing community involvement and self-help. In Option 1.c., the County could use current code enforcement standards and develop expanded standards, such as a property maintenance ordinance, to address noncompliant or unsafe structures and uses. This could increase the safety and aesthetic value of communities. Option 1.d. would showcase the unique qualities of each community in festivals or activities. An example of this would be a County publicized community festival (such as a farmers' market) each weekend during the spring and summer that would rotate to different locations within the County. Finally, for Option 1.e., the requirement to develop community specific design themes could be an option or requirement of future community plans. The General Plan could be used to provide basic design features to be covered by these design themes.

## **2. New Development - Response Options**

- ✓ 2.a. Adopt policies and guidelines for new expansion and infill ("smart growth" polices).
- ✓ 2.b. Encourage consolidation of paper parcels/subdivisions into developable lots. The County should take a more active role in this conversion.
- ✓ 2.c. Identify target growth areas in the General Plan.

### **Relationship of Response Options to Existing Plans and Programs**

The General Plan contains policies that partially address Option 2.c. by providing guidelines for the location and intensity of residential, commercial, industrial, and resort development, but the County does not actually target areas for growth.

### **Implications of Each Response Option**

The future growth of Lake County has a direct impact on the quality of life within existing communities. Certain growth policies can be used to direct growth and enhance the quality of life. Smart Growth principles

are covered under Key Issues I, "Land Use", located at the end of this document. Option 2.b. would entail the clean up of existing paper subdivisions in Lake County so that these areas do not contribute to "leapfrog" development or incompatible uses. This option would use the County's Redevelopment Agency in key areas where consolidation would promote their goals. Under this option, the county would also work with property owners to consolidate paper parcels and subdivisions during project applications. An option discussed, but not recommended, would be to implement a mandatory consolidation ordinance. Like urban growth boundaries, Option 2.c. would involve identifying areas for growth and only allow growth to occur in those predetermined areas. The areas would be chosen based on specific land use criteria that identify them as suitable areas for development. Area Plans would need to implement this feature with appropriate and consistent land use designations.

## C. Jobs/ Economic Development

### BACKGROUND

The economic development of Lake County is directly responsible for the availability of steady well-paying jobs. Lake County currently utilizes its natural resources to promote tourism as its main source of employment. However, this industry by nature provides mostly seasonal employment for local residents. Other areas of employment include agricultural-related and industrial jobs, and many agricultural jobs are also seasonal in nature. However, these jobs are not as plentiful as jobs in the tourism industry. Yet opportunities to expand employment opportunities based on existing activities in the County, such as its growing local wine industry, do exist.

### KEY QUESTIONS

The following are key questions related to job creation and development.

1. **Jobs.** What type of employment should Lake County encourage?
2. **Employment Development.** How can year-round employment centers be encouraged and developed?
3. **Infrastructure/Employment.** How can infrastructure be used to encourage the development of more jobs?
4. **Workforce Development.** How can the County increase workforce development?
5. **Small Business Development.** What actions can the County take to encourage small business development?

### POSSIBLE GENERAL PLAN RESPONSES TO KEY QUESTIONS

#### 1. Jobs - Response Options

- ✓ 1.a. Focus on economic development on the following:
  - Value-added agricultural industries,
  - Commercial, recreation, tourism,
  - Light industrial development,

- Office development (e.g., medical) and,
  - Information based industries.
- ✓ 1.b. Further explore geothermal development options.

### **Relationship of Response Options to Existing Plans and Programs**

The General Plan addresses Options 1.a. by requiring the County to diversify the economic base through taking advantage of local resources such as geothermal energy and encouraging the formation of small businesses and light industrial enterprises. The General Plan also calls for expansion of commercial and recreation resort activities, protection and expansion of agriculture and forestry industries, and an increase in local processing of raw materials. The EDSMP addresses Options 1.a. by specifically recommending that the hotel/resort, golf course, attraction, winery, and commercial promenades be the focus of economic growth. Regarding Option 1.b., the County is currently in the process of updating the Geothermal Element of the General Plan.

### **Implications of Each Response Option**

The types of industries that the County chooses to focus its resources on developing have an impact on the existing residents as well as the future growth of the County. The above-mentioned options would focus County energy into a particular industry while allowing other employment sectors to be market driven. For Option 1.a., the County would focus on preserving its agricultural industry, by providing assistance in crop identification and conservation to meet current and future market economies, and developing/promoting value-added industries that work with the raw crops produced (e.g. wineries to tie in with vineyard production). This option would further develop and refine the commercial/recreation tourist industry. Office-type development, industrial development, and information-based industries would also be encouraged by Option 1.a. These industries generally provide higher paying jobs than tourism and provide year-round employment. The County would use economic incentives and remove government constraints to attract the specific employment sectors. Option 1.b. would take advantage of a unique natural resource in the County. This option would attract power companies such as PG&E and SMUD to the area to build geothermal power plants and take advantage of the counties renewable geothermal resource.

## 2. Employment Development - Response Options

- ✓ 2.a. Designate sites for specific types of industries (i.e., commercial, tourism, office space, industrial) that are found to be lacking available land to meet their needs.
- ✓ 2.b. Target, market, and develop industries based on existing workforce demographics (i.e., education level, skills). Also see Item 4 “Work Force Development” latter in this section.
- ✓ 2.c. Strengthen business reinvestment.
- ✓ 2.d. Promote year round employment in addition to seasonal work.

### **Relationship of Response Options to Existing Plans and Programs**

The EDSMP specifically makes recommendations that could facilitate Options 2.a. and 2.c. through property inventory programs. In addition, the EDSMP suggests that the County create a unified vision, partnership, outreach program and a “Spirit of Entrepreneurs” program that could be applied to Option 2.c. Options 2.b. and 2.d. are not addressed by other plans/programs.

### **Implications of Each Response Option**

Employment development differs from typical industry/jobs development in that it uses land use and demographic information in deciding where different types of development should occur. In Lake County, the social, demographic, and existing land uses can be catalogued and used to determine the most suitable types of jobs for each area. In Option 2.a., an evaluation of existing land uses and industries would be used to identify those that need additional land to facilitate growth and provide new jobs. Depending on the location and existing infrastructure, land use choices could facilitate the development of certain employment opportunities. For instance, making sure appropriate land is available near the airport for future opportunities. Option 2.b. focuses on existing employment development demographics, such as education levels and job experience of the population in an area, to determine what industries should be encouraged. Option 2.c. utilizes reinvestment strategies in struggling industries/businesses to promote new investment. This could be accomplished through redevelopment programs that focus on business area development or joint city/County efforts to strengthen businesses in struggling geographic or employment sectors of the County. Finally, Option 2.d. is describing a desired end point. The proper identification of land, addressing the need for

education beyond high school (college or trade school), tacking advantage of secondary industries, and so forth.

