

# Area Plans – Carmel Valley

## Vision Statement

### *Carmel Valley Planning Area Goals*

The principal problem facing Carmel Valley is that development has been allowed to outstrip the valley's environmental carrying capacity and its ability adequately to absorb such growth within existing natural and infrastructure systems. In addition, further growth would negatively impact Carmel Valley's rural character.

It is the intent of the Carmel Valley Land Use Plan to mandate land use decisions that preserve the valley's rural character and environmental carrying capacity while providing for the infrastructure and service needs of its residents. All land use decisions shall be consistent with the following goals:

1. To preserve the rural character of Carmel Valley.
2. To maintain socio-economic diversity.
3. To protect all natural resources of the Carmel River Watershed, with emphasis on biological communities, agricultural lands, the Carmel River and its riparian corridor, air quality and scenic resources.
4. To provide for an appropriate range of land uses, accommodated in a compact, logical pattern consistent with applicable zoning controls and design standards.
5. To provide the widest feasible range of housing types for all income levels.
6. To provide for and maintain an adequate and esthetic circulation system.
7. To provide for those public facilities and public services necessary to accommodate the existing population of Carmel Valley.
8. To promote the public safety with respect to flooding, geologic hazards, excessive exposure to noise and fire hazards.
9. To strengthen the ties of community and viable neighborhoods in Carmel Valley.

### *Implementing The Goals For Carmel Valley*

In order to help meet the goals of the Carmel Valley Land Use Plan, the following shall be implemented by Monterey County:

1. The Carmel Valley development limit shall consist of existing buildable lots of record as of January 1, 2005, and Monterey County shall not create any

# Area Plans – Carmel Valley

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more legal lots of record in the Carmel Valley Planning Area. Approved Comprehensive Development Plans shall not be affected by this policy.

2. Monterey County shall establish environmental threshold carrying capacities, defined as environmental standards necessary to maintain significant scenic, recreational, educational, scientific or natural values of the area or to maintain public health and safety. Environmental threshold carrying capacities are to include, but not be limited to, standards for air quality, water quality, soil conservation, vegetation preservation and noise.
3. The Monterey County Board of Supervisors shall hold an annual hearing (which may be combined with the annual General Plan review required by this General Plan) to review and update Carmel Valley Area Policies that require ongoing monitoring. The review and update will include the following issues, as well as any other issues that may be deemed appropriate:
  - a. Emergency access connections;
  - b. The status of the Master Drainage Plan for Carmel Valley;
  - c. Proposed changes to the Carmel Valley Wastewater Study;
  - d. Groundwater monitoring; and
  - e. Circulation policies.

## **Special Policies for the Carmel Valley Planning Area**

### **Carmel Valley Policy #1 – Design Criteria**

The *Carmel Valley Village Development Criteria*, as adopted on April 3, 1990 for Carmel Valley Village, shall be revised and expanded to include design criteria for all areas of the Valley. Development in Carmel Valley must comply with these design guidelines and development standards once they are adopted for areas outside of the Village. Development shall address appropriate architectural themes, design review policies, traffic circulation, parking, street lighting, signage and other pertinent matters.

### **Carmel Valley Policy #2 – Rural Agricultural Character**

Gardens, orchards, row crops, grazing animals, farm equipment, and farm buildings are part of the heritage and the character of Carmel Valley. This rural agricultural nature shall be encouraged.

# Area Plans – Carmel Valley

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## **Carmel Valley Policy #3 – Viticulture and Wineries**

No new winery, artisan winery, full-scale winery, winery adjunct use, or winery tasting facility shall be permitted in the Carmel Valley planning area. Cultivation of wine grapes shall be strictly controlled to minimize potential impacts on surrounding residential properties.

## **Carmel Valley Policy #4 – Agricultural Processing**

New or expanded agricultural processing facilities are incompatible with the primarily residential character of the Carmel Valley Planning Area and shall not be allowed.

## **Carmel Valley Policy #5 – House Size Limitations**

The construction of excessively large single family houses threatens the rural character of Carmel Valley. On parcels with less than one acre, houses shall be limited to no more than 3,000 square feet in total area. The total square footage of all construction on such a parcel, including but not limited to house, garage, and all accessory structures, shall not exceed 4,000 square feet. On parcels with one to forty acres, houses shall be limited to no more than 5,000 square feet in total area. The total square footage of all construction on such a parcel, including but not limited to house, garage, and all accessory structures, shall not exceed 7,000 square feet. On parcels with more than forty acres, houses shall be limited to no more than 6,000 square feet in total area. The total square footage of all construction on such a parcel, including but not limited to house, garage, and all accessory structures, shall not exceed 9,000 square feet. House size may be further limited in cases of high visibility from public viewsheds, and the actual amount of buildable land on the parcel. House size may also be limited by its appropriateness for the neighborhood in which it is proposed. Exceptions to these limits may be allowed upon approval of a use permit.

