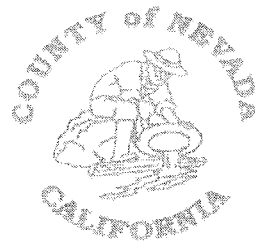


Higgins Area Plan

*An Area Plan for the
Higgins Corner-Lake of
the Pines Village Center
in unincorporated
Nevada County*



Prepared for:
**Nevada County Board
of Supervisors**

Prepared By:
**Nevada County
Planning Department and
Higgins Advisory Committee**



Higgins Area Plan

Higgins Area Plan

November 2000

County of Nevada
950 Maidu Avenue
Nevada City, CA 95959-8617
(530) 265-1440
Fax (530) 265-1798

Higgins Advisory Committee

Gary Clarke
Willard Schoellerman
Joyce Miller
Bill Nelson
Gloria Siegle
Donna Prince
Tony Gosalvez
George Asselanis
Karen Knecht, Supervisor District 2

Nevada County Planning Staff

Mark Tomich
Vicki Lake
Stephanie Wagner
Cathleen Spence-Wells, Contract Planner

APPROVED
12/05/00

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CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

The Higgins Area Plan:

- Provides comprehensive development planning for the Higgins Corner-Lake of the Pines Village Center
- Supplements the Nevada County General Plan
- Identifies community needs for services and improvements

Inside this chapter:

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PURPOSE

The Higgins Area Plan establishes the goals, policies and implementation measures that will guide development through the year 2010 in the portion of southwest Nevada County known as the Higgins Corner-Lake of the Pines Village Center (“Higgins Area”).

The direction and authority of the Higgins Area Plan is founded in the goals and policies of the 1995 *Nevada County General Plan* and implements County Ordinance 1930, which provides for comprehensive planning for the Higgins Area. The “SP” site performance combining district, described in the County’s *Land Use and Development Code and Zoning Regulations*, designates parcels within the Plan area for such comprehensive planning.

As a policy document, this plan supplements the countywide General Plan in guiding future development within the Higgins Area. It will pro-



Combie Road Corridor

vide direction in the decision-making process as development occurs.

The Higgins Area Plan will be used in a variety of ways to enhance development within the Higgins Area. The Plan identifies community goals for services and improvements, and will be used to develop private and public programs to address those needs. It also establishes policies to guide new projects through the design and development review process. The Plan’s guidelines provide suggestions for improvements to private property and are intended to stimulate implementation of private property improvements in the Higgins Area.

The goals, policies and guidelines are consistent with the overall theme, goals and policies of the General Plan. Authorized by California Planning and Zoning Law Section 65303, the Higgins Area Plan refines the policies of the General Plan as they relate to the Higgins Area. In keeping with the General Plan’s “Village Center” concept, the Higgins Plan reinforces the need for pedestrian and bike trails through the community, as well as internal access and linkages to minimize use of arterial roadways.

PLAN GOALS

The primary goal of the Higgins Area Plan is to retain the small town character of the Higgins Area, while serving the basic needs of the surrounding community and providing a gateway to those entering western Nevada County. As it develops, the Higgins Area will continue to function as the crossroads of southwestern Nevada County and as a gateway to Nevada County from the Sacramento Valley.

This Plan has been prepared to achieve the following primary goals:

- Allow the Higgins Area community to flourish while retaining its unique, small town atmosphere.
 - Protect and preserve the identity of the Higgins Area as a scenic, tranquil, family-oriented community.
 - Implement the Site Performance (SP) combining zoning district requirements of the Zoning Regulations requiring the preparation of an Area Plan/Community Plan for the Higgins Corner/Lake of the Pines Village Center.
 - Develop specific design guidelines that reflect the distinctions and transitions between Placer County and Nevada County.
- Provide uniform criteria for project design review.
 - Incorporate plans for public water and sewer for future development.
 - Identify needed drainage improvements.

PLAN ORGANIZATION

This document is arranged into four sections: Chapter I provides an introduction to the Plan; Chapter II discusses public facilities within the plan area; Chapter III contains design goals, policies and guidelines for development; and Chapter IV addresses plan implementation by providing a general discussion of the schedule and financing for various elements of the Plan. A description of the relationship of the Higgins Area Plan to the General Plan is included in the Appendix.

Supporting technical documents include a wastewater feasibility study describing the location, extent and cost of sewer facilities needed for permitted development; County circulation and drainage plans; Nevada Irrigation District's water distribution system Master Plan update for Lake of the Pines; and the Ragsdale Creek Development Setback Study. These studies are included in Chapter V: References, and are available for review at the Nevada County Planning Department.



Ragsdale Creek

The primary goals of the Higgins Area Plan are to retain small town character and meet basic community needs

PLAN AREA DESCRIPTION

The Higgins Corner/Lake of the Pines Village Center (“Higgins Area”) encompasses approximately 246 acres as delineated on the General Plan land use map. This area surrounds the Combie Road corridor, which begins just west of the intersection of State Route (SR) 49 and Combie Road, and extends approximately two miles east to the entrance of Bear River High School, north of the Lake of the Pines subdivision.

At the time of this plan’s preparation, 92 parcels exist within the Higgins Area, ranging in size from 7,000-square foot multi-family lots in Lake of the Pines, to a 27-acre multi-family residential parcel on the north side of Combie Road. The amounts of land designated for various uses within the Higgins Area include 35.19 acres of commercial, 15 acres of office and professional, 35.62 acres of industrial and business park, 136 acres of multi-family residential, 20 acres of residential-agricultural and 4.14 acres of public district.