### **3. Infrastructure/Employment - Response Options**

- ✓ 3.a. Prioritize infrastructure to serve industrial and commercial industries.
- ✓ 3.b. Work with providers to expand telecommunication services (i.e., fiber optics, DSL, Cable, wireless service).
- ✓ 3.c. Continue to pursue funding for entrepreneurial entities.

#### **Relationship of Response Options to Existing Plans and Programs**

The EDSMP makes recommendations that could facilitate Option 3.a. through a property inventory program. These recommendations could be carried forward into the General Plan. Currently there are no plans or programs for Option 3.b. Regarding Option 3.c., the Economic Development Strategic Marketing Plan recommends that a “Spirit of Entrepreneurs” program be developed. This program could help identify additional funding sources available through federal, state, and private sources. Currently the funding available for Option 3.c. is through loan programs such as the Lake County Business Loan Program, Lake County Business Outreach Response Team, and the Lake County Commercial Facade Improvement Program.

#### **Implications of Each Response Option**

Another means of encouraging certain types of industries to locate in Lake County is to develop the infrastructure that an industry would find favorable. In Option 3.a., the County would focus on traditional infrastructure, such as roads, and water, sewer, and circulation systems to provide the facilities needed entities to address service of industrial and commercial industries. This option would identify areas that are in need of improvements or additional infrastructure and focus expansions or improvements in those locations. Option 3.b. looks to the future by developing high-speed communications systems that could provide jobs for different employee levels. This option could provide jobs to individuals working from home, corporate call centers, or technical support/development, that would be well suited to Lake County. Option 3.c. would continue to search for funding to help small business. This would add to the existing funding pool that is present in the County.

#### **4. Workforce Development - Response Options**

- ✓ 4.a. Expand vocational job training programs.

##### **Relationship of Response Options to Existing Plans and Programs**

The General Plan calls for an evaluation of the County's eligibility to use federal programs to stimulate the local economy, including job training. The EDSMP offers a similar suggestion for workforce development in its "Spirit of Entrepreneurs" program, which recommends courses/counseling to foster small business growth.

##### **Implications of Each Response Option**

Workforce development is a tool that bolsters the County's existing workforce to meet the demands of current and potential industries and provides residents with opportunities to advance in their jobs. Option 4.a. would expand vocational job training programs by developing a comprehensive industry and jobs training plan that the County would implement. This option would move the County to become actively involved in the development of course work in high schools, community college and/or trade schools. By investing in people, industries in the area can expand to fill new markets.

#### **5. Small Business Development - Response Options**

- ✓ 5.a. Provide technical assistance to small business owners and employees through classes and assistance in the areas of business management, marketing, and legal assistance.
- ✓ 5.b. Provide low interest loans for small business development and expansion. Funding sources for this can be through Federal, State and Local governments as well as grant funds, support from non-profit organization and local banks.

##### **Relationship of Response Options to Existing Plans and Programs**

The General Plan does not contain any policies addressing Options 5.a. and 5.b. In regards to Option 5.a., the EDSMP recommends that a business/entrepreneur program be developed. This program will help small business with market research, technical assistance and coaching on a long-term basis. Although there have been some efforts made to provide assistance through CDS and Lake County Business Outreach and Response Team (BORT) through various grants, a stronger assistance

policy could be incorporated into the General Plan. In regards to Option 5.b., BORT provides a number of services that help small businesses including loan funds with flexible rates and terms. Both of these funding plans are over-taxed due to the fact that the Small Business Development Center in the County has closed down.

### **Implications of Each Response Option**

In order to encourage small business to develop and expand in the area, the County needs to meet the needs of small business owners and employees. Option 5.a. is one way to help small businesses. Services that can be provided would be developed and carried out on a County level. Funding small businesses (Option 5.b.) would also be facilitated through the County even though the funding might come from different sources. Such assistance could include grant writing assistance, application assistance, and expanding the County's funds available through additional federal, state and private funding sources.

## D. Water Resources

### BACKGROUND

Domestic water supply in Lake County is derived from surface and groundwater resources close to service areas. For drinking water, the largest single water source in the County is Clear Lake. Groundwater is the second most common source. In addition, a handful of systems rely on creeks and streams. Groundwater is used extensively for agricultural operations and some industrial uses.

Lake County has 95 water distribution systems registered with the State Health Agency that serve approximately 56,250 persons. For the most part, many of the County's distribution systems were constructed prior to today's higher standards. As a result, these systems tend to suffer from higher maintenance and repair demands.

In general, groundwater quality in the County is good to excellent (Lake County 1997). Groundwater quality, however, is a function of a variety of factors, including the quality of water recharged to the aquifer, aquifer chemical properties, and specific natural or human-caused waste inputs (e.g., fertilizer and pesticide applications from agricultural activities, septic system leachate, or specific waste disposal areas such as landfills, abandoned landfills, or illegal dumping). Studies conducted for the Big Valley note that the groundwater differs from other areas in the County, with Big Valley having more magnesium than calcium relative to the bicarbonate content (Lake County Flood Control and Water Conservation District 1999). Big Valley also occasionally has localized problems with geothermal features that contribute high levels of iron and boron, particularly during the late fall, when groundwater levels are at their lowest.

### KEY QUESTIONS

The following key questions have been posed regarding water distribution and groundwater supply and quality.

- 1. Community Water Systems.** How can community water systems be updated to meet current standards?
- 2. Water Conservation/Reuse.** What policies can the County enforce and/or encourage promoting water conservation and reuse?

- 3. Water Quality and Supply.** What can the County do to improve the quality and availability of groundwater?

## **POSSIBLE GENERAL PLAN RESPONSES TO KEY QUESTIONS**

### **1. Community Water Systems - Response Options**

- 1.a. Continue with current standards for water systems, making repairs as the need arises.
- ✓ 1.b. Develop a water system master plan to update the existing water systems and plan future development.
- ✓ 1.c. Facilitate a water providers' coalition to discuss options and issues.

#### **Relationship of Response Options to Existing Plans and Programs**

The General Plan partially addresses Options 1.a. and 1.b. by providing guidelines for the proper routing and distribution of waterlines to ensure adequate water infrastructure is provided to new development. The General Plan recommends the preparation of a water master plan, which has not been implemented.