## **Carmel Valley Policy #6 – Commercial Design Guidelines**

Design guidelines shall be developed for areas designated for commercial and public/quasi-public development in Carmel Valley. Design guidelines shall address height and bulk, screening, landscaping, signage, and materials and colors and any other site controls. Development shall follow a rural architectural theme to encourage visual coherence.

## **Carmel Valley Policy #7 – Existing Commercial Uses**

Nurseries, produce stands, and the Holly Farm (APNs 169-141-017, 169-141-018, and 169-141-022), existing as of the date of adoption of this General Plan, may continue in their present use or, if discontinued, another commercial use of the same

# Area Plans – Carmel Valley

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nature shall be allowed upon being granted a use permit. If no other similar commercial use is proposed, then the property shall revert to single-family residential use.

## **Carmel Valley Policy #8 – Use Permits Required**

**A use permit shall be required for all new and expanded commercial development, for conversion of uncultivated land in excess of one acre in size to cultivation, and for all new wells in Carmel Valley.**

## **Carmel Valley Policy #9 – Land Acquisitions**

Public and private agencies such as the Big Sur Land Trust, the Monterey Peninsula Regional Park District and others are encouraged to acquire development rights and/or accept easements and dedications for significant areas of biological, agricultural or other open space land.

## **Carmel Valley Policy #10 – Carmel Valley Airport**

Future development of the former Carmel Valley airport site shall be consistent with the rural character of Carmel Valley, shall address infrastructure constraints on the property, and shall be consistent with the residential nature of the neighborhood. Proposed uses of the property that maximize open space, allow for continued public access, and contain emergency staging facilities shall be given priority.

## **Carmel Valley Policy #11 – Visitor Accommodations**

Up to a maximum of 100 additional visitor accommodation units may be approved in the Carmel Valley Planning Area, including units at Carmel Valley Ranch, beginning January 1, 2005. Bed and breakfast facilities shall be counted as visitor accommodation units and shall be allowed on parcels of five acres or more in size. Up to five guest rooms may be allowed in any one Bed and Breakfast facility.

## **Carmel Valley Policy #12 – Carmel Valley Ranch**

The Amended Carmel Valley Ranch Specific Plan, dated 11/3/76, is hereby incorporated by reference into this Plan and the provisions of the Carmel Valley Ranch Specific Plan shall continue to apply. However, attainment of densities authorized by the Carmel Valley Ranch Specific Plan is dependent upon conditions existing at the time each future increment of development is sought, and is further dependent upon conformity with the Specific Plan Amended Conditions of Approval, as well as the goals and policies of this General Plan, whichever is most restrictive. Any amendment to the Carmel Valley Ranch Specific Plan must be consistent with the policies and provisions of this General Plan.

## **Carmel Valley Policy #13 – Carmel Valley Road**

# Area Plans – Carmel Valley

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A minimum setback of 100 feet shall be established along Carmel Valley Road. Failure to meet this setback requirement shall not make any structure existing on the date that this General Plan is adopted nonconforming. Additionally, if this setback requirement would make any existing legal lot of record unusable, then a variance to this requirement shall be granted, providing that the maximum possible setback is retained.

Passing lanes and safety improvements that do not significantly increase capacity may be constructed on Carmel Valley Road. However, no additional traffic signals or four-lane segments shall be constructed on Carmel Valley Road without an amendment to this General Plan. The following policies regarding improvements to Carmel Valley Road are listed in order of priority:

- a. Improvements shall be designed to increase road safety with an emphasis on access onto and off of Carmel Valley Road. Left turn lanes and acceleration/deceleration tapers are preferred.
- b. Improvements shall be consistent with the rural character of Carmel Valley. Carmel Valley Road from Rancho San Carlos Road east shall be preserved as a two-lane road except for turning pockets. Traffic signals are contrary to the rural character of the valley and no more shall be installed.
- c. Improvements shall be designed to minimize environmental damage such as road cuts and native tree removal.
- d. Rio Road shall not be extended.
- e. Shoulder widening between Laureles Grade and Pilot Road and bicycle lane improvements should occur in conjunction with safety improvements.
- f. An underpass for left turns from Laureles Grade onto Carmel Valley Road is the only acceptable traffic solution. A traffic signal at the intersection is not acceptable.

