

# *Russian River Redevelopment Project Strategic Plan “Our Vision, Our Future”*



**June 9, 2009**

# Russian River: "Our Vision, Our Future"

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# Russian River: "Our Vision, Our Future"

## I. INTRODUCTION

The Russian River Strategic Plan is intended to state the community's desires for the future and, through systematic implementation over time, guide efforts to turn them into reality. The Plan outlines priorities for the lower Russian River area, and provides an approach to pursue them.

The Russian River Strategic Plan is the result of a collaborative effort among the community residents, local leaders, businesses and the County of Sonoma. It outlines specific issues and solutions unique to these lower Russian River communities, with the goal of keeping this one-of-a-kind place beautiful, sustainable, and economically viable for all to enjoy and cherish for many years.



### A. About the Russian River Redevelopment Project

The Russian River Redevelopment Project was established under California Community Redevelopment Law (CRL) in 2000. As shown on the map included in Appendix B, the Russian River Redevelopment Project Area encompasses the lower Russian River communities from Rio Nido to Villa Grande and also includes the communities of Guerneville, Monte Rio, Vacation Beach, Northwood, and Guerneville Park.

Redevelopment is an important tool to provide significant resources to assist the community to implement community development projects. Redevelopment is the *reinvestment* of local property tax dollars into the community from which they came, *under local control*, and *according to a locally approved plan*.

- "Reinvestment of local property tax dollars" means that funds identified for the Russian River Redevelopment Project can only be spent for the benefit of the Russian River Redevelopment Project Area.
- "Under local control" means that all of the decision making for how the project's funds will be spent will be made locally (not in Sacramento or Washington, D.C.)
- "According to a locally approved plan" refers to the general provisions of the Plan approved by the Board of Supervisors and the detailed plans to be developed and approved through the process of local citizen, elected official, and county staff interaction.

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## B. Redevelopment Project Funding

While it is important to understand how the Redevelopment Project is funded, *it must be stressed that this funding source is only one of many available to the community for Plan implementation.* Community redevelopment is usually accomplished by forming a



partnership of public and private enterprise. Local, state, and federal funding opportunities will be pursued to augment available redevelopment funds. All available public resources will be used to lay the foundation and provide the pre-conditions that are necessary for private enterprises to be interested in, and capable of, investing their financial resources in the Project Area. In addition, some of the identified projects can be initiated without significant funding, as

volunteer and community-based efforts can be mobilized to implement projects.

The Russian River Redevelopment Project can remain in existence under current legislation until 2045. Redevelopment activities must be undertaken and completed during the first 30 years of the Project, through July 2030. The Project can continue for an additional 15 years, through July 2045, only if time is needed to repay debt incurred to fund previously completed activities.

The primary way in which debt would be incurred is through a financial mechanism called bonding. Bonding is a kind of loan that is repaid with interest using redevelopment funds received in future years.

Should bonding be selected as a funding mechanism, it would:

- Generate interest costs to be paid along with the borrowed amount based on the rate at the time of bonding issuance;
- Allow facilities to be developed and used sooner than waiting a period of time to accumulate funds for the project's development;
- Provide a significant quantity of immediate funding to complete large projects;
- Be used to hedge against rapidly escalating construction costs; and,
- Allow the redevelopment project to remain in place after 2030 (but not past 2045) to pay off bonds.

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The fundamental premise behind Redevelopment funding is that real estate values (called Assessed Valuation – AV) typically increase over time as existing commercial and residential properties are sold and improved and as new developments are built within a Project Area. The additional property taxes generated as a result of this increase in AV (called the property tax increment) is allocated to the Redevelopment Project to finance additional activities that will benefit the Project Area. Without the Redevelopment Project, all existing and new property taxes would continue to be allocated to the County's general fund and to special districts serving the area.



The County's general fund provides resources for services such as law enforcement, public health, planning, public works, roads, library, and administration. Special district funding provides resources for services such as fire protection, schools, lighting, parks and recreation, and pollution control/conservation.



On April 1, 2008, the Sonoma County Community Development Commission established a policy to limit the gross amount of tax increment that may be allocated to the Russian River Project Area to \$300 million cumulatively, and \$8 million per year. The Commission intends to formally amend the Russian River Redevelopment Plan to include an appropriate hard cap on receipt of tax increment revenue upon completion of a comprehensive

identification and analysis of projects and associated costs needed to improve the project area.

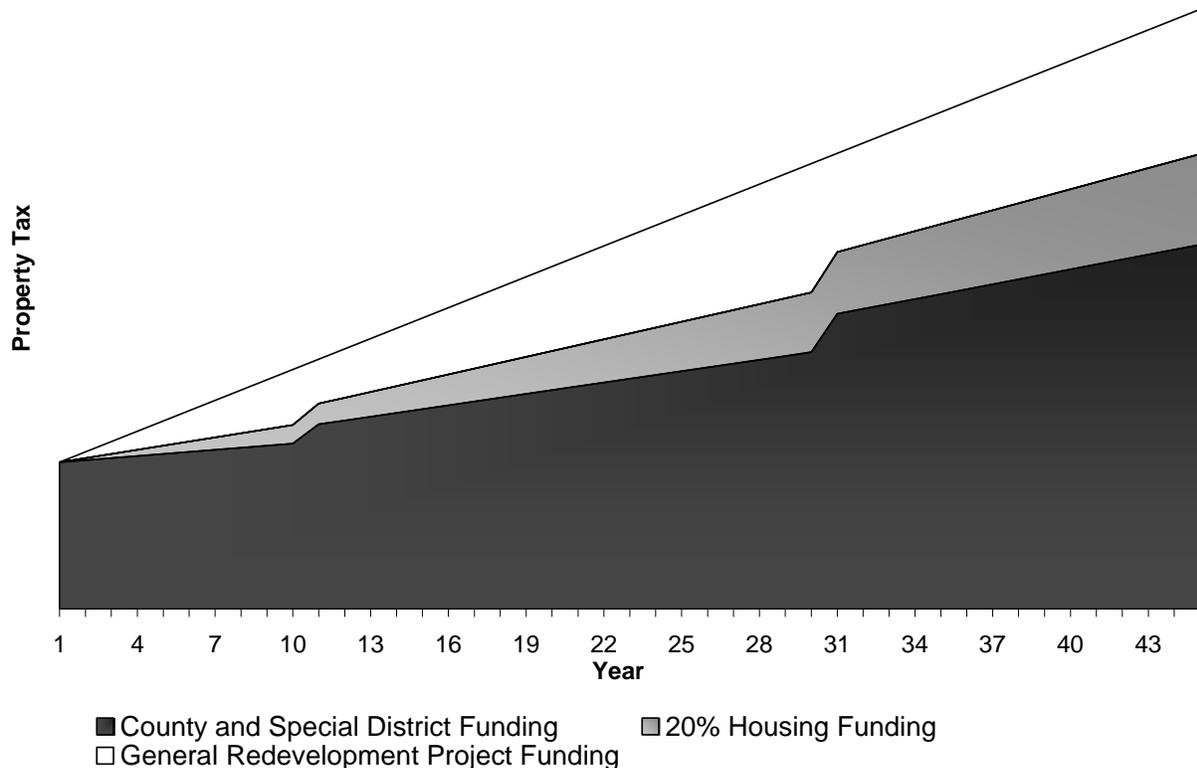
Only a portion of the gross tax increment revenues flow to the Redevelopment Project. A percentage is first "passed through" to the County's general fund and to special districts; CRL sets this percentage at 20 percent for the first ten years of the Project Area. In years 11 through 30, the pass-through amount increases by an additional 16.8 percent of the tax increment revenues generated by AV increases over the AV in the 10<sup>th</sup> year of the Project. In years 31 through 45, if outstanding debt remains to be repaid, the pass-through increases by an additional 11.2 percent of the tax increment revenues generated by AV increases over the AV in the 30<sup>th</sup> year of the Project.



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Tax increment revenues remaining after these pass-through payments, up to the amount of the annual and cumulative caps, go to the Redevelopment Project. CRL further stipulates that 20 percent of the gross tax increment revenues, as calculated prior to the pass-through payments, must be allocated to activities that will increase affordable housing opportunities for low- and moderate-income households in the Project Area. Remaining tax increment revenues received by the Project may be used for any eligible activity under CRL and the *Sonoma County Policy Guidance for Use of Redevelopment Funds* (Appendix E). The following graphic depicts how this funding process works.

### Redevelopment Project Funding Model



### C. The Strategic Planning Process

As part of the formation of the Russian River Redevelopment Project, a local advisory body was authorized by the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors, called the Russian River Redevelopment Oversight Committee (RRROC), to advise the Board on use of Redevelopment funds for activities to benefit the Project Area. This body of locally elected project area residents, property owners, and business people also serves as a primary connection between the lower Russian River community residents and Redevelopment Project.

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As mandated by the redevelopment authorization process, a Redevelopment Plan was created to serve as the roadmap for the Redevelopment Project. To expand local awareness, level of participation, and input opportunities for those in the Project Area, the Board of Supervisors authorized funding in 2006 to carry out a grass-roots-based strategic planning effort in the Russian River communities that would augment the existing Redevelopment Plan.

A Strategic Planning Subcommittee (SPS) comprised of four RRROC members and five at-large residents was formed to lead the strategic planning process, working with a planning consultant, and to deliver the draft plan to the RRROC for recommendation, and the County Board of Supervisors for approval. Appendix A contains the names of those involved in the planning process and the plan's adoption.

This Strategic Plan is an amalgamation of two initiatives: 1) the adopted Redevelopment Plan, which is the description of what the Redevelopment Project will address as part of the Redevelopment Project's legal authorization, and 2) the ideas and priorities of the residents that were identified during the strategic planning process. Redevelopment Project funding along with other sources will be used to implement identified projects and initiatives. The Strategic Plan expresses the Key Result Areas, Goals, and Project/Initiatives for the Redevelopment Project and other community-based efforts that move the community towards its vision for the future.

To accomplish this, the Strategic Plan has been developed using the following format.

### D. Public Involvement Summary

A major focus of this project was to engage the public early in the process to identify their aspirations for the future and continue to engage community members throughout the process. Comment cards and feedback forms were distributed at all events and many of the public input materials were translated into Spanish. The Strategic Plan website also contained a comment form to provide direct input at any time during the process.

Following is a summary of the public outreach activities held throughout the process.

#### **Individual Interviews**

In order to identify key planning issues and have frank discussions with key individuals, the consultant held one-on-one interviews with individuals as recommended by the SPS. These interviews were held early in the process and included discussions with local business people, key County elected officials and staff, utility and service providers, environmental interests, and long-time residents.

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## SPS Meetings

The resident-based SPS met eight times during the project and was responsible for working with the project consultant and CDC staff, analyzing public input, reviewing documents, and submitting the Plan to the RRROC for recommendation to the Board of Supervisors.