The General Plan also contains policies that address parts of Option 1.b. by encouraging the County to facilitate discussion between the water agencies of Lake County and Yolo County to promote development of joint water projects and other efforts to expand water supply. There are no plans or programs related to Option 1.c.

#### **Implications of Each Response Option**

Water systems, if planned wisely, can greatly improve the efficiency and use of water for a jurisdiction. Lake County's dated water systems continue to be an issue for the distribution and monitoring of water sources. Option 1.a. would continue to use the County's system, which would require high maintenance costs to keep water systems operational. Option 1.b. would take the next step toward updating the water system with necessary improvements by establishing a water district plan. Option 1.c. would facilitate a coalition where water providers can work together to solve issues regarding maintenance of the community water system and designated boundaries for each district. Option 1.c. would encourage water districts to share resources, and the County would be involved to ensure service issues are addressed.

## 2. Water Conservation / Reuse - Response Options

- ✓ 2.a. Promote/facilitate using reclaimed wastewater for agricultural irrigation.
- ✓ 2.b. Promote technology for efficient water use in agriculture.
- ✓ 2.c. Establish an aquifer recharge program.

### **Relationship of Response Options to Existing Plans and Programs**

The General Plan contains policies addressing Options 2.a. through 2.c. through recommendations for the preparation of a water master plan with strategies for water conservation and reuse. The General Plan contains policies addressing Option 2.a. by encouraging the County to pursue opportunities to expand the use of reclaimed wastewater for irrigation of agricultural lands. The General Plan also addresses The General Plan should also address the Basin 2020 plan. Option 2.c. through its recommendations for the location, standards, and feasibility of groundwater recharge areas. The General Plan also contains policies requiring the County to take into account the predominant land use in proposed developments to ensure that it allows for the continued recharge of the groundwater basin.

### **Implications of Each Response Option**

Water conservation and wastewater reuse are both strategies to mitigate the issue of water resources. Under Option 2.a., the County could reclaim agricultural wastewaters/runoff for reuse. This could utilize additional flows not dedicated to steam generation or new flows related to “pocket” treatment plants. Option 2.b. would focus on conserving the amount of water used by agricultural industries by encouraging the use of farming techniques and tools that decrease wastewater, such as drip irrigation. Option 2.c., would establish an aquifer recharge to maximize recharge and assumes recharge is done in the most effective manner.

## 3. Water Quality and Supply - Response Options

- ✓ 3.a. Identify alternative sources of water.
- ✓ 3.b. Support better management of water use and water quality in existing communities.
- ✓ 3.c. Develop a Groundwater Plan and a ground water assessment system for Lake County.

### **Relationship of Response Options to Existing Plans and Programs**

The General Plan contains a policy addressing Option 3.a. by encouraging the County to develop additional water sources through the expansion of water storage reservoirs, increased utilization of Clear Lake, and promotion of water conservation programs. Currently the County has no plans or programs that address Options 3.b. or 3.c.

### **Implications of Each Response Option**

The quality of groundwater is very important in Lake County since it is a primary source of water in the County. The first option (3.a.) would identify alternative sources of clean water, other than Clear Lake and existing groundwater. For instance, can the numerous lakes, rivers, and streams throughout the County be utilized for additional sources of water? Option 3.b. would focus County efforts on a community level. Possible responses include better aligning water district boundaries with the communities they serve (avoid splitting communities or not serving portions of a community). Option 3.c. would create a Groundwater Plan and a ground water assessment system for Lake County. In doing this, questions regarding water quality and supply would be answered. A long-term plan for managing ground water resources in the future would be developed by this option.

## E. Traffic

### BACKGROUND

Five state highways or state routes (SR) are located wholly or partially in Lake County: SR 20, SR 29, SR 53, SR 175, and SR 281. SR 20 is a major thoroughfare in the County, running through several communities, including Blue Lakes, Upper Lake, Nice, Lucerne, Glenhaven, and Clearlake Oaks. SR 29, which has a higher vehicle count than SR 20, provides access from the south. SR 53, in addition to SR 29, are the most traveled highways in the County. All of these highways consist of two lanes, with the exception of a portion of SR 53 in Lower Lake and a portion of SR 29 in Lakeport that are four lanes.

Lake Transit runs six fixed routes within Lake County:

- Route 1 provides service between Lakeport and Clearlake.
- Route 2 provides services between Clearlake and communities in the south.
- Route 3 runs between Clearlake and St. Helena Hospital in Angwin.
- Route 4 provides service between Clearlake and Lakeport along State Route 29.
- Route 5 provides local service within the city of Clearlake.
- Route 6 also provides local service within the city of Clearlake and the community of Lower Lake.

In addition to the fixed route services, Lake Transit provides dial-a-ride service in the cities of Lakeport and Clearlake and the communities of Lucerne, Nice, Upper Lake, Glen Haven, Clearlake Oaks, Lower Lake, North Lakeport, Kelseyville, Middletown, Twin Lakes, Hidden Valley, Cobb, Loch Lomond, Buckingham, Soda Bay, Riviera West and Clearlake Riviera.

These roadways and public transit routes remain the key elements for transportation within the County. As the County's population continues to increase, improvements will be necessary for both roadways and the public transit system in order to meet future transportation demands.

## KEY QUESTIONS

The following key questions address issues pertaining to the County's roadway network and the public transit system.

- 1. Roadway Development and Maintenance.** What measures should the County consider to alleviate traffic congestion and ensure a safe transportation system?
- 2. Public Transportation.** How could public transportation services be expanded in the County?

## POSSIBLE GENERAL PLAN RESPONSES TO KEY QUESTIONS

### 1. Roadway Development and Maintenance - Response Options

- ✓ 1.a. Define communities, locations, and circumstances where thru traffic bypasses and diversions would be appropriate. An example would be diverting truck traffic from scenic highways.
- ★ 1.b. Improve on methods for identifying poor road conditions (e.g., pavement conditions) and incorporate recommendations into the Lake County Pavement Management System (PMS) and the Lake County Road Needs Study.
- ✓ 1.c. Provide for development fees or Community Service Areas to provide for long-term maintenance of new or existing roadways.