## **Carmel Valley Policy #14 – Traffic Triggers**

If and when any segment of Carmel Valley Road degrades to LOS D, there shall be a freeze on all new development in Carmel Valley.

## **Carmel Valley Policy #15 – Traffic Impact Fees**

To mitigate traffic impacts, the Board of Supervisors shall continue imposing fees to pay for road improvements to Carmel Valley Planning Area roadways as a condition of granting of building permits. With respect to the imposition of such fees, the zone of influence shall be the Carmel Valley Planning Area and adjoining developing areas where primary access and/or commerce is via Carmel Valley Planning Area

# Area Plans – Carmel Valley

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roadways, as set forth in the map in Board of Supervisors Resolution 92-395. Fees collected shall be expended for the design and construction of mitigation improvements to the impacted roadways within the Carmel Valley Planning Area. The construction of such improvements shall be prioritized in order of need for traffic safety. Such priorities need not necessarily include site-specific improvements to mitigate impacts of the project that paid the fees. In order to ameliorate congestion at the mouth of Carmel Valley, the use of traffic impact fees to extend the Highway 1 climbing lane to Rio Road must be a priority.

## **Carmel Valley Policy #16 – Relaxation of Road Standards**

In hillside areas, relaxation of road standards should be permitted for low density development where reduced standards will result in fewer or less severe cut and fill slopes and will not adversely affect safety. In such cases, it must also be demonstrated that the relaxed standards contribute positively to plan objectives related to hazards avoidance, protection of biological resources, or viewshed protection. A climbing lane from Rio Road to Carmel Valley Road must be a priority.

## **Carmel Valley Policy #17 – Road Access Points**

New driveways that access Carmel Valley Road are prohibited. Approval of future development of land having frontage on Carmel Valley Road shall be conditioned upon alternate access to Carmel Valley Road, provided, however, that if the imposition of this policy would make an existing legal lot of record unbuildable, and there is no other feasible means to provide access to such an existing legal lot of record, a new driveway access to Carmel Valley Road may be permitted.

## **Carmel Valley Policy #18 – Minor Interchanges**

The County shall consider constructing minor interchanges or roundabouts as an alternative to signalizing any Carmel Valley Road intersection. This would result in an unimpeded flow of traffic on Carmel Valley Road and would facilitate left turning movements from and on to Carmel Valley Road intersections.

## **Carmel Valley Policy #19 – Pedestrian and Bicycle Access**

The needs of bicyclists, pedestrians, equestrians, and for utilities and drainage shall be considered in connection with any improvement to a County or private right of way. The County shall provide bicycle routes on the shoulders of Carmel Valley Road from Highway 1 east to Holman Road through the Carmel Valley Planning Area. All new road work or major work on existing roads within the commercial core areas of the Carmel Valley Planning Area shall provide, where applicable, separate pathways for the use of bicyclists and pedestrians. Circulation in Carmel Valley Village should continue to emphasize pedestrian access in accordance with

# Area Plans – Carmel Valley

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the pathways program adopted by the Carmel Valley Village Improvement Committee. Walkways and paths are preferred over conventional sidewalks. Pedestrian walkways should be used to provide access among new or remodeled commercial and other higher density uses.

## **Carmel Valley Policy #20 – Emergency Road Connections**

The County shall establish and maintain emergency road connections as necessary to provide controlled emergency access as determined by appropriate agencies (Fire Departments, Office of Emergency Services). The County shall update a list of such connections annually.

## **Carmel Valley Policy #21 – County Maintenance Facility**

The County shall locate a road and utility maintenance facility in the Carmel Valley Planning Area. Such facility would provide for storage of equipment as well as materials

## **Carmel Valley Policy #22 – Bridges**

All new public bridge construction or remodeling shall include provision for pedestrians, bicyclists and, where needed, equestrians. Expansions of existing one-lane bridges shall require the majority vote of approval by affected neighboring property owners.

## **Carmel Valley Policy #23 – Undergrounding Utility Lines**

Utilities along Carmel Valley Road shall be placed underground except where it is technically impossible to do so. Any improvement that requires the removal or replacement of utility lines along Carmel Valley Road shall trigger this requirement.

## **Carmel Valley Policy #24 – Sensitive Habitats**

Environmentally sensitive habitats shall be designated as SEAs, and shall be protected according to the policies contained in Conservation Element of this General Plan. In Carmel Valley, these environmentally sensitive habitats include, but are not limited to, the redwood community of Robinson Canyon and the riparian community and redwood community of Garzas Creek. If this policy precludes development of a parcel, development according to the provisions of the Conservation Element (but no subdivision) may be allowed. Additional areas of environmentally sensitive habitats may include native bunchgrass stands and natural meadows, cliffs, rock outcrops, and unusual geologic substrates, and ridgelines and wildlife corridors with wildlife value.