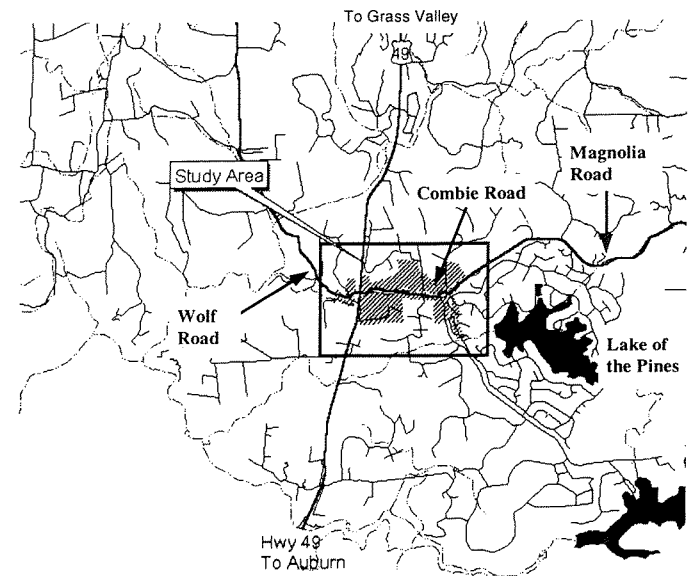
There are two primary commercial areas within the Higgins Area: the crossroads at the SR 49/Combie/Wolf Roads intersection and the crossroads at the Combie/Magnolia/West Hacienda Roads intersection. Three parcels are designated for professional office space, two of which are developed, and five parcels for industrial use, one of which has been approved for development. Forty-six duplex lots exist within the Lake of the Pines and a 24-unit mobile home park is located on the south side of West Combie Road.

While not contained within the Higgins Area, several residential developments and facilities in the vicinity must be considered because of their influence on the area. These are Lake of the Pines, a gated community consisting of 1,996 residential lots, a golf course, four tennis courts, and a 232-acre lake; school complexes consisting of Bear River High School, Magnolia Intermediate School, Cottage Hill Elementary School, two campuses of Forest Lake Christian K-12 private school and a private school located at the northwest corner of SR 49 and Combie/Wolf Roads; three churches; and Lake of the Pines Ranchos, a Community Service District consisting of 196 five-acre residential lots. In addition, a 223-lot residential subdivision and another golf course are currently under development.

Area Resources

Topography within the Higgins Area varies from gentle-to-moderate slopes along the northern and southern boundaries to sloping and relatively flat terrain along the Combie Road corridor; prominent ridgelines generally parallel Combie Road north and south. Both sides of the Combie Road corridor drain toward Ragsdale Creek, a stream that originates near Huck Finn Lake in Lake of the Pines. Within the Higgins Area, the creek parallels the southern boundary of Combie and Magnolia Roads, crossing the roadway for a short distance near Armstrong Road. Area vegetation is characterized by a mix of open grassland and oak woodland, with dominant tree species being black oak, blue oak and ponderosa pine; patches of willow scrub riparian vegetation, freshwater marsh and valley oak

woodland occur along the Ragsdale Creek riparian corridor, providing cover, foraging and breeding habitat for an array of wildlife species. The area along the riparian corridor contains suitable habitat for special-status species. However no species of concern were identified during preparation of the Ragsdale Creek Development Setback Study, completed in conjunction with this Plan. The Higgins Area Plan policies and guidelines provide for preservation of area resources and reinforce policies contained in the Nevada County General Plan by emphasizing protection of ridgeline views, slopes in excess of 30%, oak woodlands and riparian corridors.



Regional Location of Higgins Plan Area

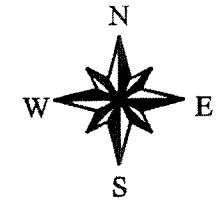
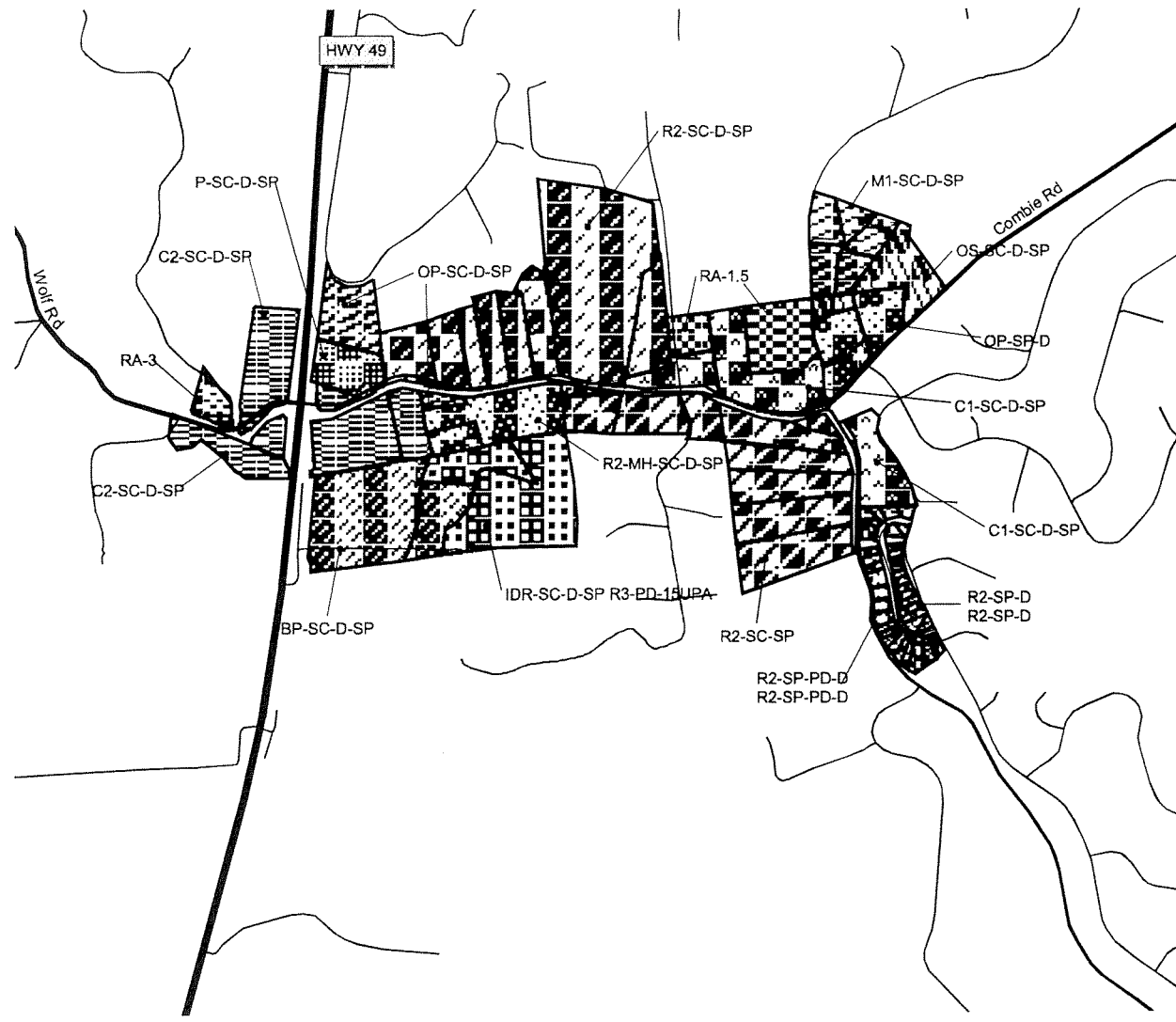