### Relationship of Response Options to Existing Plans and Programs

The current General Plan does not contain any policies that address Option 1.a. However, the Regional Transportation Plan for the Lake County Transportation Planning Agency, Fiscal Year 2002/2003 (Regional Transportation Plan) does contain a work element recommending a traffic-calming project for SR 20. The traffic-calming project is for the north shore of Clear Lake to improve pedestrian flow and access to the lake. A part of this project, the Promenade plan for Lucerne, is currently in the planning stages and involves cooperation between both the County and Caltrans. For Option 1.b., the General Plan does contain a policy stating the County should maintain the physical conditions of its roadways to be in conformance with the recommendations found in the

Regional Transportation Plan. Roadway maintenance is covered in the Lake County Pavement Management System and Lake County Road Needs Study. Depending on the specific jurisdiction, roadways in the County are maintained by Caltrans, the U.S. Forest Service, the Bureau of Land Management, or the County Public Works Department. Within the County, funding for maintenance has not kept pace with the needs of a large system. New developments, even small tracts, are often required to maintain their own roadway system. No programs or plans exist to create improved methods for identifying poor road conditions.

### **Implications of Each Response Option**

The County relies heavily upon its roadways for the movement of goods and people. Therefore, creative methods for improving the County's roadway system are very important. Option 1.a. looks at where existing truck traffic can be diverted. This option provides an improvement in traffic congestion for existing communities by diverting much of the truck traffic from these areas. However, this option could result in increased traffic for other roadways in the County. Option 1.b. involves creating new methods for identifying poor road conditions. This option would incorporate these new methods into the already existing County plans. Improved methods would most likely identify new areas for maintenance that are currently not identified. Option 1.c. identifies the need for long-term funding of road maintenance. The General Plan also needs to evaluate sustainable methods for roadway maintenance related to new development.

## **2. Public Transportation - Response Options**

- ✓ 2.a. Expand public transportation services in areas that are currently deficient.
- ✓ 2.b. Continue to work with state and federal agencies to identify and apply for available public transportation grants in order to expand public transportation.

### **Relationship of Response Options to Existing Plans and Programs**

The current General Plan contains a policy pertaining to Option 2.a, which recommends that the County cooperate with the Lake County/City Area Planning Council in studying transit needs and developing an implementation program for public transit services. The General Plan does not contain policies addressing Option 2.b. The Regional Transportation Plan does contain a work program that applies to Option 2.b. The work program calls for the evaluation of transit needs

and for the application for funding available from various agencies. A policy could be added to the General Plan that implements these programs.

### **Implications of Each Response Option**

As the County's population continues to increase, the demand for alternative modes of transportation becomes more crucial. Option 2.a. considers the expansion of public transit in areas where service is currently deficient and where demand is growing. For example, the City of Lakeport needs bus service on more frequent intervals, which is provided by Lake Transit a County operated service. Option 2.b. promotes the pursuit of funding for expansion of public transportation services. The additional funding would support the development of more transit service, which will in turn relieve traffic congestion. The General Plan needs to identify service areas and highlight areas with deficiencies. New transit capabilities that support transportation to employment locations and service centers (like the hospitals) should be given top priority for County support.

## F. Natural Resources

### BACKGROUND

Lake County contains a variety of natural habitats and a network of wildlife corridors connecting these areas. These corridors provide the opportunity for plants and animals to survive in a specific area without being threatened by urban development. About 48 percent of the land in the County is open space that contains wildlife corridors, with the majority of this land managed by federal agencies. Some of the major open space areas include Boggs Lake Preserve, Cow Mountain Recreation Area (containing about 10,000 acres of BLM land), Mendocino National Forest, Snow Mountain, and Cache Creek (which is managed by BLM for tule elk and bald eagles and encompasses 80,000 acres).

The California Natural Diversity Data Base (CNDDDB) lists 81 of California's approximately 1,843 listed species as occurring in Lake County. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service lists 96 potential species as occurring in Lake County. When these two lists are combined, there are 108 listed species for Lake County (CNDDDB, 2002 and USFWS, 2002). In addition to listed species, Lake County has 11 of the approximately 150 unique and sensitive habitats in the state.

Both listed species and the unique sensitive wildlife habitats (i.e., native vegetation) in Lake County are threatened due to human-made and natural occurrences, mainly encroaching development and the ongoing threat of wildfires due to the dry summer conditions in the area. It is important to preserve existing wildlife corridors and other existing open space areas in the County.

### KEY QUESTIONS

The following key questions address issues pertaining to natural resources.

- 1. Wildfire Protection/Management.** How should the County strive to protect land from wildfires?
- 2. Wildlife Corridors.** What methods should be used to preserve wildlife corridors?

## POSSIBLE GENERAL PLAN RESPONSES TO KEY QUESTIONS

### 1. Wildfire Protection/Management - Response Options

- ✓ 1.a. Work with the California Department of Forestry (CDF), US Forest Service, and the fire districts in the County to have fuel load reduction.
- ✓ 1.b. Educate the public on wildfire protection through school programs, website information, and other public avenues.
- ✓ 1.c. Require fire safe designs and locations and incorporate fire-resistant plants that are native species into new development.
- ✓ 1.d. Prepare a county-wide Fire Prevention Plan.

#### **Relationship of Response Options to Existing Plans and Programs**

The General Plan does contain a policy recommending County consultation with fire service districts in areas that are designated as having a high fire risk. This policy can include the methods listed in Option 1.a. Relevant to Option 1.b. there are two fire safe councils in the County that provide guidance in regards to fire safety. It is likely that this option will be incorporated into the Riviearas Area Plan. The General Plan contains policies that are somewhat related to Options 1.c. For example, the General Plan states that fire resistant materials should be used around residential units to reduce fire vulnerability, and a 30-foot firebreak should be maintained around all buildings in the County (CDF Regulation 4290). When fire danger is particularly severe, firebreaks should be increased to 100 feet. There is no current direction from the Board of Supervisors or any County agency on Option 1.d. No policies or plans exist regarding countywide fire prevention goals, objectives, or funding sources for a Fire Prevention Plan.

#### **Implications of Each Response Option**

Option 1.a. allows the County to have a systematic maintenance program for its wildland areas to prevent fires, which ultimately can result in the loss of property and life. Option 1.a. also reduces the need for controlled burns by reducing burnable fuels. The result of Option 1.b. is a reduction in the risk of a fire caused by local residents and an increased general awareness of fire dangers. To aid in this effort, the two fire safe councils should be supported in their efforts to educate the public. Option 1.c. is another method to reduce the risk of fires from occurring in the built environment. These options can be implemented together or

individually. As part of the General Plan, fire safe design concepts, focusing both on construction and site location/maintenance, should be included. Areas with very high fire danger potential should be limited in the types of development allowed. Option 1.d. would develop a countywide Fire Prevention Plan that would outline current and future needs for preventing fires in the County. A countywide plan could identify resources and make recommendations..