## Joint SPS/RRROC Planning Sessions

Twice during the process, the SPS and RRROC convened for joint planning sessions. The purpose of these events was to allow the entire RRROC to see the progress being made and provided valuable input at key points in the process.



## Community Visioning Event Week

A week-long visioning event was held early in the process (October 2006) in order to determine the residents' desires for the future. Events were held in the communities of Rio Nido, Guerneville, and Monte Rio/Northwood with over 300 people participating. The Community Values and Vision were developed based on the input from these events.

In addition to these events, a Forum was held with members of the Hispanic Community in Guerneville with over 60 participants. The meeting was held in Spanish and all input was documented and translated for distribution.



## Youth Visioning Workshop

An interactive Visioning Workshop was held with a seventh grade class from Guerneville School. Members of the class discussed what they would like to see the community be like in the future and also created their own Vision Collages which were presented to the community at the Visioning Event Week summary meeting.

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## Solutions Forum Events

After development of the Plan framework based on the existing Redevelopment Plan and Community Values and Vision, events were held in March 2007 in the three communities to gather ideas for specific projects and initiatives that the public felt should be considered for implementation to address the Key Result Areas and Goals. This input was used to develop the draft Plan.

## Subcommittee Meetings

Meetings were held with the RRROC's Infrastructure and Housing Subcommittees at key points in the process to review work completed and provide an opportunity for specific input pertaining to their specific objectives.



## Project Website

A strategic planning project website was established at the outset of the process and contained project background information, announcements of public events and activities, reports and work products, and opportunities to provide input via e-mail. All of the information and reports posted on the website during the process has been archived on the Sonoma County Community Development Commission's website at [www.sonoma-county.org/cdc](http://www.sonoma-county.org/cdc).

## II. COMMUNITY VISION AND VALUES

The following Values and Vision were used as the framework for this Plan and it is anticipated that they will provide broad guidance in making decisions about Redevelopment activities in the Project Area in the future. As the community evolves, the Values and Vision will also be used as tools to track progress and results.

### Community Values

**Community Values are core community philosophies and assets that should not be compromised under any circumstances. That which makes you want to live and/or work here that if lost, would prompt you to leave. These values were determined to currently exist and are therefore stated in the present tense.**

#### Value: The River Runs Through Us!

The Russian River connects us to one another at a deep, soulful level. The power and tranquility of the river, the majestic Redwoods, and splendor of the natural environment are why we choose to call this area home! The peaceful, quiet, and rustic ambiance of this special place resonates deeply with those that visit for a day or stay for a lifetime.



#### Value: We Honor our Diversity

People, ideas, and attitudes are welcome and the community's diversity is embraced as a community asset. Compassion is shown for people of all walks of life and lifestyles, families of all kinds, and individuals struggling along their life journey. There is always a "community light left on" to welcome those new to the area or just passing through.

#### Value: Doing it Our Way!

Strong minded, independent individuals that are passionate about this unique place provide the community foundation. Historically, people have come to the area to live their life and raise their family on their own terms. This independence has been embedded within the community culture and is the motivation to find solutions "to do it our way!"

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## Value: Tread Lightly

Residents are honored to live within this beautiful environment and understand their stewardship responsibility to the area and globally. The area recognizes the sensitive balance and close interconnectedness between economic vitality and environmental sustainability. If the quality of the river, our water, or the natural environment is diminished, the reason to live or visit here will be compromised.

## Value: Our Children, Our Future

The children are a sense of community pride and the hope for the future. The area strives to maintain an environment that nourishes children's ability to play and learn in a safe and supportive manner. A drug-free community with strong families that allow children to expand their creativity and explore the wonderment of life is expected. Children have the opportunity to reach for the stars and create their own successful path.



## Reflecting the Past

The area has a long and colorful history that is celebrated and has defined the area's uniqueness and eclectic-ness. The arts, music, and creativity have been the threads that connect today to the past. This rich history has created memories that linger and a desire to reflect this history as we move forward.



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## Community Vision

***The Community Vision is a statement of the desired future condition for the community that is used to guide decision-making and track results. The Vision describes the community's desired, long-range future condition. Looking optimistically that this desired future condition can be attained, the Vision is expressed in the present tense.***

The Russian River area is a collection of unique communities nestled in the Redwoods along the banks of the pristine river. The area is a globally-recognized model for environmental preservation and sustainability. Long-term water supply and quality is assured and an innovative approach has been taken to address the impacts of river flooding. People come from around the world for eco-tourism and the area is home to the finest ecological educational opportunities.



The Russian River has a thriving, year-round economy that meets the needs of the local residents while providing services to visitors. The vibrant business climate is comprised of locally-owned small businesses that are compatible with the area's environmental ethic and quality of life. The area supports entrepreneurs and provides assistance to new local business start-ups.

Schools are the cornerstone of the community and quality education is a point of community pride. Life-long learning opportunities are abundant and tailored to people of all ages. Scholarships, apprenticeships, and mentoring programs are available to assist residents in achieving their dreams. Employment opportunities are available locally for all so people do not have to leave the area to work and young people can choose to stay and raise their families.



The built environment compliments the splendor of the natural setting. As visitors enter the area, the community's sense of pride is evident with beautifully renovated buildings, clean and litter free areas, and improved streetscapes. The area has quality housing and neighborhoods that are well-kept, but affordable for year-round residents.

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Recreational opportunities for people of all ages abound. Kids have a place to call their own and to learn or just hang out in a safe environment. Improved public river access and recreational opportunities have increased while ensuring the river's long-term health. Trails, walking pathways, public transit, and bike paths offer alternative modes of travel throughout the area connecting communities and providing access to services for residents and visitors.



Collaborative efforts between the schools, neighborhoods, religious institutions, businesses, and social service agencies have resulted in numerous community improvements including addressing homelessness and substance abuse in a comprehensive and compassionate manner. The root causes of these social issues are addressed by providing support and education to assist individuals to help themselves. Caring for the less fortunate is an effort that unites the community.



Civil discourse is a way of local decision-making. Residents, businesses, and agencies work together to collaboratively identify and implement innovative solutions to critical community issues. The public has a voice in local decision-making impacting the area. Self-determination is the result of a cohesive, community consensus.

***Russian River is more than a place; it's a state of mind and a way of living. Our Vision, Our Future!***

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## III. ACTION PLAN

The Action Plan provides the structure for carrying out the Community Values and Vision. As previously mentioned, this Strategic Plan is comprised of the original Redevelopment Plan augmented by additional desires identified by the community.

There are 23 Goals and Objectives identified in the Redevelopment Plan that was created to establish the Redevelopment Project. The Strategic Planning Subcommittee of the RRROC also recommended a set of Community Values and a Community Vision for the future. From the Values and Vision, additional goals were identified. The Action Plan relies heavily on these planning foundations.

The Action Plan is comprised of Key Result Areas and Goals. The Key Result Areas identify broad topics on which the community should focus. Each Key Result Area contains Goals that will be worked toward. From the Goals, Potential Projects and Initiatives have been generated to serve as specific actions to be considered after the Plan's adoption.

It is important to note that while the Strategic Plan is based on a five-year timeframe, the Key Result Areas and Goals are much more comprehensive and long-term. The Strategic Plan will be updated periodically as initiatives are implemented and projects completed, and as circumstances and needs change in future years. The Strategic Plan will focus on what is feasible over the next five years while the Plan Framework is intended to guide planning and decision making for much longer.

The Key Result Areas are presented in no prioritized order. Goals identified in the Redevelopment Plan that must remain intact are presented in **bold** type. Goals that were developed through public input to augment the Redevelopment Plan are presented in non-bold type.

### A. Key Result Areas and Goals

#### **Key Result Area: Public Health and Safety**

Providing for the health and safety of the public is government's highest priority. Steps to minimize unsafe or unhealthy conditions from homes, businesses, and the transportation network are keys to successful community development. Protecting people and investments from natural hazards is also critical in the Russian River area.

#### ***How Does this Key Result Area Relate to the Redevelopment Project?***

Maintaining a safe and healthy community will create the kind of atmosphere that will promote longevity and stability of residents and also create a positive image for visitors and new investment.



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## Goals

1. The elimination, over time, of conditions that blight the Project Area, with special emphasis on those conditions that contribute to blight along the River itself.
2. The improvement of streets to ensure safe motor vehicle, bicycle and pedestrian movements and facilitate emergency vehicle accessibility.
3. The provision of storm drainage improvements to enhance public safety and minimize damage to public and private property.
4. Assistance to public safety entities in the provision of capital facilities and equipment to serve the Project Area and environs.
5. For public safety purposes, the development of an improved system of street names and addresses.
6. The expansion of law enforcement presence and service.
7. The increase of paid full-time Fire and EMS personnel.
8. The improvement and maintenance of the integrity and safety of public water and wastewater systems from public and private utility providers.

## Key Result Area: Strong, Diverse Households

Maintaining strong households, with year-round residents, is critical to providing stability and diversity in the community. People putting down roots and having a stake in the future will ensure the long-term viability of the area.

### *How Does this Key Result Area Relate to the Redevelopment Project?*

A solid network of strong, financially viable households will provide year-round support of local businesses and make revenue streams more predictable. People with a stake in the community tend to invest in their properties resulting in an improved image and appearance that will expand economic development opportunities and have a positive effect on community pride.

## Goals

1. The improvement of social services for all residents.
2. The improvement of education, life-long learning, and career opportunities for all residents.
3. The increase of youth activities and facilities.
4. The monitoring of overall affordability issues (including housing, healthcare, and utility costs) and addressing the results.
5. The exploration of options for creating/expanding needed family support services (e.g., day/child care, health services).



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## Key Result Area: Social Issues

Homelessness and substance abuse are recognized issues that the community has chosen to address. These issues not only impact those individuals directly involved, but also the lower Russian River community. Health care, hunger, and care and services for the elderly and disabled are also growing concerns that impact the overall livability of the community.

### *How Does this Key Result Area Relate to the Redevelopment Project?*

Residents have expressed that without caring for all in the community there is no "community." While there are divergent opinions on how to address some of the issues, there is consensus that the area cannot be successful socially or economically unless the communities come together with the rest of the region to address the key social issues.



## Goals

1. The creation and expansion of facilities and services for special needs populations, including the homeless and the elderly.
2. The addressing of homeless issues on a more regional basis by collaborating with other agencies and communities throughout the County.
3. The effort to decrease youth and adult substance abuse.
4. The improvement of locally available health care.
5. The increase in access to basic needs (such as food, clothing, and hygiene).

## Key Result Area: Environment and River Preservation

Protecting the environment and Russian River continues to be expressed by the public as the highest priority. Without this unique environment, the community would not exist as we know it today.