LEGEND

- BP = Business Park
- CC = Community Commercial
- EST = Estate
- IND = Industrial
- NC = Neighborhood Commercial
- OP = Office-Professional
- OS = Open Space
- PD = Planned Development
- PUB = Public
- RES = Residential
- UMD = Urban Med. Density Residential



General Plan Designations in the Higgins Area



LEDGEND

- BP = Business Park
- C1 = Neighborhood Commercial
- C2 = Community Commercial
- D = Design
- M1 = Light Manufacturing and Industrial
- OP = office and Professional
- MH = Mobile Home*
- OS = Open Space
- P = Public
- PD = Planned Development
- R2 = Multiple Family Residential
- R3 = Medium Density Multiple Family Residential
- RA = Residential Agricultural
- SC = Scenic Corridor *
- SP = Site Performance
- 15UPA = 15 units per acre *
- * Combing District



Zoning Districts in the Higgins Area

AREA HISTORY

Recorded history indicates that the Higgins Area was occupied during the pre-European period by the Southern Maidu, or Nisenan, who resided in permanent winter villages. Although the Gold Rush had a tremendous impact on the region and on the Nisenan, the population survived by adapting to and integrating with the Euro-American inhabitants.

Non-native American use of the region began in earnest with the discovery of placer deposits in Wolf Creek in 1848. The Higgins Area appears to have been largely bypassed by the intensive mining that occurred on the Bear River to the south and near Grass Valley to the north. Historic use of the area centered on animal husbandry, homesteading, and ranching, lasting well into the twentieth century. The Higgins Area community retained its rural and agricultural identity until development of Lake of the Pines began in 1966. This large residential subdivision served as the starting point for a shift to the community's current suburban character.

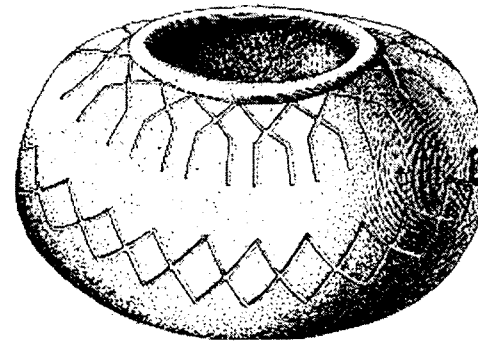
Specific historic features within the vicinity included the "Auburn and Grass Valley Road" and "Ragsdale Ranch." The original wagon road

from Auburn to Grass Valley was located about one-half mile west of Lake of the Pines (LOP), paralleling the current alignment of SR 49. Ragsdale Ranch was located about one mile south of LOP. The SR 49/Combie Road intersection was developed and used intensively since the early 1860s. Two early transportation corridors, the Overland Emigrant Trail and an early wagon road between Auburn and Grass Valley, are located in the vicinity and roughly follow the present route of SR 49 near Higgins Corner.

The locale of Higgins Corner itself was acquired by Mr. M.J. Higgins in the 1860s. Mr. Higgins was born in Ireland in 1833. He came to California in search of gold, settling in Nevada County in 1860 to raise cattle on a 160-acre ranch near this area with his wife Mary Driscoll and his four daughters and two sons. He acquired approximately 400 acres at this location, which includes what is now the intersection of SR 49 and Wolf Road. This area was gradually developed for commercial use and included construction of a residence and barn southwest of the intersection. Mr. Higgins passed away at age 80 in 1913. Subsequent land transactions involving the Higgins property were conducted primarily by his son, Wil-

liam, who had earlier expanded the commercial operations to include a blacksmith's shop and a gas station.

The original residence apparently burned (date unknown) and in 1958 Mr. Roy Peterson acquired 400 acres in the vicinity of Higgins Corner, including the remaining historic structures on the southwest side of the intersection. At that time, the structures included the blacksmith's shop, the gas station and the barn. A number of alterations were made to these buildings and in the 1960s Peterson razed the blacksmith shop along with the remaining historic structures. Alterations were made to the barn by Peterson and, subsequently, by new owners who in 1985 acquired the property. The barn is now the "49er Feed Store" and is not considered a significant resource due to extensive alterations.



CHAPTER II PUBLIC FACILITIES

Existing conditions for domestic water supply, fire protection, sewage disposal, drainage, and circulation are described. Additionally, improvements, if proposed, are discussed for each element. Detailed technical reports from which this information was drawn can be found on file at the Nevada County Planning Department.

developments—the Lake Combie Mobile-home Park and Lone Pines Estates in Lake of the Pines—the Master Plan assumes one dwelling unit per parcel.