## **2. Wildlife Corridors - Response Options**

- ✓ 2.a. Utilize conserved lands, including agricultural and open space areas, for wildlife corridors as part of new projects.
- ✓ 2.b. Discourage the interruption or blockage of wildlife corridors in developing areas.

### **Relationship of Response Options to Existing Plans and Programs**

The Open Space Action Program in the General Plan addresses the need to have open space for the preservation and production of natural resources as well as having open space for recreation and public health and safety. Focusing on natural resources, the Open Space Action Program protects prime agricultural soils, timberland, wetlands, riparian habitats, and rare and endangered species. The General Plan has no special requirements or procedures for wildlife corridors, which are discussed in both Options 2.a. and 2.b.

### **Implications of Each Response Option**

Option 2.a. enables agricultural areas to serve dual uses. This is important especially where there is a lack of natural open space that can support wildlife. This can be accomplished by impacting development securing habitat areas through such actions as conservation easements. Option 2.b. reduces the overall loss in wildlife habitat value due to urban encroachment. This option can be established through the County's General Plan and zoning practices and regulations. This option would identify critical resources (such as water, food resources, and migration paths) and ensure maintenance of critical corridors during the project planning phase.

## G. Agriculture

### BACKGROUND

In Lake County, the Clear Lake basin area has become the center for agricultural activity, producing most of the fruit and nut crops that are at the heart of the County's agricultural economy. According to the Lake County Farm Bureau, the value of agricultural production for 2002 was \$63.9 million.

The most substantial trend in agricultural land use in the basin in recent years is the dramatic increase in vineyard development. The County has historically had a grape industry, but some land was converted to pear and walnut orchards during Prohibition. Now that wine grapes are a profitable crop again, they are coming back to the area.

Although agriculture plays a large role in the County's economy, issues still remain regarding the future of agriculture as the County continues to grow in population and urbanize. Ongoing urbanization of the County has been responsible for the steady and sometimes dramatic reduction in acreage of farmland in the basin since the mid-1960s.

The General Plan needs to facilitate a balance between urbanization and the continued preservation of agricultural land and its overall economic vitality.

### KEY QUESTIONS

The following key questions address issues pertaining to agriculture.

- 1. Preservation of Agricultural Land.** What measures should the County take to assist in the preservation of agricultural land?
- 2. Increase Agricultural Viability.** How should the County improve its agricultural viability?

## POSSIBLE GENERAL PLAN RESPONSES TO KEY QUESTIONS

### 1. Preservation of Agricultural Land - Response Options

- ✓ 1.a. Limit the range of non-agricultural uses in the areas designated/ zoned for agriculture.
- ✓ 1.b. Increase implementation of the Williamson Act and Farmland Security Act.
- ✓ 1.c. Preserve agriculture through the use of conservation easements. An example may be the use of a 50-year conservation easement to preserve prime agricultural land.
- ✓ 1.d. Establish urban/community growth boundaries to prevent encroachment of urban land uses into agricultural areas.

#### **Relationship of Response Options to Existing Plans and Programs**

The current General Plan includes a policy related to Option 1.a. that suggests directing non-agricultural development into marginal agricultural lands and avoiding prime agricultural land. The policy does not however limit the range of non-agricultural uses in agricultural zones. For Option 1.b., the General Plan has an implementation measure that calls for revising the zoning ordinance to establish the Williamson Act, but requires the Board of Supervisors to approve each contract. The General Plan does not have any other specific policies that address Options 1.c. or 1.d.

#### **Implications of Each Response Option**

The implementation of Option 1.a. will prevent incompatible land uses, such as suburban residential land uses, from placing growth inducement pressures on adjacent agricultural land. Option 1.b. will prevent existing agricultural land from being developed, in a given timeframe, with other land uses and will therefore delay urban development from occurring in outlying areas. The County can look to proactively utilize this tool to help protect farmlands from conversion. Option 1.c. provides for the preservation of agricultural land for longer periods than under the Williamson Act, with the County tacking an active role in implementing/encouraging easements. The establishment of an urban services boundary, as indicated in Option 1.d., will help to prevent urban sprawl into existing agricultural areas and ensure that development does not occur unless there is adequate public infrastructure already in place.

## 2. Increase Agricultural Viability - Response Options

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*Also see Item 1,  
"Tourism Expansion"  
in Section H,  
"Tourism".*

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- ✓ 2.a. Establish a "Winery Economic Zone" that will encourage the development of wineries.
- ✓ 2.b. Strengthen agricultural products marketing programs.
- ★ 2.c. Promote crop diversification.

### **Relationship of Response Options to Existing Plans and Programs**

The General Plan does not contain specific policies or implementation measures that address Options 2.a. and 2.b. However, with regards to Option 2.a., the EDSMP does make a recommendation for the County to hire a recruitment team that would be responsible for attracting businesses such as wineries into the County. Currently BORT plays an indirect role in attracting wineries to the area by trying to attract business in general. The EDSMP recommendation could be carried over into the General Plan as a policy. Currently there are no plans or programs that address Options 2.c.

### **Implications of Each Response Option**

Implementation of Option 2.a. will allow the County to capitalize on its growing wine industry and can also promote tourism within the County. This measure will also reduce the loss of revenue in wine production to other counties. Reclaimed water can be made available for use on vineyards, which can reduce the cost of water and conserve water resources in the County. However, other environmental impacts may result, such as increased traffic in agricultural areas. The implementation of Option 2.b. will allow the County's agricultural producers to be more competitive with other regions and provide greater economic stability for the County and its residents. Option 2.c. would expand the current crop base to include additional types of crops. By doing this, the agricultural base in the County would become more diversified and new agricultural markets could be explored.

## H. Tourism

### BACKGROUND

Most of Lake County consists of rural areas containing open space and agricultural land. It is the County's open space and agricultural land that attracts many tourists to the area. More recently, casinos have been attracting tourists as well. There are three tribal casinos in Lake County. The Robinson Rancheria Bingo and Casino is located in Nice at 1545 East Highway 20. The Twin Pine Casino is located at 22223 Highway 29 at Rancheria Road in Middletown. The Konocti Vista located at 2755 Mission Rancheria Road in Lakeport

Lake County's economy is largely based on tourism. According to the latest California tourism report published by the California Division of Tourism, visitors to Lake County spent an estimated \$220 million in Lake County on accommodations, retail goods, food and beverages, recreation activities, and other business services in 2000. During this year, tourism and recreation activities supported an estimated 4,860 jobs and generated approximately \$2.4 million in local (city and County) tax revenue.