## **Carmel Valley Policy #25 – Floodplain Development**

New development in the floodplain and flood fringe of the Carmel River is prohibited. Exceptions may be granted with a use permit for existing legal lots of

# Area Plans – Carmel Valley

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record on which no building site above the flood-fringe exists. In such cases, structures must be designed with particular attention to flooding issues.

Valley Oaks and other appropriate natives shall be used in landscape planting plans on flood plain terraces.

## **Carmel Valley Policy #26 – River Management Program**

Pumping from the Carmel River aquifer shall be managed in a manner consistent with the Carmel River Management Program. A program of irrigation within the affected area must accompany any draw down of the aquifer that threatens natural vegetation in the judgment of Monterey Peninsula Water Management District or California American Water Company.

## **Carmel Valley Policy #27 – Private River Management**

River bed and bank management by private property owners shall preserve the natural state of the Carmel River by maintaining willow and other native riparian cover along the banks for erosion control, not building levees, not further altering the course of the river, and not allowing individuals to dredge the river except by permit from all regulatory bodies.

## **Carmel Valley Policy #28 – Riparian Corridor Monitoring**

A monitoring program shall be implemented to document changes in vegetation of the Carmel River riparian corridor and to determine the most relevant factors involved. This monitoring program shall be funded by users of the riparian corridor, particularly those involved in water extraction, streambed alterations and developments that encroach upon the corridor. The monitoring program shall produce an annual report to the Board of Supervisors through a Joint Powers Agreement with the agency or agencies conducting the monitoring. Upon two consecutive years of declining vigor in any reach of the river as defined by the Monterey Peninsula Water Management District, the Board of Supervisors shall immediately hold public hearings to consider limitation of further development and/or an amendment to reverse the causes of declining riparian vegetation vigor determined by evidence in the record to be derived from implementation of the General Plan or development designated therein.

## **Carmel Valley Policy #29 – Motorized Vehicles in River**

The use of motorized vehicles on the banks or in the bed of the Carmel River shall be prohibited, except by permit from the Monterey Peninsula Water Management District or the County.

## **Carmel Valley Policy #30 – Agricultural Buffers**



# Area Plans – Carmel Valley

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A 200' agricultural buffer to protect existing residential uses from the impacts of new agricultural land uses shall be established on the land proposed for the agricultural use. Additional rules for agricultural buffers found in this General Plan apply to the Carmel Valley Planning Area.

## **Carmel Valley Policy #31 – Energy Self-Sufficiency**

The installation of appropriate solar panels and other renewable energy sources is encouraged on all new developments and remodels of existing developments.

## **Carmel Valley Policy #32 – Scenic Corridors**

Carmel Valley Road shall be designated as a County Scenic Road, and the County shall create a Scenic Corridor Plan for Carmel Valley Road and Laureles Grade Road that defines corridor boundaries and development controls. Appropriate scenic preservation measures to be implemented on these roads include, but are not limited to, screening of development with vegetation, and treatment of exterior surfaces with earth tones and setbacks. Public vista areas shall be provided and paved. Until such a specific plan is adopted, all development within the public viewshed of Carmel Valley Road and Laureles Grade Road shall be sited and designed per the countywide Scenic Resources policies.

## **Carmel Valley Policy #33 – Preserving Our Night Sky**

All development in Carmel Valley should seek to preserve our night sky for residents, aesthetics and our natural surroundings. Please refer to the lighting policies in this General Plan.

## **Carmel Valley Policy #34 – Open Grasslands Views**

Structures located in open grassland areas shall be discouraged where they would be highly visible from Carmel Valley Road and Laureles Grade Road. New structures shall be sited near existing natural or man-made vertical features and designed to be least visible from public view from these roadways.

## **Carmel Valley Policy #35 – Historical Sites**

The California Department of Parks and Recreation inventory of historical resources lists three sites, eleven structures, and three bridges of historical significance in Carmel Valley, as of November 2001. As an interim protection of these sites, the Historical Resources Review Board will review this list on a site by site basis for the purpose of evaluating the current condition of each and recommend deletions, additions or other measures as needed. Historic resources in Carmel Valley include:

*Sites:*

- a) Carmel Mission Stone Quarry, South of Carmel River at Odello Ranch

# Area Plans – Carmel Valley

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- b) Site of Fish Ranch Adobe, (Las Virgenes) South of Carmel River at Odello Ranch
- c) Site of Potrero de San Carlos Adobe, South of Carmel River at Odello Ranch