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## **How Does this Key Result Area Relate to the Redevelopment Project?**

Maintaining the environment and River is imperative to not only the residents' quality of life but also the local economy in general. The natural beauty and recreational opportunities are intertwined with everything that is the Russian River from local residents' enjoyment of the area in which they live to tourists that come from around the world to experience this special place.

### **Goals**

1. The enhancement and protection of the physical environment and sensitive habitat areas, such as forests and riparian ecosystems.
2. The elimination, over time, of adverse conditions that contribute to soils, groundwater, and river contamination.
3. The protection of endangered species consistent with local, state, and federal law.
4. The improvement of overall air quality.
5. The promotion of the cleanliness and health of the Russian River to permit swimming and recreation.



### **Key Result Area: Economy**

One of the leading initiatives of redevelopment projects is to stimulate the local economy. The Russian River area desires a well-rounded and stable business community that will expand local employment opportunities and add to the quality of life and diversity. The community wishes to attain this without becoming a major commerce center.



### **How Does this Key Result Area Relate to the Redevelopment Project?**

A strong local economy provides business opportunities and encourages local investment. Quality jobs available locally minimize commuting and economic leakage (people spending money out of the area). Increasing tourism and the amount of money spent per visitor provides value to the community without the need to provide infrastructure.



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## Goals

1. The restoration and expansion of the Project Area as a desirable visitor and tourist destination.
2. The revitalization, as appropriate, of the Project Area's businesses and business districts.
3. Economic development that leads to increased employment opportunities and that mitigates underemployment problems for local residents.
4. The establishment as a model community that integrates the natural environment into a strong, small business-based economy.
5. The expansion of local patronage of area businesses to reduce economic leakage and the promotion of tourism within the River communities.
6. The development of an economic damage control strategy regarding flooding.



## Key Result Area: Housing

The diversity of the current housing stock is part of the area's charm, but is also a challenge. Many homes are substandard and much of the stock is reaching critical age. Affordability of housing is also a major issue as many are being priced out of the community. Maintaining a mix of housing in type and price range will ensure the diversity the community wishes to maintain.



All types of housing should be explored including owner-occupants and renters, single-family homes, multi-family dwellings and single-room occupancy units, congregate housing, mobile homes, trailers, and manufactured homes, transitional housing, permanent supportive housing, emergency shelter, co-housing, and safe havens.

### ***How Does this Key Result Area Relate to the Redevelopment Project?***

Housing was identified as a Key Result Area because availability of decent, safe, accessible, and affordable housing will play a key role in the community's economy and addressing of social issues. Attracting and creating home-based businesses and other business opportunities will be dependent on a wide range of housing options.



Success in improvement of the overall housing market will also help address many of

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the social issues identified as challenges. There is also a requirement that 20 percent of the Redevelopment Funding be used for affordable housing for low- and moderate-income households and a specific strategy is needed to best utilize these funds.

### Goals

1. **The improvement of substandard housing conditions in the Project Area.**
2. **The provision of an increased supply of affordable housing, either through new construction or rehabilitation.**
3. **The elevation of flood-prone housing.**
4. The promotion of diversified housing opportunities, both in terms of structure types and tenure.
5. The identification and implementation of innovative techniques to leverage funds to expand housing opportunities for community members.
6. The improvement of energy efficiency in existing and new housing.

### Key Result Area: Image and Appearance

The community desires to have a physical appearance that fosters community pride and does not detract from the spectacular natural surroundings. The community's image and "first impression" also play a key role in attracting visitors to the area.

#### ***How Does this Key Result Area Relate to the Redevelopment Project?***

First impressions are a critical component of the tourism industry. Over the years, residents have expressed concerns that the community is becoming less visually attractive and the overall image has diminished. There are concerns that the quality of the built environment and challenges provided by social issues are undermining the area's visitor experience.



### Goals

1. **The preservation and enhancement of architecturally and historically interesting buildings and neighborhoods.**
2. **The provision of public improvements and facilities as may be appropriate, consistent with maintaining and enhancing the rustic, informal character of the area, as well as the natural environment.**
3. The maintenance of a clean community.
4. The effort to ensure the built environment compliments the natural surroundings.
5. The capturing and documentation of the history of the area and integrating into events and activities.
6. The promotion of a positive image to counter negative perceptions caused by flooding and other disasters.



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7. The support and encouragement of using Design Guidelines throughout the Project Area.

### Key Result Area: Recreation and Activities

Recreation pulls communities together and offering multi-generational facilities and programs has been expressed as a community priority. Recreation is also one of the primary reasons that visitors come to the area. One of the obstacles to developing a comprehensive program is on-going funding. There are funds available to develop facilities, but little available for maintenance, staffing, and on-going operations.

#### ***How Does this Key Result Area Relate to the Redevelopment Project?***

Recreation and the enjoyment of the natural surroundings by residents and visitors is a key component of "living on the river" and an attraction for visitors to the area. Increased programs for all residents and visitors, including youth and senior activities, are essential for building a well-rounded, active, healthy, and safe community and contribute to a vibrant visitor serving economy.



#### **Goals**

1. The provision of recreation and park facilities for both local residents and visitors, and improved accessibility to recreation assets.
2. The identification and implementation of viable recreation activities.
3. Ensuring the long-term maintenance and viability of recreational and park facilities and programs.

### Key Result Area: Mobility

Mobility is defined as the ability to travel within the area and to other areas by a variety of transportation modes – generally, just the ability to *get around*. Mobility within and through the area is at times difficult and hazardous. State highways that also serve as "Main Street" also provide unique challenges. Non-motorized vehicle and pedestrian accommodations are also in need of expansion or improvement.



#### ***How Does this Key Result Area Relate to the Redevelopment Project?***

The ability to move about the community in a safe and efficient manner impacts both residents and visitors alike. Improving the opportunities for pedestrian and bicycle travel will enhance the local resident and visitor experience in



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addition to reducing negative impacts on the local environment caused by traffic congestion and idling vehicles.

### Goals

1. **The provision of an improved commercial and residential parking supply.**
2. **The provision of streetscape and pedestrian amenities to encourage improved pedestrian/bicycle circulation.**
3. The improvement of non-motorized, low-speed, pedestrian, and non-traditional vehicle transportation options linking the entire Project Area.
4. The expansion of transit opportunities.
5. The reduction of traffic congestion during seasonal periods.

### Key Result Area: Basic Utility and Road Infrastructure



Providing utilities and basic services is a challenge due to the area's terrain and environmental constraints. Managing water, storm water and wastewater services, providing reliable electric and telecommunication services, and developing/maintaining roads all bring about numerous trade-offs between environmental protection and costs to the community. Developing partnerships among the various public and private sector service providers is critical to ensure quality and affordable services

that respect the areas character and fragile environment.

### ***How Does this Key Result Area Relate to the Redevelopment Project?***

Due to the remoteness of the Project Area, maintaining reliable utility and transportation infrastructure is critical. The economy cannot flourish without reliable and consistent services and public facilities that are now not just luxuries but expectations.



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## Goals

1. The upgrading and improvement of utility services to reduce power outages.
2. Assistance in the repair, expansion or development of sewer and septic facilities serving the Project Area consistent with the applicable policies in the General Plan.
3. The improvement of telecommunications with forward-looking, reliable technologies.
4. The effort to ensure the long-term viability of a safe and clean water delivery system.
5. The encouragement of innovative ways to provide utilities and promote cost affordability and rate consistency.
6. The timely maintenance of street and drainage systems.



## Key Result Area: Emergency Preparedness

The area is prone to natural disasters. While some steps have been taken to mitigate the damage caused by flooding and storms, much work needs to be done to protect the community from future damage and health concerns. Earthquakes and fires can also have significant impacts and this is magnified due to the area's remoteness and difficult accessibility should major infrastructure be damaged or roads impassable.

### *How Does this Key Result Area Relate to the Redevelopment Project?*



Besides the obvious impact on public health and safety and the need to protect the citizens, each time a natural disaster strikes the area (such as previous floods or mudslides) the image and perception are impacted. There are also the hard costs of businesses being shut down or disrupted. Through better preparation, education, and assistance, the impacts of natural disasters can be minimized thus expanding the local economy and business opportunities.

## Goals

1. The mitigation of problems resulting from natural disasters.
2. The recovery from natural disasters.
3. The improvement of local emergency preparedness, education, and communication network.
4. The pursuit of a self-contained, alternative electric and telecommunication system to ensure continued service during disasters.

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## Key Result Area: Self-Reliant Community



Building the community's capacity to address its own issues and desires will take a collaborative effort among citizens, businesses, service providers, and governmental agencies. Improving the public's access to quality information will promote increased awareness, participation, and cohesiveness. One of the key tools of the community is the Redevelopment Project, which needs to be better understood.

### ***How Does this Key Result Area Relate to the Redevelopment Project?***

The Russian River communities need to work together to address mutually accepted goals. With the Redevelopment Project providing local funding and County staff support, it is time to develop a strong community leadership body and pursue some of the big items that would have been insurmountable in the past.

### **Goals**

1. **The facilitation of redevelopment activities by working cooperatively with staff of various departments within the County.**
2. The expansion of public information and education efforts about community's activities, the Strategic Plan, and the Russian River Redevelopment Project.
3. The continued building of a culture of community involvement and expanding the public's role in the decision-making process.
4. The exploration of the possible development of standards and guidelines appropriate for the terrain and character of the Russian River area.
5. The expansion of the area's influence and visibility in county and regional planning.
6. The integration of the Strategic Plan into all area planning and decision-making.
7. The use of Evaluation Criteria to objectively prioritize projects and expenditures submitted to the RRROC for consideration.
8. The building of partnerships and collaborative working relationships with the private sector, community-based organizations, and service providers.

## **B. Potential Projects and Initiatives**

The following list of potential projects and initiatives was developed by the public, SPS, and RRROC based on the Key Result Areas and Goals. Many of these projects may be eligible for Redevelopment assistance in accordance with the criteria set forth in CRL and the *Sonoma County Policy Guidance for Use of Redevelopment Funds* (Appendix E). As noted in the Introduction section of this Plan, redevelopment is only one of many funding sources available to the community for Plan implementation. Community redevelopment is usually accomplished by forming a partnership of public and private enterprise. Therefore, the potential project list also includes projects that would not be eligible for redevelopment assistance but may be eligible for assistance through other funding sources, some of which

## Russian River: "Our Vision, Our Future"

are identified below. Local, state, and federal funding opportunities will be pursued to augment available redevelopment funds. All available public resources will be used to lay the foundation and provide the pre-conditions that are necessary for private enterprises to be interested in, and capable of, investing their financial resources in the Project Area. In addition, some of the identified projects can be initiated without significant funding, as volunteer and community-based efforts can be mobilized to implement projects.