The 1995 Nevada County General Plan added a significant amount of multi-family residential use to the area, resulting in density for 862 additional residential units within N.I.D.’s Master Plan boundaries. There has not been a significant increase in the amount of commercial or industrial acreage that would be served by N.I.D.’s Master Plan. N.I.D. has conducted subsequent analysis which determined that while current facilities are insufficient to serve development projected under the 1995 General Plan, the District does have the ability to upgrade its water treatment and delivery system under the existing fee structure. It was further determined that the District can continue the process of upgrading the system under this fee structure for the next 20 years.

Domestic water service is available to new development on a “first come, first served” basis. As development occurs, existing capacity will be depleted. Construction of additional treatment plant capacity may be expensive. N.I.D would expect project proponents to fund the cost of treatment plant expansion. The cost of providing piped, treated water may impose constraints to future development in the Higgins Area. In the case of minor land divisions, General Plan Policy 3.18 allows individual water supply systems if it would be less costly than extending the public system.

DOMESTIC WATER SUPPLY

Domestic water is provided to the Higgins Area by the Nevada Irrigation District (N.I.D.), whose facilities in the area include Lake Combie, the Magnolia III Canal, and a treatment plant located near the eastern boundary of Lake of the Pines. All but a small portion of the Higgins Area is located within the boundaries of N.I.D.’s Domestic Water Distribution System Master Plan.

The 1989 update to N.I.D.’s Master Plan recognized the capacity of the treatment plant to serve properties within the Master Plan boundaries and an additional 138 residential units outside its boundaries. With the exception of two existing multi-family de-

While raw water supply is available, it is anticipated that the demand for treated water, at buildout, will exceed the capacity of the existing treatment plant. The figure on the following page shows the existing and future distribution of N.I.D. pipelines carrying treated water in the Higgins Area.

Well-developed infrastructure and adequate public facilities provide for a well-planned, functional community.

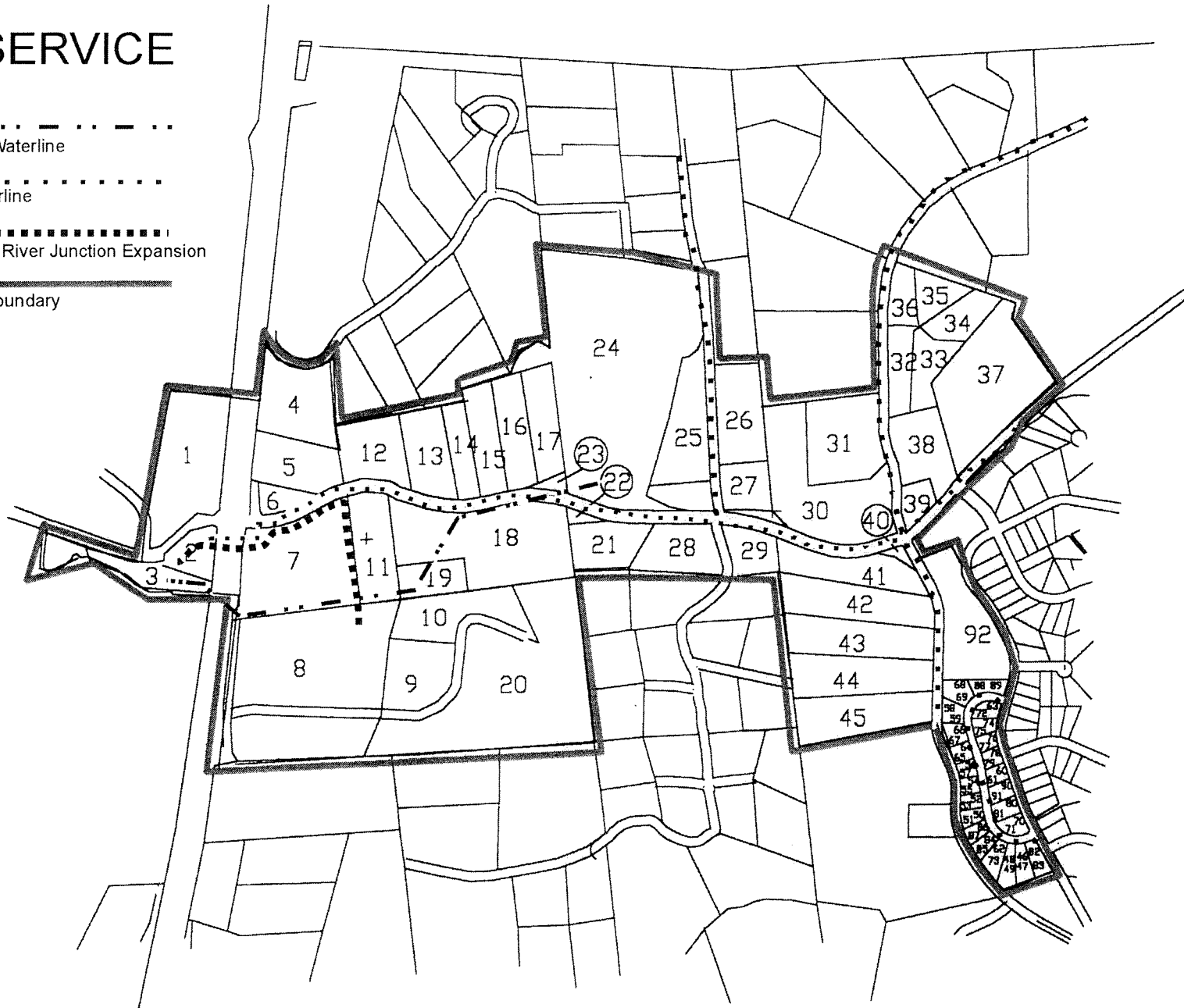
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NID SERVICE

- Private Raw Waterline
- Treated Waterline
- Planned Bear River Junction Expansion
- _____ Community Boundary



N.I.D.'s Existing and Planned Treated Water Pipeline System

FIRE PROTECTION

Fire protection in the Higgins Area is provided by the Higgins Fire Protection District in coordination with the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection. The District maintains its headquarters at the intersection of Combie Road and SR 49 (Station 21), the entrance to the Higgins Area.