### KEY QUESTIONS

The following are key questions related to the tourism industry.

1. **Tourism Expansion.** How can the County expand the tourism industry?
2. **Casino Development.** How can the County benefit from casino tourism?

### POSSIBLE GENERAL PLAN RESPONSES TO KEY QUESTIONS

#### 1. Tourism Expansion - Response Options

- ✓ 1.a. Develop a long-term plan and incentives to revitalize old resorts in order to attract more tourists.
- ✓ 1.b. Promote agri-tourism, eco-tourism, and outdoor recreation in Lake County to outside markets.

- ✓ 1.c. Work to market local culture and art events, including outdoor concerts and art shows.
- ✓ 1.d. Develop new shoreline resorts.

### **Relationship of Response Options to Existing Plans and Programs**

The General Plan does not contain policies that address tourism expansion. The EDSMP does address tourism development. The plan recommends that “high quality” resorts be built to attract higher income tourists, which is related to Option 1.a. The Plan also recommends that bass fishing be promoted, which is an aspect of Option 1.b. In regards to Option 1.c., the EDSMP suggests that a trade show booth be developed that could go to malls and other public areas. These recommendations in the EDSMP could be used to develop policies for the General Plan.

### **Implications of Each Response Option**

Option 1.a. would require redevelopment efforts and funding sources (e.g., low interest loans) to help local hotels and motels improve their facilities. Code enforcement can also be targeted at blighted tourist facilities and blighted areas surrounding tourist locations. The County’s strongest economic sectors are tourism and agriculture, but the tourist industry is primarily focused on lake-related recreation (an aspect of both eco-tourism and outdoor recreation). Option 1.b. will promote the expansion of tourism into areas related to agriculture (such as wineries), eco-tourism and outdoor recreation (hiking, bird watching, and so forth). Additionally, Option 1.b. would take an existing market in the County (tourism) and combine it with agriculture. This would create a secondary market for both industries (agri-tourism). Using culture and art to attract tourists (Option 1.c.) would require a committee to plan and manage events for the County. These events should be planned to occur throughout Lake County to encourage broad economic development. Option 1.d. would be used in the General Plan to have the County actively identify potential sites and developers for shoreline recreational facilities, including full-service resorts.

## **2. Casino Development - Response Options**

- ✓ 2.a. Continue to pursue the development of a memorandum of understanding between tribal governments and the County government addressing casino impacts on County services.
- ✓ 2.b. Assist tribal governments in advertising local casinos to outside markets by including casinos in the County’s tourism marketing strategy.

- ✓ 2.c. Expand the existing transit system to include access to and from local casinos/tourist-oriented facilities and County communities.

### **Relationship of Response Options to Existing Plans and Programs**

The General Plan does not address Options 2.a. through 2.c. and there are no programs in the EDSMP related to these options.

### **Implications of Each Response Option**

The first and second options would involve working with tribal governments. Option 2.a. would create an agreement between the County and the tribes operating casinos in Lake County. This is needed to help offset impacts related to increased traffic, public safety requests, community services, and so forth. Option 2.b. could be done in conjunction with Option 2.a. or separately. This option would benefit both the County and the tribes by providing advertising for both. The third option (Option 2.c.) would target developing transit mechanisms to bring people between the communities and the casinos/other tourist-oriented facilities. This would allow for enhanced tourism opportunities in the communities and promote the use of transit by casino employees.

## I. Land Use

### BACKGROUND

Lake County is predominantly a rural county. A majority of land in the County is devoted to agricultural and open space uses. Land use is primarily guided by the 1981 General Plan, which specifies 16 land use designations. In addition, there are eight community plans, each with its own set of land use designations.

Growth in the County has been mainly concentrated in existing incorporated cities and in unincorporated communities throughout the County. Although population growth in Lake County has been similar to surrounding counties and California as a whole, the average annual growth rate is expected to nearly double for the period of 2000-2010 compared to the growth rate between 1990-2000 (California Department of Finance). As a result, pressure to extend development into existing rural areas, where agricultural and open space lands exist, will intensify in the future. In recent years, interest in smaller parcels has grown, increasing residential ranch style development and motivating public interest in preserving agricultural and natural resource lands from urbanization.

The existing area land use plans and zoning ordinances play a major role in guiding future development in the County. The inconsistencies in the existing land use plans and zoning ordinances could impede facilitating orderly development to meet the County's growing population.

### KEY QUESTIONS

The following key questions address issues pertaining to land use.

- 1. Land Use Designations.** How can the existing land use designations for these plans be integrated into a single, consistent land use designation set for the General Plan update?
- 2. New Growth.** How can higher density, intensive uses be kept from encroaching on existing agricultural and natural resources while allowing public access to open space?
- 3. "Smart Growth."** How can the General Plan and zoning ordinance be improved to promote "smart growth" and desired development?

**POSSIBLE GENERAL PLAN RESPONSES TO KEY QUESTIONS**

**1. Land Use Designations - Response Options**

- 1.a. Continue with separate land use designations in the land use element and Area Plans.
- 1.b. Keep all existing land use designations, include all of them in the land use element and apply county-wide on the land use diagram.
- ✓ 1.c. Consolidate similar land use designations and create one comprehensive county-wide land use plan that each Plan Area can draw its land use designations from.

**Relationship of Response Options to Existing Plans and Programs**

The General Plan addresses Options 1.a. through 1.c. by requiring the County to establish a generalized set of land use designations that will best utilize the County's resources and to describe them in sufficient detail to guide future land use and zoning decisions. The General Plan also addresses Options 1.a. through 1.c. by providing guidelines for the location and intensity of residential, commercial, industrial, and resort development.

**Implications of Each Response Option**

Consistency, or inconsistency, between plans can affect the way in which development occurs throughout the County. If plans that are intended to work in conjunction with one another are inconsistent, varied development occurs. Option 1.a. would not change the inconsistency between plans. Alternatively, Option 1.b. provides an opportunity to continue with several different land use designations, but includes them all in the Land Use Element with descriptions and specified locations. The last option would be to combine all existing land use designations into a reasonable number that would then be applied to the entire County, the land use element, and each Area plan.

Table 1 provides a matrix showing the land use designations used in the County's current General Plan and in each of the Area Plans. Table 2 provides a more detailed description of the land use designations in the General Plan. The final table, Table 3, provides a proposed set of land use designations that would be used in the General Plan update as well as future Area Plans.