Potential Projects and Initiatives	Key Result Areas Addressed	Potential Non-Redevelopment Funding Sources
Explore all opportunities to improve the area's wastewater systems.	Basic Utility/Road Infrastructure Economy Environment/River Preservation Image and Appearance Public Health and Safety	Water Resources Control Board (State) Water Agency (County) Non-profit organizations Dept. of Agriculture (Fed) DTPW
Improve the water system.	Basic Utility/Road Infrastructure Economy Self Reliant Community	Water Districts Sewer Districts
Identify most needed residential street improvements and develop strategies to make improvements.	Basic Utility/Road Infrastructure Emergency Preparedness Image and Appearance Mobility Public Health and Safety	Assessment District DTPW CDBG
Conduct a traffic study for Highway 116 and River Road to identify safety improvements at busy intersections and pedestrian safety improvements such as locations for crosswalks. Coordinate	Basic Utility/Road Infrastructure Mobility Public Health and Safety	DTPW (County) Caltrans (CA) Chambers of Commerce
Improve road shoulders along Highway 116 for pedestrians and bicyclists.	Basic Utility/Road Infrastructure Economy Mobility Public Health and Safety Recreation and Activities	DTPW (County) Rec & Park Districts TDA Article 3 (State) Regional Bike & Pedestrian Program (Federal) CMAQ/STP (Federal)
Create a pathway for pedestrians and cyclists that is separated from the highway by natural landscaping.	Basic Utility/Road Infrastructure Economy Mobility Recreation and Activities	Rec & Park Districts TDA Article 3 (CA) Regional Bike & Pedestrian Program (Federal) CMAQ/STP (Federal)
Rehabilitate or remove derelict and dangerous buildings.	Economy Image and Appearance Public Health and Safety Social Issues	CDBG PRMD (County) Flood Elevation (FEMA) Property Owners

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Potential Projects and Initiatives	Key Result Areas Addressed	Potential Non-Redevelopment Funding Sources
Address abandoned/vacant buildings in downtown areas.	Economy Image and Appearance Public Health and Safety	CDBG PRMD (County)
Develop a façade improvement program.	Economy Image and Appearance	CDBG Property Owners
Help small businesses to improve old signs and building appearance.	Economy Image and Appearance	Chambers of Commerce
Clean up and beautify entryways into each of the Russian River communities.	Economy Image and Appearance	CDBG Property Owners
Improved signage/marker/identifiers coming into town.	Economy Image and Appearance	Chambers of Commerce DTPW (County)
Explore the development of a destination/convention facility.	Economy Image and Appearance	Sonoma County Economic Development Board
Develop and maintain public restrooms.	Economy Environment/River Preservation Image and Appearance Public Health and Safety Social Issues	Rec & Park Districts Regional Parks (County) Chambers of Commerce
Develop/improve existing restrooms public buildings and provide public access.	Economy Image and Appearance Social Issues	Rec & Park Districts Regional Parks (County) Chambers of Commerce
Explore innovative strategies to increase available parking in downtown areas.	Economy Mobility	Business and Property Owners Religious Organizations
Provide housing at all low-income levels, including downtown rentals for seniors.	Economy Housing Social Issues	CDBG Non-profit organizations Developers Public & private lenders
Promote a mix of owner occupied and rental housing.	Economy Housing Strong, Diverse Households	CDBG/HOME State and County Funds Developers Public & private lenders
Improve physical and economic infrastructure for home-based businesses.	Economy Housing Self Reliant Community	Private lenders
Upgrade the visitor's centers and strengthen Visitor's Bureau.	Economy Image and Appearance	Sonoma County Economic Development Board

## Russian River: "Our Vision, Our Future"

Potential Projects and Initiatives	Key Result Areas Addressed	Potential Non-Redevelopment Funding Sources
Enlarge the plaza to hold more/larger events.	Economy Image and Appearance Self Reliant Community	Property Owners Developers State Funds
Acquire the old bank building and restore as a Historical Society museum.	Economy Image and Appearance Recreation and Activities	Private/Grant Funding
Develop a business incubator program.	Economy	Community College District
Build a work-live-market-sell cooperative for artists and artisans. This could also address life long learning opportunities by providing workshops	Economy Image and Appearance	CDBG/HOME HCD (State)
Create summer job opportunities for youth.	Economy Social Issues Strong, Diverse Households	Human Services EDD (CA) CA Human Development Corp. School Districts
Create trade school and apprenticeship opportunities.	Economy Social Issues Strong, Diverse Households	Human Services (County) EDD (CA) CA Human Development Corp.
Develop a theater and/or community center in Russian River communities to host activities.	Economy Recreation and Activities Self Reliant Community Strong, Diverse Households	CDBG Rec & Park Districts Pegasus Theater Private donations Foundations
Make the community more pedestrian friendly (including American with Disabilities Act improvements).	Economy Image and Appearance Mobility	CDBG
Address the flood threat as well as flood damage and its effect on our local businesses.	Economy Image and Appearance	FEMA (Federal) Dept. of Emergency Serv. (County)
Educate property owners and distribute information on riparian area restoration and preservation.	Economy Environment/River Preservation, Image and Appearance	Russian Riverkeepers Coastal Conservancy Open Space District (County)
Explore solutions to treat water runoff to minimize the flow of pesticides and road contaminants into the river and waterways.	Economy Environment/River Preservation,	Regional Parks Coastal Conservancy Water Resources Control Board (State)

## Russian River: "Our Vision, Our Future"

Potential Projects and Initiatives	Key Result Areas Addressed	Potential Non-Redevelopment Funding Sources
Implement an annual community clean up program.	Economy Image and Appearance Public Health and Safety	Private waste management firms
Develop a regular river clean-up program.	Economy Environment/River Preservation, Image and Appearance	Regional Parks Coastal Conservancy Integrated Waste Mgmt (State) Water Agency (County) Foundations and Corporations
Explore the development of an education and evaluation programs to raise awareness about emissions and environmental impacts.	Economy Environment/River Preservation,	Non-profit organizations Water Agency (County) Local/Regional foundations
Support continued testing and monitoring to protect and enhance the River and its habitat and water quality.	Economy Environment/River Preservation, Image and Appearance	Water Agency (County) Local/Regional foundations Non-profit organization Volunteers Coastal Conservancy
Work regionally to minimize the discharge of sewage into the river.	Economy Environment/River Preservation, Image and Appearance	Local/Regional foundations Water Agency (County) City of Santa Rosa Non-profit organizations
Develop strategy to capitalize on new commercial air service to Santa Rosa.	Economy	Sonoma County Tourism Bureau (County)
Develop a marketing strategy to promote the major economic opportunities (arts, industry, river, home-based businesses, and eco-tourism)	Economy Strong, Diverse Households	Sonoma County Economic Development Board EcoRing Niche Marketing Travel & Tourism (County)
Develop community "branding" that stakeholders can adopt to unify our community promotion efforts.	Economy Image and Appearance	Chambers of Commerce Niche Marketing EcoRing Donations
Focus on building the eco-tourism industry.	Economy Image and Appearance	Sonoma County Economic Development Board EcoRing Niche Marketing
Develop more gardening and food related businesses.	Economy Self Reliant Community	Community Alliance for Family Farms (non-profit) Master Gardeners Program (County)

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Potential Projects and Initiatives	Key Result Areas Addressed	Potential Non-Redevelopment Funding Sources
Plant more trees, flowers, and greenery to improve the appearance of downtown Guerneville and Monte Rio.	Economy Environment/River Preservation Image and Appearance	Chambers of Commerce Business and Property Owners
Provide more substations in the Russian River area for law enforcement.	Economy Emergency Preparedness Image and Appearance Public Health and Safety Social Issues	Sheriffs (County)
Develop and/or expand childcare services.	Economy Social Issues Strong, Diverse Households	River Childcare Services CDBG Community Organizations School Districts
Establish a public art program.	Economy Image and Appearance Recreation and Activities	DTPW (County) Chambers of Commerce Business and Property Owners
Renovate and better maintain the parks.	Economy Image and Appearance Recreation and Activities	Rec and Parks Districts Regional Parks
Explore expansion/reconfiguration of recreation facilities.	Economy Image and Appearance Recreation and Activities	Rec and Parks Districts Regional Parks
Improve existing tennis courts.	Economy Recreation and Activities	Rec and Parks Districts Regional Parks
Develop a network of hiking, biking, and equestrian trails to tie into state, county, and local systems.	Economy Image and Appearance Recreation and Activities	Open Space District (County) Sonoma Land Trust Land Path (non-profit)
Improve river access and develop trails along river with benches, bike racks, & picnic tables	Economy Environment/River Preservation Image and Appearance Recreation and Activities	Coastal Conservancy Regional Parks TDA Article 3 (CA) CMAQ (Federal)
Provide shuttle service between communities.	Economy Mobility	Sonoma County Transit
Improve access for people with disabilities.	Economy Mobility Social Issues	CDBG Non-profit organizations
Explore the development of pedestrian bridges over the river to connect the trail system.	Economy Mobility Recreation and Activities	Open Space District (County) Sonoma Land Trust Land Path (non-profit)

## Russian River: "Our Vision, Our Future"

Potential Projects and Initiatives	Key Result Areas Addressed	Potential Non-Redevelopment Funding Sources
Encourage property owners to manage overgrown vegetation along roadways to increase options for pedestrian/bicycle users.	Economy Mobility Recreation and Activities	PRMD (County) DES (County)
Develop a community-wide wireless Internet system.	Economy Self Reliant Community	Private
Develop and circulate a brochure listing public agencies and community service organizations and contact information.	Economy Public Health and Safety Self Reliant Community Social Issues Strong, Diverse Households	Chambers of Commerce Regional Library (County) Community Organizations Volunteers/Student Interns
Explore ways to combine and/or expand Special Districts (i.e., Fire and Recreation & Parks) within the redevelopment area.	Economy Self Reliant Community	Fire Districts Rec & Park Districts
Develop local parks and recreation funding.	Economy Image and Appearance Recreation and Activities Self Reliant Community	Rec & Park Districts Open Space District (County) Coastal Conservancy Regional Parks
Focus on improving the quality and appearance of local schools.	Economy Self Reliant Community Strong, Diverse Households	School Districts
Improve local fire protection.	Economy Image and Appearance Public Health and Safety	Fire Districts
Explore ways to increase locally grown food. Consider establishing community gardens and food cooperatives.	Economy Self Reliant Community	Cooperatives Community Alliance for Family Farms (non-profit) Master Gardeners Program (County)
Identify sustainable and cost effective utility services.	Economy Public Health and Safety Self Reliant Community	Utility Providers
Expand incentives and assistance options to increase solar power use.	Economy Environment/River Preservation Self Reliant Community	Utility Providers Foundations
Identify options and encourage the use of alternative energy sources.	Economy Environment/River Preservation Self Reliant Community	Utility Providers Foundations