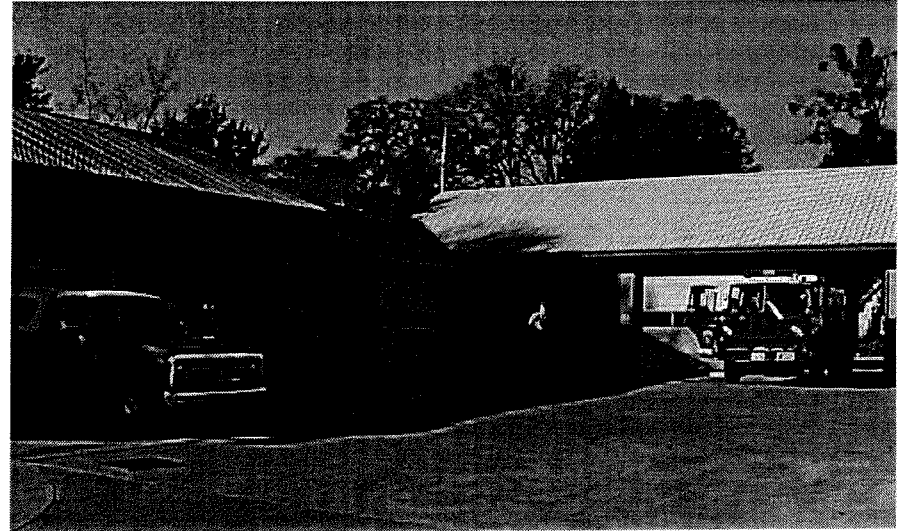
The station houses three engines and is staffed with four full-time engineers, two long-term firefighters, one administrative captain and one administrative assistant. The station is manned 24 hours a day.

The District is funded by a combination of property taxes and development fees. All new construction within the boundaries of the Higgins Area will be required to pay impact fees at an established per-square-foot rate. Fireflow (pressurized water available for fire protection purposes) is currently provided within the Higgins Area via hydrants connected to the Nevada Irrigation District public water supply. A 10-inch water main runs the length of Combie Road from the eastern boundary of Lake of the Pines to the Higgins Fire District property.

No ambulance services are located within the Higgins Fire Protection District. However, all firefighters within the District are trained emergency medical technicians or first responders. Sierra Nevada Hospital Unit, a private ambulance service, is the nearest service provider to the Higgins Area. The ambulance is stationed about four miles north of Station 21 on SR 49.

State and County codes require that any development in this area comply with minimum fire safety requirements, including establishing improved access for fire equipment, clearance of native brush from around structures and, for commercial projects, interior fire sprinkler systems.

Existing facilities and equipment are excellent for meeting current fire protection needs in the Higgins Fire Protection District. One additional full-time engineer is being added to the staff. The Higgins Fire Protection District accumulates monies in a reserve account to ensure resources are available for expansion, as needed, and does not foresee any difficulties providing services for a growing community as projected by the Nevada County General Plan.



Higgins Fire District – Station 21



SEWAGE DISPOSAL

The Nevada County Department of Transportation and Sanitation oversees Sanitation District No. 1- the district that operates the Lake of the Pines wastewater collection and treatment facilities. There are about 1,950 equivalent dwelling units (edus), or "hookups" currently connected to the District's system. Existing flow is approaching the capacity of the treatment facilities, with only 250 remaining edus. The zoning designations established by Nevada County Board of Supervisors would allow development of an additional 1330 edus. These additional units, while located within the sphere of influence of Zone 2 of Sanitation District No. 1, will require Local Area Formation Commission (LAFCo) action to annex them before the Zone 2 plant will serve them.

The District recognizes that projected sewage flow is well beyond the capacity of the existing Lake of the Pines wastewater treatment facilities. The District commissioned a preliminary feasibility study to assess plant expansion requirements and potential treatment alternatives to increase the capacity of the wastewater treatment plant. In September 1999, the Board of Supervisors accepted Phases I and II of the LOP/Higgins Wastewater Feasibility Study as complete and authorized staff to investigate potential

funding sources for planning, design, environmental review and construction of the expansion project.

Existing Wastewater Facilities

Lake of the Pines' wastewater treatment, storage and disposal facilities consist of an aerated facultative pond, two settling/backwash ponds, chemical feed facilities, sand filters, chlorination and dechlorination facilities, three storage ponds, five 9-15 acre spray irrigation fields, and a gravity outfall to Magnolia Creek. The plant is located on 104 acres off South Combie Road, outside of the Higgins Area.

From May to October, disposal of secondary treated effluent is accomplished by spray irrigation. From November to April, tertiary treated effluent is discharged into Magnolia Creek. Conditions permitting, spray irrigation is also used for disposal from November to April.

Proposed Treatment Plant Capacity Expansion

The preliminary feasibility study evaluated the technical and economic merits of several wastewater treatment alternatives. The study recommends the Dual-Powered Aerated Lagoon System alternative. This alternative consists of multiple-cell lagoon (pond) systems that typically include a completely-mixed cell followed by a series

of equal volume partially-mixed cells. The benefits of this system are reduced hydraulic retention time, which results in capital cost savings, and the suppression of algal growth, resulting in improved effluent quality.