**Table 1. Lake County General Plan & Area Plan Land Use Designations**

Land Use Designations <sup>1</sup>	1981 General Plan	Upper Lake/Nice	Middletown	Lakeport	Kelseyville	Cobb Mountain	Lower Lake	Shoreline Communities <sup>2</sup>	Rivieras <sup>2</sup>
Urban Residential (1-20 DU/Acre)	■	■		■					
Medium Density Residential (6-9 DU/Acre)	■	■	■	■	■		■		
High Density Residential (10-19 DU/Acre)	■	■	■	■	■		■		
Suburban Residential (1-4 DU/Acre)	■	■	■	■		■	■		
Suburban Residential (1-5 DU/Acre)									
Suburban Residential Reserve (1 DU/1 Acre)	■	■	■		■	■	■		
Rural Residential (1 DU/5-20 Acres)	■	■	■	■	■		■		
Rural Residential (1 DU/20-70 Acres)						■			
Rural Lands (1 DU/20-40 Acres)	■	■	■	■	■	■	■		
Mixed Density Residential							■		
Commercial			■				■		
Local Commercial (0.2-0.25 FAR)	■	■		■		■			
Community Commercial (0.2 - 1.2 FAR)	■	■		■	■	■			
Service Commercial (0.5 - 1.0 FAR)	■	■		■	■				

**Table 1. Lake County General Plan & Area Plan Land Use Designations**

Land Use Designations <sup>1</sup>	1981 General Plan	Upper Lake/Nice	Middletown	Lakeport	Kelseyville	Cobb Mountain	Lower Lake	Shoreline Communities <sup>2</sup>	Rivieras <sup>2</sup>
Industrial		■	■		■				
Industrial/Heavy Commercial (0.1-1.5 FAR)	■	■	■	■		■	■		
Mixed Light/Heavy Commercial				■					
Resource Industrial Conservation and Open Space									
Resource Conservation Agricultural (40 Acre Minimum)	■	■	■	■		■	■		
Intensive Agriculture	■	■	■	■	■	■	■		
Public Lands and Facilities									
Public Lands	■	■	■	■	■	■	■		
Public Facilities	■	■	■	■		■	■		
Special Use									
Resorts	■								
Resort Commercial		■		■		■			
Commercial Resort Neighborhood Commercial			■						
			■						

<sup>1</sup> Designations taken from Area Plans, the 1981 Land Use Element, and February 2003 Draft General Plan Update Background Report.

<sup>2</sup> Do not have plans.

**Table 2. 1981 General Plan Land Use Designation Summary**

<b>Land Use Designation</b>	<b>Density/Intensity</b>	<b>Minimum Lot Size</b>	<b>Intended Uses</b>
Urban Residential	(1-20 DU/Acre)		Single Family, Mobile Homes, Townhouses, Apartments. Higher density to be placed near urbanized areas and transit.
Medium Density Residential	(6-9 DU/Acre)		Duplexes, Triplexes, Mobile Home Parks.
High Density Residential	(10-20 DU/Acre)		Multifamily, Duplexes, Town homes, Apartments.
Suburban Residential	(1-4 DU/Acre)		Single Family at low densities.
Suburban Residential Reserve	(1 DU/Acre)	(2 Acre Minimum)	Single Family at very low densities and higher densities as applicable.
Rural Residential	(1 DU/5-20 Acres)		Single Family at very low rural densities, Farming, sale of Agriculture.
Rural Lands	(1 DU/20-40 Acres)		Single Family at very low rural densities, Farming, sale of Agriculture, Open space, preserves, fisheries.
Local Commercial	(0.2-0.25 FAR)		Small localized retail, recreational, and services. Eating and drinking establishments, food and beverage retail sales, limited personal medical and repair services, retail sales.
Community Commercial	(0.2 - 1.2 FAR)		Range of Commercial retail and services. Gasoline service stations, hardware stores, eating and drinking establishments, food and beverage sales, public buildings, general merchandise stores, professional offices, and finance offices.
Service Commercial	(0.5 - 1.0 FAR)		Heavy commercial uses around urban concentrations. Automotive related services, heavy equipment sales/service, building maintenance services, construction sales/service, warehousing.
Industrial/Heavy Commercial	(0.1-1.5 FAR)	(12,500 Sq/Ft)	Manufacturing and processing of natural resources and heavy commercial activities. Geothermal service yards, warehousing, asphalt batch plants, mills, lumber yards, boat building, welding, fabrication.
Resource Conservation			Maintenance and sustained production of natural resources. Habitats, timber, agriculture, watersheds, outdoor parks, hazardous areas, single family dwellings, recreation, mineral extraction.
Agricultural		(40 Acre Minimum)	Protect agricultural resources. Crop production, horticulture, tree crops, row crops, field crops, agricultural related activities.
Public Lands			Publicly owned lands. U.S. Forest land, BLM land, State, and County. Open space activities. Recreation, mining, forestry, grazing, planned development.
Public Facilities			Areas for services and facilities which are necessary for the community. Parks, schools, civic centers, hospitals, liquid, solid waste disposal sites, cemeteries, public utilities. <i>Designated Public Lands</i>
Resorts			Mix of commercial and residential uses utilizing geographic locations. Recreation activities, lodging, dining, entertainment services, hotels, motels,