## Russian River: "Our Vision, Our Future"

Potential Projects and Initiatives	Key Result Areas Addressed	Potential Non-Redevelopment Funding Sources
Improve access to health care.	Economy Public Health and Safety Strong, Diverse Households	Sonoma Community Foundation Non-profit organizations Sonoma County Transit Private donors
Strengthen local radio.	Economy Emergency Preparedness Image and Appearance	Media Owners
Provide equipment for fire districts to fight fires in buildings taller than 35 feet.	Emergency Preparedness Housing Public Health and Safety	CDBG Fire District Funds
Ensure there are working generators for all emergency and essential public facilities.	Emergency Preparedness Public Health and Safety Self Reliant Community	FEMA (Federal) DES (County) Fire Districts
Establish neighborhood meeting places in time of emergency.	Emergency Preparedness	School Districts Regional Parks Fire Districts
Provide emergency preparedness classes free to local residents.	Emergency Preparedness Self Reliant Community	School Districts Regional Parks Fire Districts
Develop and maintain neighborhood networks to educate citizens on emergency preparedness.	Emergency Preparedness Public Health and Safety Strong, Diverse Households	DES FEMA
Develop and maintain more neighborhood watch programs.	Emergency Preparedness Image and Appearance Public Health and Safety Self Reliant Community Strong, Diverse Households	Volunteers Sheriffs (County) Chambers of Commerce Homeowner Associations
Develop a drop-in day center for homeless with laundry, showers, food/coffee, telephones, message boards, and access to computers, classes, and counseling.	Environment/River Preservation Public Health and Safety Social Issues	Continuum of Care (Federal) Community Organizations Foundations Private donors
Develop a temporary shelter and transitional housing.	Housing Social Issues	CDBG Public funds Non-profit organizations
Support development of single room and senior housing facilities.	Housing Strong, Diverse Households	CDC Developers Public & private lenders

## Russian River: "Our Vision, Our Future"

Potential Projects and Initiatives	Key Result Areas Addressed	Potential Non-Redevelopment Funding Sources
Work with other agencies and foundations to expand housing opportunities.	Housing Self Reliant Community Social Issues	CDBG Non-profit organizations State Funds Developers Public & private lenders
Support compliance of health and safety codes	Housing Image and Appearance Public Health and Safety	CDBG PRMD (County) Health Services (County) Public & private lenders
Explore the feasibility of undergrounding utilities.	Image and Appearance	Utility Providers
Develop shelters for shuttle service.	Image and Appearance Mobility	Sonoma County Transit
Create dog park or dog trails with waste disposing stations.	Image and Appearance Public Health and Safety Recreation and Activities	Regional Parks
Remodel the library to include a teen reading area.	Image and Appearance Social Issues Strong, Diverse Households	CDBG School Districts
Educate citizens about the importance of self-reliance and opportunities to serve the community.	Image and Appearance Self Reliant Community	Chambers of Commerce Non profit organizations School Districts
Develop a Teen Center.	Public Health and Safety Recreation and Activities Social Issues Strong, Diverse Households	CDBG Rec & Parks Districts Private Donations Non-profit organizations Foundations
Develop a Skate Board Park.	Public Health and Safety Recreation and Activities Social Issues Strong, Diverse Households	Rec & Parks Districts Sonoma Community Foundation
Develop training programs for home and business owners to reduce crime.	Public Health and Safety	Sheriffs (County) Chambers of Commerce Volunteers Foundation Grants
Encourage community forums and town meetings.	Public Health and Safety Self Reliant Community	Neighborhood Organizations
Expand efforts to provide assistance and available resources on substance abuse to the community.	Public Health and Safety Social Issues	Health Services (County)

## Russian River: "Our Vision, Our Future"

Potential Projects and Initiatives	Key Result Areas Addressed	Potential Non-Redevelopment Funding Sources
Expand free food outlets that focus on a nutritious and balanced diet	Public Health and Safety Social Issues	Community Organizations Local/Regional Foundations Volunteers
Improve coordination and cooperation with school districts to make better use of school facilities for various activities.	Recreation and Activities Strong, Diverse Households	School Districts Rec and Park Districts
Create a one-stop community/social service center.	Self Reliant Community Social Issues Strong, Diverse Households	CDBG Community Organizations Foundations Private donors
Develop community centers to bring together community functions.	Self Reliant Community Strong, Diverse Households	CDBG State Funds

## IV. PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

Implementing this Plan will require a consortium of stakeholders including the Board of Supervisors, Sonoma County Community Development Commission, RRROC, local businesses and service providers, and the citizens of the lower Russian River communities.

This section outlines key steps in the plan's implementation: evaluation of projects proposed for Redevelopment assistance, evaluation of program performance, and specific strategies for keeping the plan relevant, up to date, and effective.

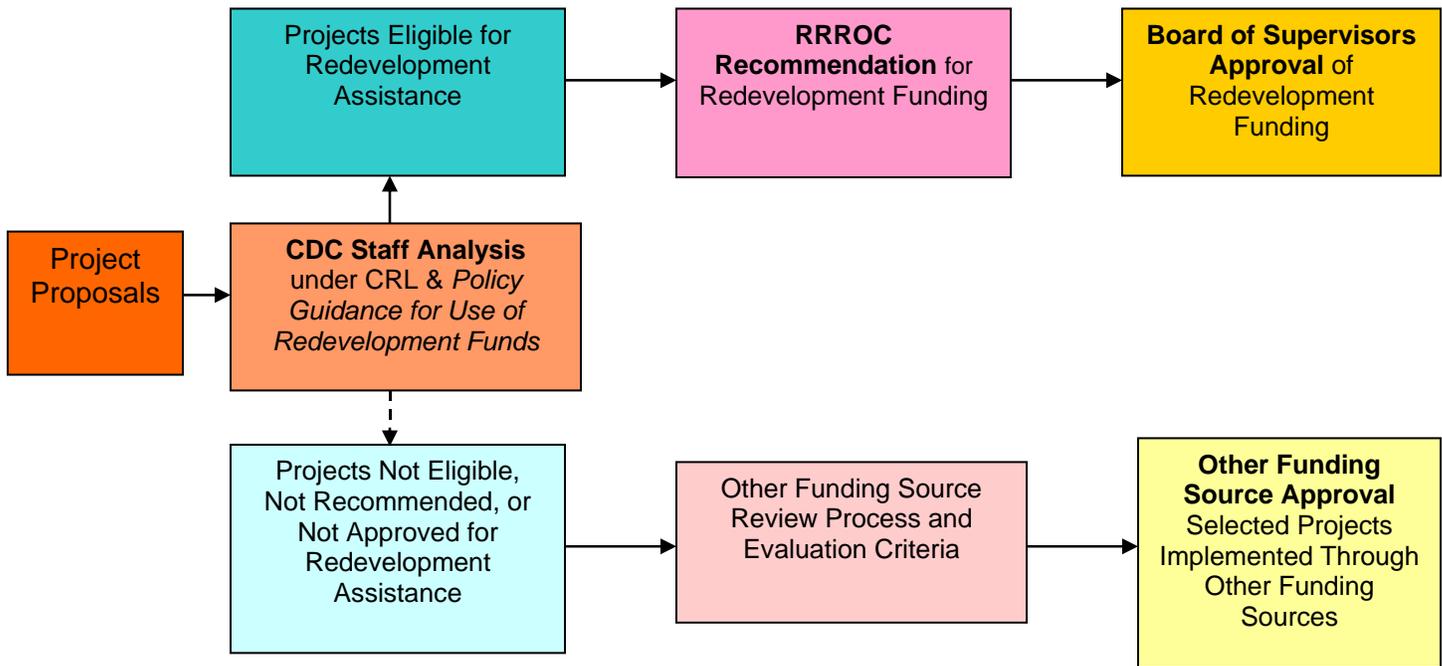
### A. Project Evaluation Criteria and Funding Approval Process

#### Evaluation Criteria

Using Evaluation Criteria is a common way for both public and private sector organizations to prioritize expenditures. The key is to determine a set of criteria that can pertain to a wide variety of projects while reflecting the mission, vision, and values of the organization. Having established criteria also provides those developing proposals with a clear understanding of what submissions should address and what results are desired.

#### Project Review and Funding Approval Process

Evaluating projects that have been developed to implement the plan will entail several decision points, as illustrated in the flowchart below.



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### Projects Eligible for Redevelopment Assistance

A project will first be evaluated to determine if it is eligible for Redevelopment assistance under CRL. Projects that are deemed eligible under CRL will be further evaluated through a three-step process to determine if they are a high priority for Redevelopment assistance, if they meet the criteria and standards outlined in the *Sonoma County Policy Guidance for Use of Redevelopment Funds* (Appendix E), and how much Redevelopment funding may be provided.

**Step 1** – CDC staff analysis of project using criteria and standards established by CRL and *Sonoma County Policy Guidance* to determine eligibility, priority, and benefit to Redevelopment Project Area.

**Step 2** – RRROC recommendation regarding funding approval for capital projects. In addition to reviewing the CDC staff analysis, the RRROC will review proposals using the following criteria, which reflect the Key Result Areas identified by the community.

- a. Will the project have a direct impact on improving local business opportunities, creating potential new jobs, or retaining existing jobs? Will it have a positive impact on the overall business climate?
- b. Will the project directly or indirectly support expanding affordable housing efforts?
- c. Will the project have a direct or indirect positive impact on the local environment?
- d. Will the project directly or indirectly lead to improvements in recreation facilities or programs?
- e. Will the project provide direct or indirect improvements to overall multimodal mobility?
- f. Will the project directly or indirectly address a recognized health and safety issue?
- g. Will the project have a direct or indirect impact on improving the community's ability to retain/attract diverse households?
- h. Will the project directly or indirectly address social issues?

**Step 3** – Board of Supervisors consideration of CDC staff analysis and RRROC recommendation, and final decision regarding funding approval.

### Projects Not Eligible for Redevelopment Assistance

For projects that not deemed eligible for Redevelopment assistance, it will be incumbent on the community to mobilize funding from other sources. Such projects will be evaluated under the criteria established by the funding sources from which assistance is requested.

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## B. Performance Indicators

Performance Indicators are a way of "keeping score" to determine the effectiveness of an organization and/or the implementation success of a specific plan. Since the issues to be addressed in this Plan are community-wide and comprehensive, the Performance Indicators must be quite broad. It is critical that current data is readily available in order to determine the level of performance and that a manageable and realistic number of indicators are used since data collection is time-consuming and resources are limited. Indicators have been chosen that can be measured annually as opposed to waiting for decennial census data.

The goal of the Performance Indicators is to periodically have the ability to pull together poignant information so the community can "tell a story" about the effectiveness of its strategic goals and programs. As the data is tracked over a period of years, it can be determined whether the community is making positive strides, or lagging behind its goals.