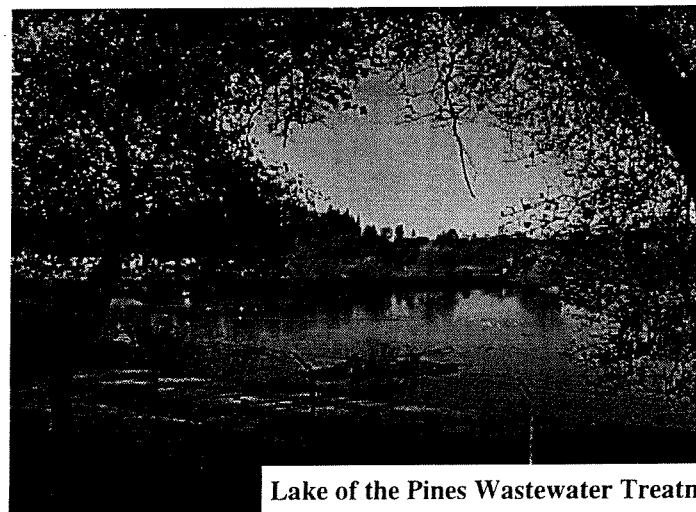
The preliminary feasibility study concluded that this alternative would be economically feasible and could accommodate projected development in the area. Based on the positive conclusions drawn in the preliminary feasibility study, the District is further considering expansion of the wastewater treatment plant.

It has been determined, through a subsequent assessment, conducted by the Department of Transportation and Sanitation, that the wastewater treatment plant can be upgraded incrementally to accommodate development as it occurs, eventually resulting in an almost doubling of plant size at General Plan buildout. If incremental upgrading is determined to be infeasible due to a lack of funding, it may preclude near-term expansion and, therefore, pose a constraint to development.

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Regional Wastewater Treatment

Another option for treatment of wastewater currently under consideration by the Nevada County Board of Supervisors and the Sanitation District Board is participation in a regional wastewater treatment facility that is currently proposed near Auburn Ravine in Lincoln. A Joint Powers Agreement with Placer County and several cities in Placer County to pursue the construction of this facility is currently being considered.



Lake of the Pines Wastewater Treatment Plant

DRAINAGE

Watershed Description

Ragsdale Creek, a tributary of Wolf Creek which flows into the Bear River, is located in western Nevada County in the Sierra Foothills. The size of the drainage basin upstream of SR 49 is approximately 595 acres (.93 square miles) with elevations ranging from 1,420 to 1,720 feet. The basin is made up of moderately sloping wooded and grassy terrain. The mean annual precipitation in this basin is approximately 37 inches.

The land use patterns in this basin include rural large parcel residential, suburban subdivision, schools, playing fields and low-to-medium density multi-family and commercial developments.

A field reconnaissance was performed in December 1998 by the Nevada County Department of Transportation and Sanitation. The field investigation confirmed the basin boundaries and runoff potential contained in the documented information concerning this watershed.

both the 10- and 100-year storms using rainfall depth-duration information contained in the Nevada County Standard Specifications.

The drainage basin was delineated and mapped using the USGS quad maps overlain on Assessor Parcel Maps and Road System Maintained Mileage Maps prepared by the Nevada County GIS Department. The Drainage Area Map is included in this report. Curve numbers were determined using the SCS' *Soil Survey of Nevada County*, a projection of 20-year land use patterns in the area based on Nevada County's zoning maps, General Plan and personal observations of cover type and watershed conditions. General Plan Policy 1.23 was used to determine the percent of impervious surface for the various land use designations. Lag times were based on slopes and lengths taken from USGS maps and observations of conveyance characteristics.



Ragsdale Creek

Hydrologic Analysis

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' HEC-1 flood hydrograph computer program was used in this study utilizing the Soil Conservation Service (SCS) unit hydrograph method. The runoff from the 24-hour synthetic storm was calculated for

A summary of the hydrologic calculations are as follows:

Drainage Area Flow Designation	Ragsdale Creek					
	Area (sq. mi)	Combined Area	SCS Curve No.	MAP (in)	10 Yr. Peak Flow (cfs)	100 Yr. Peak (cfs)
1	.31	.31	65.0	37	71	146
2	.16	.47	72.0	37	114	224
3	.27	.74	72.5	37	191	367
4	.19	.93	78.6	37	267	493



Contour Interval = 20'

Runoff Summary

	<u>10 Year</u>	<u>100 Year</u>
Poc #1	71cfs	146cfs
Poc #2	114 cfs	224cfs
Poc #3	191cfs	367cfs
Poc #4	267cfs	493cfs

Ragsdale Creek Drainage Basins

Hydraulic Analysis -Existing Conditions

A hydraulic analysis was performed on the SR 49 culvert crossing and the Ragsdale Creek channel extending from SR 49 to approximately 1,300 feet east of Highway 49. The analysis was performed with study level (as opposed to design level) survey information and under no circumstances should culvert or channel sizing information discussed in this report be used in the construction of new facilities without a detailed survey and design performed by a licensed Civil Engineer.

The methods used to analyze the hydraulics in the drainage system included the Direct Step Method for open channel flow conditions and the Mannings Equation for conduit pressure flow conditions. Junction and transition losses were calculated using the energy equation loss coefficients.

Under current conditions, with the watershed only partially developed, there is local flooding on the low lying parcels near SR 49. The extent of flooding is affected more by the sizing of driveway conveyances and the amount of vegetation in the creek bed, rather than the cross section/flow capacity of Ragsdale Creek. Currently the Ragsdale Creek conveyance system and the SR 49 culvert crossing, with the exception of the undersized driveway culverts, is functioning adequately.

The hydraulic conditions expected to occur at watershed buildout will create the need for minor improvements to the Ragsdale Creek channel as well as the SR 49 culvert crossing. It is projected that at buildout the storm flows will exceed the capacity of the existing creek channel causing minor flooding on Assessor's

Parcels 57-070-4 and 57-140-11 on Combie Road. Minor flooding is also expected to occur on Combie Road near the SR 49 intersection. Although the exact depth and extent of the flooding is beyond the scope of this study, it is predicted that the flooding would be less than one-foot deep.