Source: Lake County 1981 General Plan

**Table 3. Proposed General Plan Land Use Designation Summary**

Proposed	Existing	Density/Intensity	Minimum Lot Size	Intended Uses
Rural Residential	Rural Residential	1 DU/5 Acres	20 Acres	Single Family at very low rural densities, Farming, sale of Agriculture.
Low Density Residential	Suburban Residential	1-4 DU/Acre	10,000 Sq/Ft	Single family, mobile homes, mobile home parks, with sewer and water.
Medium Density Residential	Medium Density Residential	6-9 DU/Acre	4,500 Sq/Ft	Duplexes, Triplexes, Mobile Home Parks with sewer and water.
High Density Residential	High Density Residential, Mixed Density Residential, Urban Residential	10-20 DU/Acre	3,200 Sq/Ft	Multifamily, Duplexes, Town homes, Apartments.
Residential Reserve	Suburban Residential Reserve	1 DU/Acre	2 Acres	Single Family at very low densities with higher densities planned for future growth. Located near existing urban areas planned for future residential growth.
Mixed Use	Urban Residential, Local Commercial	1-20 DU/Acre FAR	20,000 Sq/Ft	Mixed use residential, retail, recreational, and services. eating and drinking establishments, limited personal medical and repair services, retail sales, office space incorporated with Single Family, Townhouses, and Apartments. Higher density encouraged near urbanized areas and transit.
Community Commercial	Community Commercial	0.2 - 1.2 FAR	12,500 Sq/Ft	Range of commercial retail and services. Gasoline service stations, hardware stores, eating and drinking establishments, food and beverage sales, public buildings, general merchandise stores, professional offices, and finance offices.
Service Commercial	Service Commercial	0.5 - 1.0 FAR	12,500 Sq/Ft	Heavy commercial uses around urban concentrations. Automotive related services, heavy equipment sales/service, building maintenance services, construction sales/service, warehousing.
Neighborhood Commercial	Neighborhood Commercial, Local Commercial	0.2-0.25 FAR	12,500 Sq/Ft	Small localized retail, recreational, and services. Eating and drinking establishments, food and beverage retail sales, limited personal medical and repair services, retail sales.
Resort Commercial	Resorts, Resort Commercial, Commercial Resort	0.1-0.5	5 Acres	Mix of commercial and on site residential uses utilizing geographic locations. Recreation activities, lodging, dining, entertainment services, hotels, motels, ranches, spas. Residential uses allowed in conjunction with resort uses only.
Industrial	Industrial/Heavy Commercial	0.1-1.5 FAR	12,500 Sq/Ft	Manufacturing and processing of natural resources and heavy commercial activities. Geothermal service yards, warehousing, asphalt batch plants, mills, lumber yards, boat building, welding, fabrication.
Resource Conservation	Conservation and Open Space, Resource Conservation, Public Lands			Maintenance and sustained production of natural resources. Habitats, timber, agriculture, watersheds, outdoor parks, hazardous areas, single family dwellings, recreation, mineral extraction. Publicly owned lands. U.S. Forest land, BLM land, State, and County. Open space activities. Recreation, mining, forestry, grazing, planned development.
Agricultural	Agricultural, Intensive Agriculture, Rural Lands	1 DU/ 40 Acres	40 Acre Minimum	Protect agricultural resources. Crop production, horticulture, tree crops, row crops, field crops, agricultural related activities.
Public Facilities	Public Facilities			Areas for services and facilities which are necessary for the community. Parks, schools, civic centers, hospitals, liquid, solid waste disposal sites, cemeteries, public utilities.

## 2. New Growth - Response Options

- ✓ 2.a. Continue with current development trends that focus on residential and commercial development accompanied by smaller amounts of industrial use in and around existing cities and communities.
- 2.b. Identify geographic locations for new communities for growth and designate those lands for urbanization.
- ✓ 2.c. Accommodate residential growth in existing urban areas by providing appropriate infrastructure.

### **Relationship of Response Options to Existing Plans and Programs**

The General Plan encourages the location, timing, and intensity of future development consistency and availability of services citing unmanaged growth as a possible disrupter of the County's character and an overburden on services such as water supplies, waste facilities, schools, and roads. The General Plan also encourages a diverse community in terms of income, age, occupation, race, religion, and lifestyle, and encourages the preservation and fostering of the existing small town appearance and sense of community.

The General Plan contains policies addressing alternative Options 2.a. through 2.c. by providing guidelines for the location and intensity residential, commercial, industrial, and resort development. Option 2.c. is addressed in the General Plan through specific circulation pattern provisions that support local communities and growth. The EDSMP recommends strategies that support Options 2.a. through 2.c. suggest. Specifically, the EDSMP recommends that the hotel/resort, golf course, attraction, winery, and commercial promenade area act as the focus of economic growth, thus influencing new growth.

### **Implications of Each Response Option**

New growth is probably the most important aspect of land use in the General Plan. The placement of different types of development affects every aspect of how the County will grow. Lake County, like many other counties, faces the challenge of providing land for housing and economic development, while preserving agricultural and open space lands. Under Option 2.a., the County would continue with historic growth trends, identifying land for development as indicated in the current General Plan and area plans. Option 2.b. is an expansion model that would identify new areas for urban growth in the County, thus using more open space land for development. Option 2.c. would look to areas

that have existing urban development and increase the available infrastructure to allow for more growth.

### 3. Smart Growth - Response Options

- 3.a. Continue using typical development as described in the existing zoning ordinance.
- ✓ 3.b. Identify types of existing developments that need better planning/regulations and amend the zoning ordinance accordingly.
- ✓ 3.c. Use existing redevelopment area boundaries to establish “smart growth” overlay zones that encourage higher density housing, transit-oriented development, and mixed-use development.
- ✓ 3.d. Identify areas in redevelopment project areas that can be targeted for smart growth development (e.g. transit centers, mixed use, high density housing).

#### **Relationship of Response Options to Existing Plans and Programs**

The General Plan addresses Option 3.b. and 3.c. by providing provisions for a regulation land capacity ordinance to replace existing zoning provisions for determining the allowed density. The General Plan also addresses Option 3.b. by requiring the County to establish areas for resort development using mixed-use concepts. Finally, the General Plan addresses Option 3.c. and 3.d. by requiring the County to ensure that the road systems are appropriate and supportive of an orderly pattern of land uses, which also support the development of a public transportation system.

The General Plan partially addresses Options 3.a. through 3.d. by providing guidelines for the location and intensity residential, commercial, industrial, and resort development. The General Plan also addresses Option 3.c. through specific circulation patterns provisions that support local communities and growth. The EDSMP recommends strategies that impact the issue that Options 3.a. through 3.d. suggest. Specifically, the EDSMP recommends that the hotel/resort, golf course, attraction, winery, and commercial promenade area act as the focus of economic growth, thus influencing where new growth.

### **Implications of Each Response Option**

Zoning and redevelopment areas provide a means for the County to for the location, design, and construction of new development, while redevelopment provides a focused area in need of new development interest. The zoning ordinance can be used as a tool to insure that development occurs within the guidelines of the General Plan as well as for creating desired “smart” communities. Under Option 3.a., the County would continue with its current zoning ordinance, identifying where development could occur. Option 3.b. would identify key development issues that have resulted from unclear zoning regulations and amend the ordinance accordingly. Option 3.c. would utilize existing redevelopment areas as boundaries for a new overlay zone. This zone could establish development guidelines, encourage development, and/or relax zoning requirements in a way that promotes smart growth (e.g. transit centers, mixed-use, high density housing). Option 3.d. would focus on the County’s existing redevelopment areas to promote smart growth practices. This option could establish guidelines and encourage development/redevelopment of redevelopment areas with smart growth.