Since many of the Performance Indicators cross several Key Result Areas, they are not categorized. The following Performance Indicators were developed for use during the first year's Performance Evaluation. It is anticipated that each year the Performance Indicators will be reviewed as to relevancy, data availability, so that newly developed community goals, and desired outcomes can be created or previous goals/outcomes adjusted.

Potential data sources are listed with each of the Indicators:

- Crime rates (Sheriff's Office)
- Traffic accident data (Sheriff's Office, California Highway Patrol)
- Emergency response times (Sheriff's Office, Fire Departments)
- Number of full-time households (Census, utilities)
- River water quality readings (Water Quality Control Board, Water Agencies)
- Air quality readings (Northern Sonoma County Air Pollution Control District)
- Net new businesses (Sonoma County, Chambers of Commerce)
- Commercial Construction Permits (County PRMD)
- Retail sales/sales/TOT tax revenues (Sonoma County Economic Development Board)
- Assessed Valuation (County Assessor's Office)
- Housing starts and rehabilitation permits (County PRMD)
- Number of new or rehabilitated housing units restricted as affordable (Sonoma County CDC)
- Participant level in recreation programs (Parks and Recreation Districts)

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- New parks and recreation programs and facilities developed (Recreation and Park Districts)
- Transit rider-ship (Sonoma County Transit)
- Number of miles of new bicycle and pedestrian paths developed (Sonoma County)
- Miles of repaired or renovated roadways (Sonoma County DTPW)
- Number of transitional and supportive housing units developed (Sonoma County CDC)
- Number of homeless people in the community (Biennial Homeless Count – Sonoma County CDC)
- Traffic Counts to measure visitors vs. pass through traffic (CHP, Sonoma County Public Works)

### **Performance Indicator Tracking Matrix**

The following table can be used to gather and report data for the annual evaluation of the community's performance in implementing the plan.

INDICATORS	2009	2010	2011	2012
Crime rates				
Traffic accident data				
Emergency response times				
Number of full-time households				
River water quality readings				
Air quality readings				
Net new businesses				
Commercial Construction Permits				
Retail sales/sales/TOT tax revenues				
Assessed Valuation				
Housing starts and rehabilitation permits				
Number of new or rehabilitated housing units restricted as affordable				
Participant level in recreation programs				
New parks and recreation programs and facilities developed				
Transit rider-ship				
Number of miles of new bicycle and pedestrian paths developed				
Miles of repaired or renovated roadways				
Number of transitional and supportive housing units developed				
Number of homeless people in the community				
Traffic counts to measure visitors vs. pass through traffic				

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### C. Implementation Strategies

The following general Implementation strategies are recommended:

- Developing public/private partnerships to expand funding opportunities and collaborative initiative implementation.
- Pursuing alternative local, state, federal, and private funding sources to implement priority projects.
- Adoption of 5-Year Implementation Plans required by CRL.
- Periodic Strategic Plan updates to ensure the plan is current and reflects internal and external changes.
- Complete an annual report as required by the State of California.
- Continue public engagement and dialogue to raise resident awareness about the Plan, Redevelopment, and community development efforts in general.
- Use the Performance Indicators to annually review and assess plan performance and implementation.
- Evaluate specific projects by Primary and Secondary Goals related to the Key Result Areas (see Appendix C – Goals and Objectives (Key Result Areas)).

***By sticking to the Plan and decision-making tools provided, the community can systematically accomplish key tasks that will move the Russian River area towards its Vision for the Future!***

**Russian River is more than a place;  
It's a state of mind and a way of living.  
Our Vision, Our Future!**

## **APPENDIX A – ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

### **Sonoma County Board of Supervisors**

Chairman Paul L. Kelley, 4<sup>th</sup> District  
Vice Chairwoman Valerie Brown, 1<sup>st</sup> District  
Mike Kerns, 2<sup>nd</sup> District  
Shirlee Zane, 3<sup>rd</sup> District  
Efren Carrillo, 5<sup>th</sup> District

### **RRROC**

Suzie Baxman  
Lynn Crescione  
Dan Fein  
Gary Getchell  
Tom Lynch  
Sarah Ronis  
John Uniack  
Ken Wikle  
Catherine Young

### **Former RRROC members:**

John De Salvio  
Sheila Peterson  
George Zastrow

### **Strategic Planning Subcommittee**

#### **RRROC Members**

Lynn Crescione  
Dan Fein  
Ken Wikle  
Catherine Young

#### **Public Members**

Bruce Alfano  
Liam Davis  
Herman Hernandez  
Elisabeth Middelberg  
Robert Petersen

### **Sonoma County Community Development Commission / Redevelopment Agency Staff**

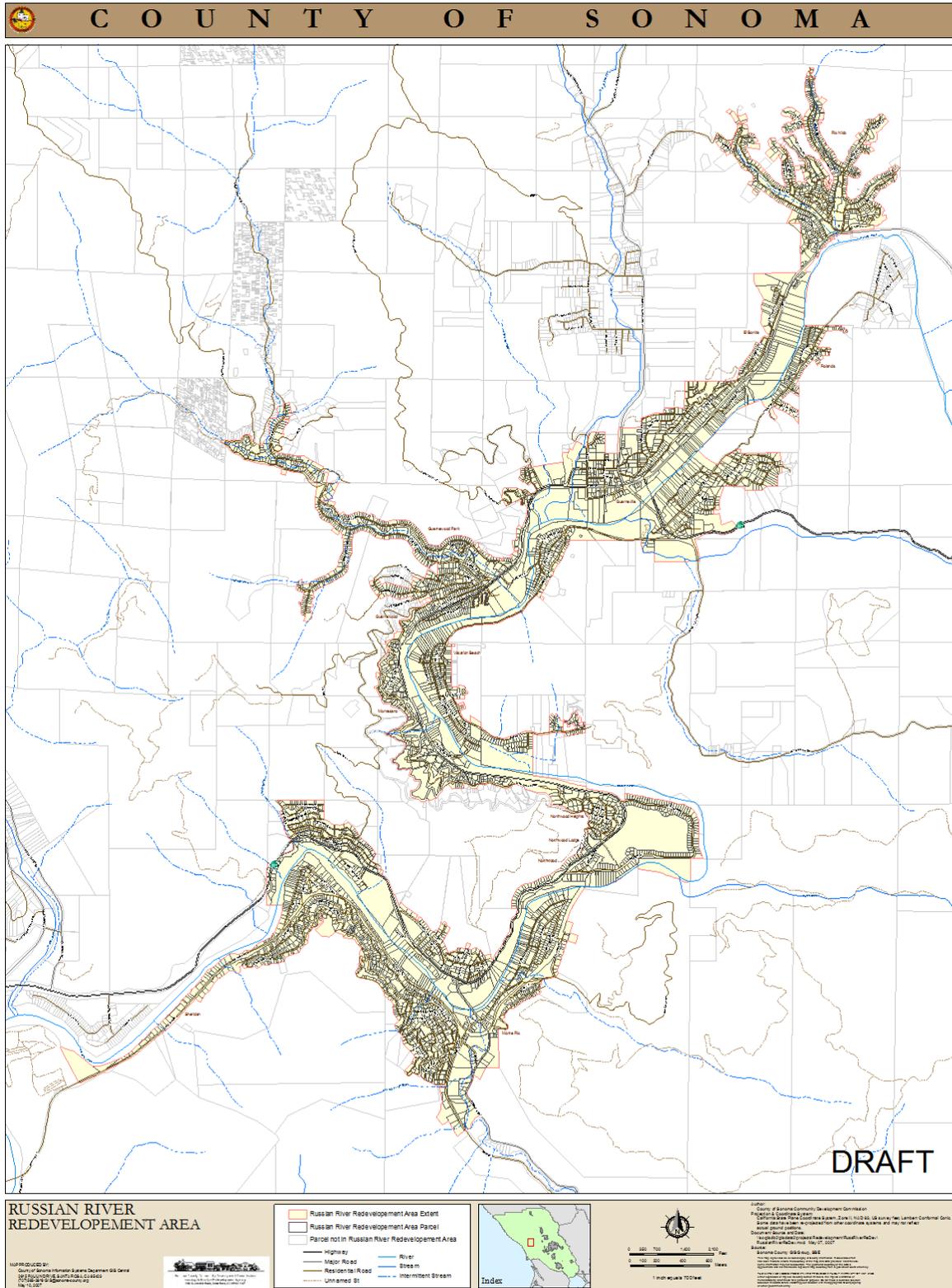
#### **Project Consultant**

Partners for Strategic Action, Inc.  
13771 Fountain Hills Blvd., Suite 360, Fountain Hills, Arizona 85268  
480.816.1811  
psainc@cox.net  
www.psaplanning.com

**The Strategic Planning Subcommittee, RRROC, CDC Staff, and Board of Supervisors would also like to acknowledge and thank the hundreds of participants, young and old, who contributed their time, ideas, passion, and energy into this planning effort!**

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## APPENDIX B – PLANNING AREA MAP



# Russian River: "Our Vision, Our Future"

## APPENDIX C – Goals and Objectives (Key Result Areas)

Legend														
Project Primary Goal														
Project Secondary Goal														
Projects		Public Health & Safety	Strong Diverse Households	Social Issues	Environment & River Preservation	Economy	Housing	Image & Appearance	Recreation & Activities	Mobility	Basic Utility and Road Infrastructure	Emergency Preparedness	Self Reliant Community	
<b>Approved projects</b>														
Housing Study - BAE														
Housing Rehabilitation Program														
RRRPD Emergency Generator														
Historic Bridge Security Cameras														
River Flow Study														
Rio Nido Fire Station														
MRRPD Master Plan														
RRRPD Master Plan														
Ca-LEEP Pilot Program														
Big Spring Cleanup														
Norgaard (Formerly Kelso) Building Removal														
De Monchy Building Removal														
KGGV Grant														
Monte Rio Community Center														
Vehicle Abatement Program														
Design Guidelines - RRM														
Eco-Ring														
Woodstove Program														
River Park Restrooms														
Riverkeepers Property Rehab														
Niche Marketing Grant														
Strategic Plan Consultants - PSA														
RRRPD Tennis Courts														
Riverkeeper Property Rehab Ph II														
Guerneville River Park Ph II														
Design Guidelines - PRMD														
River Child Care Services														
MR Fire District Study														
Guerne Property Acquisition														
5th & Mill Housing Project														
<b>Proposed projects</b>														
Sweetwater Springs District Pipeline Replacement														
<b>Primary Goal</b>		5	1	0	5	3	3	7	4	0	1	0	1	
<b>Secondary Goal</b>		4	2	2	3	3	1	1	6	0	0	2	6	
<b>Summary</b>		9	3	2	8	6	4	8	10	0	1	2	7	