Hydraulic Analysis - Required Improvements

Drainage improvement options were investigated for the section of Ragsdale Creek between SR 49 and the Combie Road/Magnolia Road intersection. For ease of discussion this section of the creek will be broken into seven reaches, as shown on the figure on the following page. Each reach will be discussed separately in this report. As stated earlier, this analysis was performed with study level (as opposed to design level) survey information and under no circumstances should culvert or channel sizing information discussed in this report be used in the construction of new facilities without a detailed survey and design performed by a licensed Civil Engineer. All dimensions used on the options discussed herein should be considered as approximate.

- REACH 1 - SR 49 CULVERT CROSSING

The existing 84-inch corrugated metal culvert appears to satisfy Nevada County's drainage criteria but the culvert's current configuration creates a backwater condition extending most of the way through Reach 2. It appears that this backwater condition can be contained by channel and site grading improvements through Reach 2 and Nevada County's drainage standards can be maintained. Although the existing culvert appears to just meet Nevada County's drainage standards, the hydraulic conditions of the parcels in Reach 2

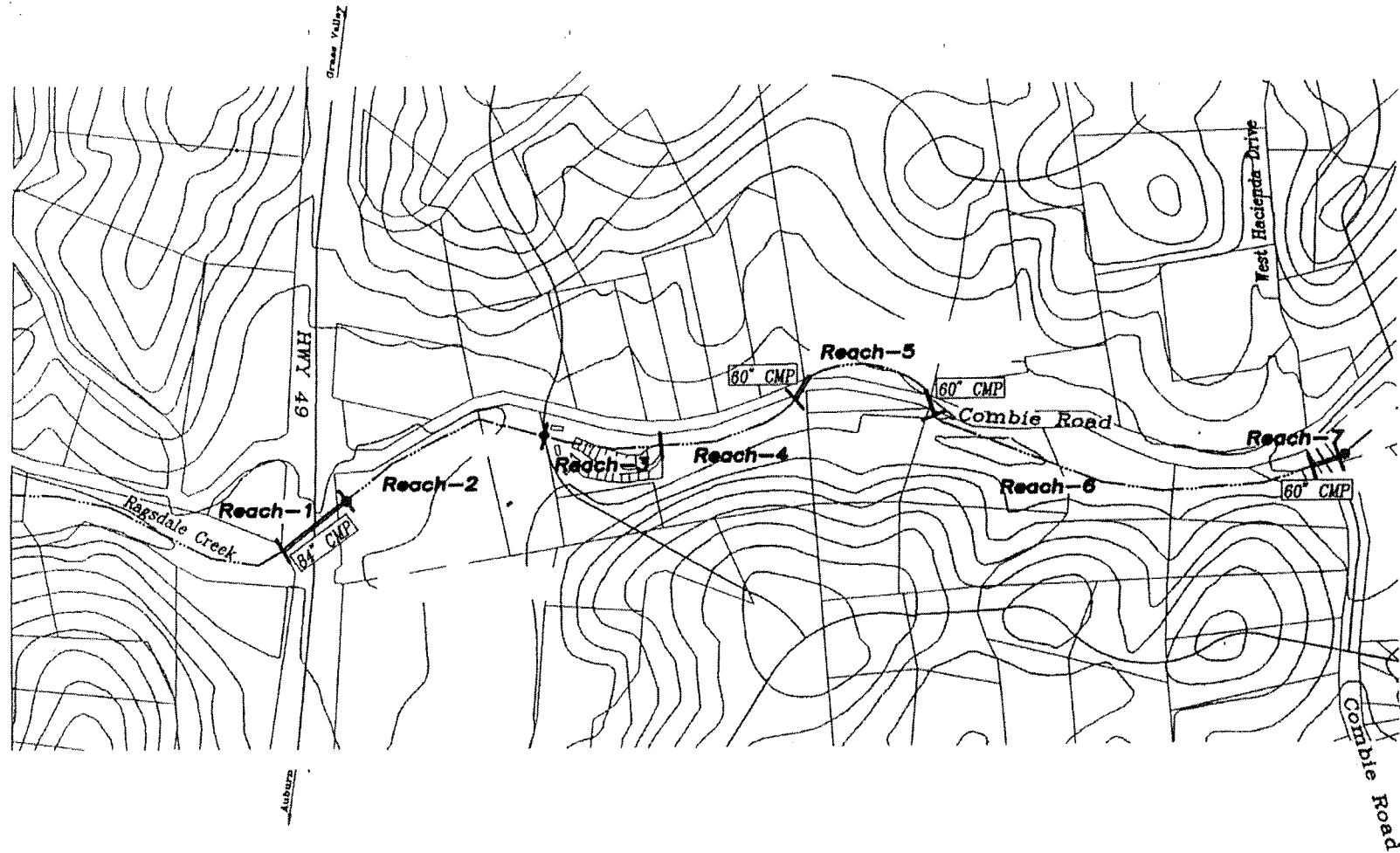
would be improved by the addition of hydraulic capacity under SR 49. The addition of a parallel culvert or the replacement of the existing culvert with a larger culvert would decrease or eliminate the backwater condition which exists in Reach 2. However, due to the downstream topography and channel size, Caltrans has indicated that increasing the hydraulic capacity under SR 49 would create flooding problems downstream of this location. For this reason, Caltrans does not include such an improvement in the plans for the widening of SR 49. Caltrans has no plans to replace or expand the existing culvert, as it is hydrologically sound. Caltrans recommends controlling this backwater condition through upstream improvements, including detention basins and channel widening. Relieving this backwater condition would likely reduce or eliminate the need to raise building pad grades. At watershed buildout, it is anticipated that water flows through this culvert may meet, or even exceed, the existing hydraulic capacity.