## *Structures:*

- a) Old Carmelo School, North of Schulte Road
- b) Meadows Home, North of Schulte Road
- c) Berwick Home, Mid-Carmel Valley\*
- d) Farm Center, Robinson Canyon Road at Carmel Valley Road
- e) Carmel Valley Rock & Sand Co. Conveyor, behind the Farm Center
- f) Colton Home, Holt Road
- g) Los Laureles Lodge, Carmel Valley Road at Boronda Road
- h) Boronda Adobe, Boronda Road\*
- i) Del Monte Milk Barn, Carmel Valley Village
- j) Robles del Rio Lodge, Robles del Rio
- k) Rosie's Cracker Barrel, Robles del Rio

## *Bridges:*

- a) o) Bridge #501, Schulte Road at Carmel River
- b) p) Bridge #507, Boronda Road at Carmel River
- c) q) Bridge #523, Garzas Road at Garzas Creek

*\* Structures found on the National Register of Historic Places*

## **Carmel Valley Policy 37 – Flood Control Measures**

Private or public flood control measures should include restoration of the riverbanks to a natural vegetated appearance. Any bank restoration project shall use natural materials and be revegetated with vegetation selected from a list of plants approved for this purpose by the Monterey Peninsula Water Management District and Monterey County.

## **Carmel Valley Policy #38 – Trail Easements and Hazards**

Where feasible, proposed trail easements in high and extreme fire hazard areas shall be designed to provide effective firebreak zones and shall be designed for access to Laureles Grade, Tierra Grande and other roads for emergency vehicle access.

## **Carmel Valley Policy #39 – Inadequate Fire Flow Areas**

The County should work with water companies serving the Carmel Valley, Fire Districts, and the Monterey Peninsula Water Management District to identify areas of inadequate fire flow and to develop a program of actions necessary to bring them up to Fire District standards.

## **Carmel Valley Policy #40 – Mitigation for Wildland Fires**

# Area Plans – Carmel Valley

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The potential for wildland fires in the valley must be recognized in development proposals and adequate mitigation measures incorporated in the designs.

## **Carmel Valley Policy #41 – Air Quality Monitoring**

The County shall encourage the Monterey Bay Unified Air Pollution Control District to maintain at least one station to monitor ozone and PM10 in Carmel Valley. Whenever the State ozone standard is exceeded more than 15 hours in one year, the County shall immediately hold public hearings to consider control measures on upwind sources and limitation of further development in the Carmel Valley Planning Area until the standard is met.

## **Carmel Valley Policy #42 – Master Drainage Plan Fee**

In addition to required on-site improvements for development projects, the County shall impose a fee to help finance the improvement and maintenance of drainage facilities as identified in the Master Drainage Plan for Carmel Valley.

## **Carmel Valley Policy #43 – Valley Wastewater Study**

The Carmel Valley aquifer may be susceptible to contamination from development in unsewered areas. Projects on existing lots of record shall be carefully reviewed for proper siting and design of sewage disposal facilities so as to meet the standards of the Carmel Valley Wastewater Study. This Study is hereby incorporated into this Plan by reference.

## **Carmel Valley Policy #44 – Groundwater Monitoring**

The County shall continue monitoring efforts in the Carmel Valley Village and Mid-Valley Areas to:

- Identify existing groundwater quality or other impacts from septic systems;
- Verify the data assumptions and predictions contained in the Carmel Valley Wastewater Study for these areas; and
- Determine the need for community sewerage facilities or other improvement in waste disposal practices.

## **Carmel Valley Policy #45–Community Sewering**

Further community sewerage shall not be permitted unless and until ‘build out’ has been formally declared and adopted by Monterey County for the Carmel Valley Planning Area. Under such conditions, wastewater processed through treatment facilities shall be reclaimed and used for irrigation on landscape, pasture or crops within Carmel Valley.

# Area Plans – Carmel Valley

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## **Carmel Valley Policy #46 – Recreation Facilities**

Existing school facilities should be considered for use as a nucleus for expansion of recreational uses. Land next to the Carmelo and Middle Schools should be considered for recreational uses.

## **Carmel Valley Policy #47 – Equestrian Recreation**

Equestrian-oriented recreational activities shall be encouraged when consistent with the rural character of the Valley.

## **Carmel Valley Policy #48 – Lighting for Outdoor Recreation**

There shall be no lighting for outdoor sports in Carmel Valley where it would be visible off-site.

## **Carmel Valley Policy #49 – Trails**

All public trails previously designated for Carmel Valley are integrated in this Area Plan. The development of new trails is encouraged, including those that would form a Carmel River Parkway.