## **APPENDIX D- Glossary of Acronyms**

- ABAG/RHND** – Association of Bay Area Governments/Regional Housing Needs Determination
- AV** – Assessed Valuation
- BAE** – Bay Area Economics
- Ca-LEEP** – California Local Energy Efficiency Program
- CDBG** – Community Development Block Grant
- CDC** – Sonoma County Community Development Commission
- CHP** – California Highway Patrol
- CMAQ/STP** - Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement/Surface Transportation Program
- CRL** - California Community Redevelopment Law
- DES** – California Department of Emergency Services
- DTPW** – Sonoma County Department of Transportation and Public Works
- EDD** – California Employment Development Department
- EMS** – Emergency Medical Services
- FEMA** – Federal Emergency Management Agency
- HCD** – California Department of Housing and Community Development
- HOME** – Home Investment Partnerships Program
- KGGV** – KGGV FM Radio
- MR** – Monte Rio
- MRRPD** – Monte Rio Recreation and Park District
- PSA** – Partners for Strategic Action, Inc.
- PRMD** – Sonoma County Permit Resource and Management Department
- RDA** – Redevelopment Agency
- RRFPD** – Russian River Fire Protection District
- RRM** – RRM Design Group
- RRROC** - Russian River Redevelopment Oversight Committee
- RRRPD** – Russian River Recreation and Parks District
- SPS** – RRROC Strategic Planning Subcommittee
- TDA** – Transportation Development Act
- TOT** – Transient Occupancy Tax

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**APPENDIX E - Sonoma County Policy Guidance for Use of  
Redevelopment Funds**

**SONOMA COUNTY**  
**POLICY GUIDANCE FOR USE OF REDEVELOPMENT FUNDS**  
**April 1, 2008**

The California Community Redevelopment Law (CRL) provides the authority for a county or city to establish a redevelopment agency to carry out a local redevelopment program using tax increment financing. The law governing community redevelopment resides in the Health and Safety Code, beginning with Section 33000 et seq. At its roots, redevelopment is about improving the health and safety conditions in a designated redevelopment project area. Redevelopment can only be used in areas that suffer from adverse physical and economic conditions, defined in the law as “blight”. Redevelopment is also focused on the preservation and expansion of employment and affordable housing opportunities.

The fundamental premise behind redevelopment funding is that real estate values (called Assessed Valuation – AV) typically increase over time as existing commercial and residential properties are sold and improved, and as new developments are built within a redevelopment project area. The additional property taxes generated as a result of this increase in AV (called the property tax increment) are allocated to the redevelopment project to finance additional activities that will benefit the project area.

Without the redevelopment project, all existing and new property taxes would continue to be allocated to the County’s general fund and to special districts serving the area. The County’s general fund provides resources for services such as law enforcement, public health, planning, public works, roads, library, and administration. Special district funding provides resources for services such as fire protection, schools, lighting, parks and recreation, and pollution control/conservation.

Only a portion of the tax increment revenues flow to the redevelopment project. A percentage is first “passed through” to the County’s general fund and to special districts. Tax increment revenues remaining after these pass-through payments go to the redevelopment project. CRL further stipulates that 20 percent of the gross tax increment revenues, as calculated prior to the pass-through payments, must be allocated to activities that will increase affordable housing opportunities for low- and moderate-income households in the project area. Remaining tax increment revenues received by the redevelopment project may be used for any eligible activity under CRL.

A county or city that establishes a redevelopment project may establish additional priorities and criteria for the types of CRL-eligible activities that will be considered for receipt of local redevelopment assistance. Accordingly, the Board of Supervisors, acting in their capacity as the Board of Commissioners of the Sonoma County Community Redevelopment Agency, has developed the following policies and priorities to more narrowly focus the investment of redevelopment funding in County redevelopment project areas.

**All requests for Sonoma County redevelopment assistance will be evaluated to determine that the proposed project will:**

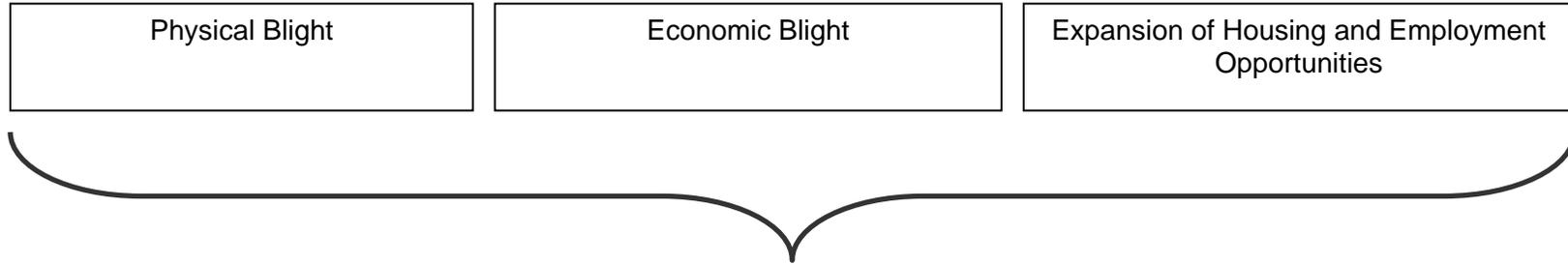
- 1) Address a primary purpose of CRL; and
- 2) Represent an allowable use of redevelopment funds under CRL; and
- 3) Meet the criteria and standards contained in CRL; and
- 4) Meet local priorities, criteria, and standards contained in these policies.

The following pages further describe each of the factors listed above, and lay out the framework within which proposed projects will be evaluated for redevelopment assistance within Sonoma County’s redevelopment project areas.

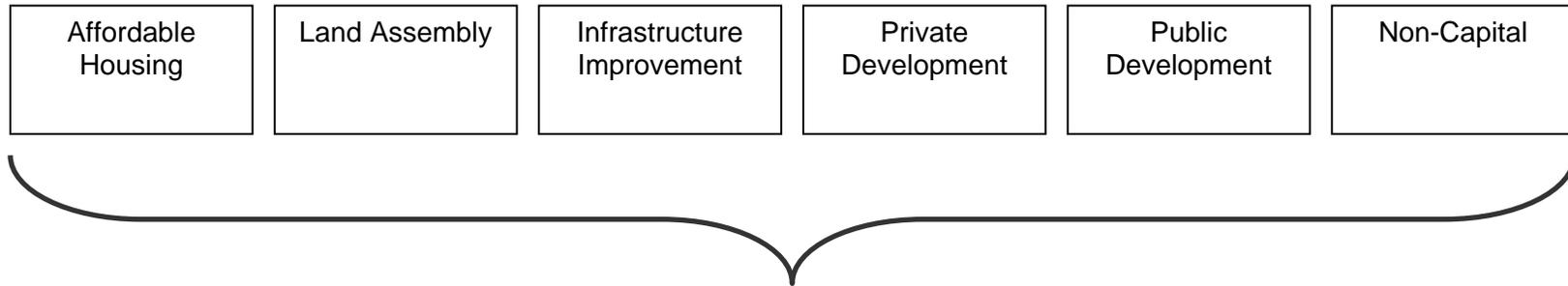
**For further information, please contact: Sonoma County Community Development Commission / Redevelopment Agency- 707-565-7508.**

# SONOMA COUNTY POLICY GUIDANCE FOR USE OF REDEVELOPMENT FUNDS

**1. Project must conform to State law: elimination of blight and the expansion of housing and employment opportunities**



**2. An activity must be permitted under CRL and meet statutory criteria and standards, as applicable**



**3 & 4. Project must meet state and local criteria and standards**



## SONOMA COUNTY POLICY GUIDANCE FOR USE OF REDEVELOPMENT FUNDS

The following decision-making framework will be used to evaluate projects seeking redevelopment assistance.

### 1. Is the proposed use consistent with the purpose of California Redevelopment Law?

California Community Redevelopment Law (CRL) establishes the primary purpose of redevelopment funding as the elimination of blight and the expansion of housing and employment opportunities. CRL defines **blight** as a **predominantly urbanized** area characterized by **one or more** CRL listed **physical blight condition and economic blight condition** that rise to the following levels of significance:

- the combination of blight conditions are so **prevalent** and **substantial**
- there is a resulting **reduction** of, or **lack** of, utilization of the area
- area constitutes a **serious** physical and economic **burden** on the community
- blight cannot reasonably be expected to be reversed or alleviated by **private enterprise**, or **government action**, without redevelopment assistance

To be eligible for redevelopment funding, an activity must address one of the purposes identified in CRL. Table 1 identifies CRL listed physical and economic blight conditions, and housing and employment opportunities eligible for redevelopment assistance.

**Table 1: Statutory Purposes for Redevelopment**

Physical Blight	Economic Blight	Housing and Employment Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Unsafe or unhealthy buildings</li> <li>- Conditions that prevent or substantially hinder the viable use or capacity of buildings or lots</li> <li>- Adjacent or nearby incompatible land uses</li> <li>- Subdivided lots with multiple ownership and development constraints</li> <li>- Inadequate infrastructure</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Depreciated or stagnated property values</li> <li>- Abnormally high vacancy rates, low lease rates, high number of abandoned buildings</li> <li>- Impaired properties (contamination)</li> <li>- Serious lack of necessary commercial facilities</li> <li>- Serious residential overcrowding</li> <li>- Excess of bars, liquor stores, or adult-oriented businesses</li> <li>- High crime rate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Expand supply of low- and moderate-income housing</li> <li>- Expand employment opportunities for jobless, underemployed, and low-income persons residing in the project area</li> </ul>

**SONOMA COUNTY POLICY GUIDANCE FOR USE OF REDEVELOPMENT FUNDS**

**2. Is the proposed use allowable under CRL?**

In addition to addressing the purpose of redevelopment, an activity must be allowable under CRL. Table 2 includes examples of allowable activities. Allowable does not mean that such activities are automatically eligible for redevelopment funding. To be eligible, activity must meet the purpose of CRL, be allowable under CRL, and meet criteria and standards (Ref. 3 & 4 below) contained in CRL.

**Table 2: Examples of State CRL Allowable Activities for the Use of Redevelopment Funding**

<b>A. Affordable Housing (20 % low mod set-aside)</b>	<b>B. Land Assembly</b>	<b>C. Infrastructure Improvement</b>	<b>D. Private Development</b>	<b>E. Public Development</b>	<b>F. Non-Capital</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- New rental and owner units</li> <li>- Substantial rehabilitation</li> <li>- Non-substantial rehab</li> <li>- Hazard mitigation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Acquisition</li> <li>- Site preparation</li> <li>- Disposition</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Sewer</li> <li>-Water</li> <li>-Roads</li> <li>-Sidewalks</li> <li>-Lighting</li> <li>- Storm Drains</li> <li>-Landscape</li> <li>-Drainage</li> <li>- Bike lanes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Facade Improve</li> <li>- Commercial Rehab</li> <li>- Seismic Upgrd</li> <li>- Visitor centers</li> <li>- Hazard mitigation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Parks</li> <li>- Health facilities</li> <li>- Community Ctrs</li> <li>- Public restrooms</li> <li>- Fire stations</li> <li>- Law enforcement</li> <li>-Signage</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Strategic plans</li> <li>- Design guidelines</li> <li>- Marketing (tourism)</li> <li>- Clean-up programs</li> <li>- Graffiti removal</li> <li>- Abandon vehicle abate</li> <li>- Extraord code enforce</li> </ul>

**3. Does the activity meet criteria and standards contained in CRL?**

CRL contains statutory criteria and standards a project must meet to be eligible for redevelopment assistance. Following is a list of criteria and standards arranged by activity type:

**A. Affordable Housing**

- Loans or grants for public or private developers/property owners
- Increases, improves, or preserves the supply of housing affordable to low- and moderate-income households
- Counts towards unmet replacement housing requirement, if any<sup>1</sup>
- Counts towards unmet housing production requirement, if any<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Agency must replace any affordable housing units eliminated as a result of agency-funded activity  
April 1, 2008

## SONOMA COUNTY POLICY GUIDANCE FOR USE OF REDEVELOPMENT FUNDS

- In the aggregate, housing units assisted with redevelopment (RDA) funds must be affordable to very low-, and low-income households in at least the same proportion as the ratio of the number of units needed for these two income categories to the total number of units needed for very low-, low-, and moderate-income households, as determined by ABAG RHND.
- In the aggregate, housing units assisted with RDA funds must be available to persons regardless of age in at least the same proportion as the number of low-income households in the community with a member under age 65 to the total number of low-income households in the community, as determined by the most recent census.
- New and substantially rehabilitated<sup>3</sup> rental units assisted with RDA funds must be restricted as affordable for minimum of 55 years
- New and substantially rehabilitated ownership units assisted with RDA funds must be restricted as affordable for minimum of 45 years
- 100% of non-substantially rehabilitated units must be restricted as affordable for reasonable period of time given level of assistance
- Transitional housing permitted with long-term affordability restrictions in place
- Prohibition against using housing set aside funds for emergency shelters
- Housing outside of RDA permitted only if finding of benefit to RDA

### B. Land Assembly

- Agency will own land only for period reasonably necessary to return the land to productive reuse by private sector or other public agencies
- Property will be developed by another public or private entity based on established criteria & standards, as applicable
- Consistent with 5-Year Implementation Plan
- Disposition is for not less than highest and best use value or “fair reuse value” under terms of conveyance

### C. Infrastructure Improvement

- Provided for in Redevelopment Plan
- Consistent with General Plan
- Consistent with 5-Year Implementation Plan
- No other reasonable means available to finance improvements
- Must eliminate blight and benefit project area
- Prohibition against use of funds for normal operation or maintenance of publicly-owned buildings, facilities, structures, or other improvements (except properties owned directly by Agency)

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<sup>2</sup> Agency must ensure that 15% of all housing units built or substantially rehabilitated within the RDA are affordable to low- and moderate-income person, regardless of whether such activity is assisted by the Agency. Forty percent of the 15% (or 6% of total), must be affordable to very low-income households

<sup>3</sup> Rehabilitation cost at or above 25% of after—rehab value inclusive of land value

## SONOMA COUNTY POLICY GUIDANCE FOR USE OF REDEVELOPMENT FUNDS

### D. Private Development – Non Housing

- Loans only for commercial rehabilitation
- Loans or grants for seismic retrofitting
- Loans or grants for manufacturing facilities
- Land assembly/site preparation/land disposition to cause private sector reinvestment in underutilized sites
- Prohibition against use of funds for private construction costs
- 

### E. Public Development (Land and Public Buildings and Facilities; Section 33445 Findings)

- Provided for in Redevelopment Plan
- Consistent with 5-Year Implementation Plan
- Consistent with General Plan
- Building, facilities, structures, or other improvements are of benefit to the project area or the immediate neighborhood in which the project is located
- No other reasonable means available to finance development
- Payment of funds for the acquisition of land or the cost of buildings, facilities, or structures, or other improvements will assist in the elimination of one or more blighting conditions or provide housing for low- or moderate-income persons
- Prohibition against use of funds for normal operation or maintenance of publicly-owned buildings, facilities, structures, or other improvements (except properties owned directly by Agency)

### F. Non-Capital/Planning/Marketing

- Promotes economic development and creates job opportunities, particularly for low-income persons residing within RDA
- Promotes elimination of blight
- Necessary to effectively and efficiently administer the RDA and implement the RDA Plan and 5-Year Implementation Plan

## 4. Does the proposed use meet local criteria and standards?

### A. Affordable Housing Projects

In addition to meeting all applicable statutory requirements, housing projects must meet local criteria and standards to be approved for redevelopment assistance. The County will use the following criteria to evaluate housing projects proposed for redevelopment assistance.

Housing projects that develop new or preserve existing housing units affordable to and restricted for occupancy by low- and moderate-income households are a high priority for assistance.

- Housing projects will receive a higher priority for funding if they:

## SONOMA COUNTY POLICY GUIDANCE FOR USE OF REDEVELOPMENT FUNDS

- Exceed the affordability requirements listed in 3.A. above
- Help meet replacement housing and project area housing production requirements
- Help County to satisfy the Housing Element Quantified Objectives
- Assistance for housing projects will be provided in the form of a loan
- Assistance must be secured by the appraised value of the property
- Assistance must meet all CDC underwriting criteria and locally-adopted lending policies

### **B, C, D, & E Non-Housing Capital Development Projects (Land Assembly, Infrastructure Improvements, Private Development, Public Development)**

In addition to meeting all applicable statutory requirements, non-housing projects must meet local criteria and standards to be approved for redevelopment assistance. All non-housing capital development projects will be evaluated according to the following three-tiered structure that describes the local priorities, criteria, and standards that must be met to receive approval for redevelopment assistance.

Each project must demonstrate that it meets the standards in each of the three tiers to be approved for redevelopment assistance.

Tier 1: First, a project will be assessed to determine if it falls within one of the Tier 1 relative priority areas that will be considered for assistance.

Tier 2: If the project falls within one of the Tier 1 priority areas, it will next be assessed against Tier 2 eligibility criteria. The project must meet at least one of the eligibility criteria under Tier 2 to be eligible to receive assistance.

Tier 3: If the project meets one or more of the eligibility criteria, it will then be assessed using benefit indicators such as those listed under Tier 3. The information provided through the benefit indicators will be used by staff, advisory committees, and the Board of Supervisors to evaluate whether the project will provide a level of benefit that justifies the investment of the requested redevelopment funds.

#### 1. Relative Priority of Projects

Several types of non-housing projects are eligible for redevelopment assistance under the State standards and criteria discussed above. Sonoma County has established additional standards and criteria that give a higher relative priority for assistance to certain types of projects, and a lower relative priority for assistance to other types of projects. In general, projects will be considered for assistance in accordance with the following relative priority structure:

##### Highest Priority Projects (most likely to receive assistance)

- Blight removal
- Public health<sup>4</sup> and safety (e.g., buildings falling down, pedestrian crossings, flood/seismic hazard mitigation. Not medical clinics).

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<sup>4</sup> Public health addresses the health of the population as a whole rather than medical health care, which focuses on treatment of the individual ailment.

## SONOMA COUNTY POLICY GUIDANCE FOR USE OF REDEVELOPMENT FUNDS

- Economic development and tourism / visitor-serving uses

### Moderate Priority Projects (will require significant community benefit analysis to receive assistance)

- Public recreation the primary purpose of which is to remove blight and/or support economic development
- Natural environment preservation the primary purpose of which is to remove blight and/or support economic development

### Lowest Priority Projects (least likely to receive assistance)

- Accommodate diverse households, preserve and foster diverse local character
- Mobility improvements
- Social issues, personal health issues, and support of programs, services, and neighborhood organizations

## 2. Eligibility Criteria

Non-housing projects must meet one or more of the following criteria to receive County redevelopment assistance. Projects meeting more than one of these criteria are more likely to receive assistance.

- Projects that will replace or improve deteriorated buildings and infrastructure
- Projects that will mitigate a public health or safety threat to the physical well-being of area residents and visitors
- Projects that will mitigate an environmental health hazard
- Projects that will correct a condition for which a government abatement action is pending
- Projects that will induce private investment in surrounding properties with goal of removing blight and/or economic development.
- Projects that establish recapture of redevelopment investment through:
  - Increase in property values
  - Increase sales tax revenue
  - Increase transient occupancy tax revenue
  - Repayment of redevelopment funds over time
- Projects that will have a direct impact on increased tourism
  - Higher priority for increase in off-peak and mid-week visits
- Projects that will result in a significant number of new jobs for lower-income residents of the project area
- Projects that will also support development of affordable housing
- Projects that will maximize the leveraging of redevelopment funds with private debt and equity, and other governmental funds

## 3. Benefit Indicators

Requests for non-housing project assistance will be evaluated based on the project proponent's identification of specific indicators of benefit to the project area, such as those listed below. Additional indicators may be used, as appropriate, to demonstrate project benefit.

- How and to what extent blight condition will be mitigated
- How and to what extent health and safety will be improved

## SONOMA COUNTY POLICY GUIDANCE FOR USE OF REDEVELOPMENT FUNDS

- Number of jobs to be created
- Number of persons to benefit from development
- Source and amount of gross income expected to be generated
- Projected increase in property tax paid
- Projected increase in sales tax revenue paid
- Projected increase in TOT generated
- Terms and conditions for repayment of redevelopment assistance
- Amount and source of other public/private funding leveraged
- Provision for long-term maintenance of development
- Savings in need for expenditure of other local government funds
- Number, type, and tenancy of affordable housing units that will be supported by development
- Capacity of project proponent to successfully complete and maintain the project
- Readiness to proceed
- Inability to proceed without redevelopment funding (particularly for public entities supported by tax or fee revenue)

### **F. Non-Capital/Planning/Administration/Marketing Activities**

A minor amount of redevelopment funding may be expended for the following activities. Any projects funded under this category must be undertaken by the Redevelopment Agency either directly or through an administrative services agreement with an appropriate contractor. Approval of funds for costs in this category falls under the sole purview of the Community Development Commission, in its capacity as the governing body of the Sonoma County Community Redevelopment Agency.

- Planning and other general administration activities necessary for Redevelopment Agency to effectively administer and implement the Redevelopment Project
- Activities that will eliminate physical blighting conditions
- Activities that will eliminate economic blighting conditions, including significant level of crime reduction
- Marketing activities that are expected to result in increased tourism