The existing entrance structure is a simple headwall with very little transition from the channel to the culvert. This should be replaced with a wingwall structure, which forms a smooth transition between the channel and the culvert. Since this structure is owned and maintained by Caltrans, it is recommended that Caltrans Standard Plan D86B be used. The structure is efficient from a hydraulics point of view, and using this a Caltrans standard structure will help speed approvals through the Caltrans Encroachment Permit process. The addition of this structure will have a minimal effect on the backwater condition.

- REACH 2 - JUST UPSTREAM OF SR 49 TO JUST DOWNSTREAM OF PARCEL 57-140-13 (Siegle Property)

The analysis of existing conditions has shown that the Ragsdale Creek Channel along Reach 2 is only slightly undersized to carry the buildout flows. This being the case, only minor improvements are required. It

Ragsdale Creek



Ragsdale Creek Reach Locations

is possible that when site-specific surveys and designs are prepared for this area, it will be determined that site grading (raising of lot grade elevations) and minor channel improvements will satisfy the majority of the drainage issues. Note that in the following discussion individual driveway crossings are not discussed. Individual driveways must be designed and evaluated to suit the individual development condition.

Several Reach 2 options were evaluated for the final configuration of the creek. These options ranged from a wide channel with gently sloping banks to a vertical walled channel supported by the use of concrete or gabion retaining walls. The preferred options were those without structural support from an aesthetic, biological and economic point of view (constructing vertical retaining walls would increase the cost of Reach 2 improvements by approximately \$325,000). An example for reconfiguration of the Creek that meets all three of the above criteria, is shown on Page II-11 of this plan. Under this method, the channel base and lower two-thirds of the side-slopes shall be revegetated with locally native, low-growing grasses, sedges and rushes (depending upon market availability) that lay over during storm flows. The reconstructed channel shall include a low-flow channel designed to accommodate fish and aquatic organisms during low flows, as well as a terrace to provide a planting area for riparian species. The exact channel dimensions and top of bank elevations will be determined from detailed surveys, hydraulic design and grading plans at the time of development, but generally it appears that the depth of the channel will vary from approximately 10-feet deep at Highway 49 to approximately 5-feet deep at the upstream end of Reach 2. It is anticipated that it will be necessary to raise the lot elevations by importing fill material along Reach 2 to protect these proper-

ties from the 100-year storm. The project proponent shall provide a system designed to meet the Nevada County drainage standards.

- REACH 3 - FROM JUST DOWNSTREAM OF PARCEL 57-140-13 (Siegle Property) TO THE POND

Reach 3 was recently improved along with the construction of a commercial development. It is assumed that this reach was properly designed and constructed, so no further discussion is provided.

- REACH 4 - FROM THE POND ON PARCEL 57-140-13 (Siegle Property) TO THE COMBIE ROAD CULVERT CROSSING

The pond will have little or no effect on the ability of Ragsdale Creek to carry storm flows and it is recommended that this pond remain in its current location.

The section of open channel from the pond to the Combie Road crossing can incorporate the reconstruction method discussed for Reach 2. Due to lower flow rates in Reach 4 channel dimensions will be less than those shown for Reach 2.

- REACH 5 - FROM THE CULVERT CROSSING AT COMBIE ROAD THROUGH THE POND ON PARCEL 57-140-16 (Armstrong Property) THROUGH THE CULVERT CROSSING AT COMBIE ROAD UPSTREAM OF THE POND

Both 60-inch corrugated metal pipe culvert crossings are undersized for buildout flows and should be augmented with an additional 60-inch parallel culvert at each location. These improvements should be made during the future widening

project on Combie Road.

The pond will have little or no effect on the ability of Ragsdale Creek to carry storm flows and it is recommended that this pond remain in its current location.

- REACH 6 - FROM THE CULVERT CROSSING AT COMBIE ROAD TO THE INTERSECTION OF COMBIE AND MAGNOLIA ROADS

Reach 6 can incorporate identical methods (including the same dimensions) discussed for Reach 4.

- REACH 7 - CULVERT CROSSING AT THE INTERSECTION OF COMBIE AND MAGNOLIA

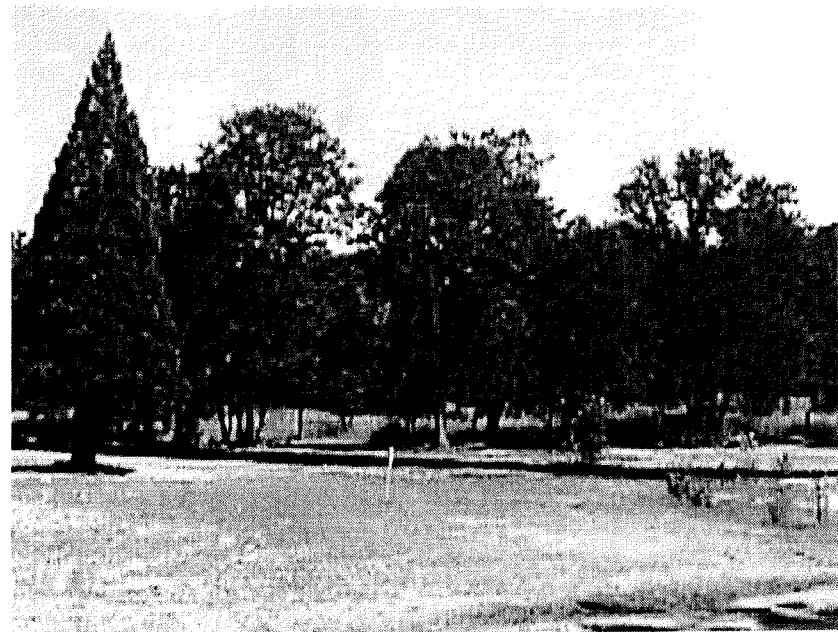
This 60-inch corrugated metal pipe culvert crossing is undersized and should be augmented with a 54-inch corrugated metal parallel pipe. These improvements should be made during future improvements to this intersection.

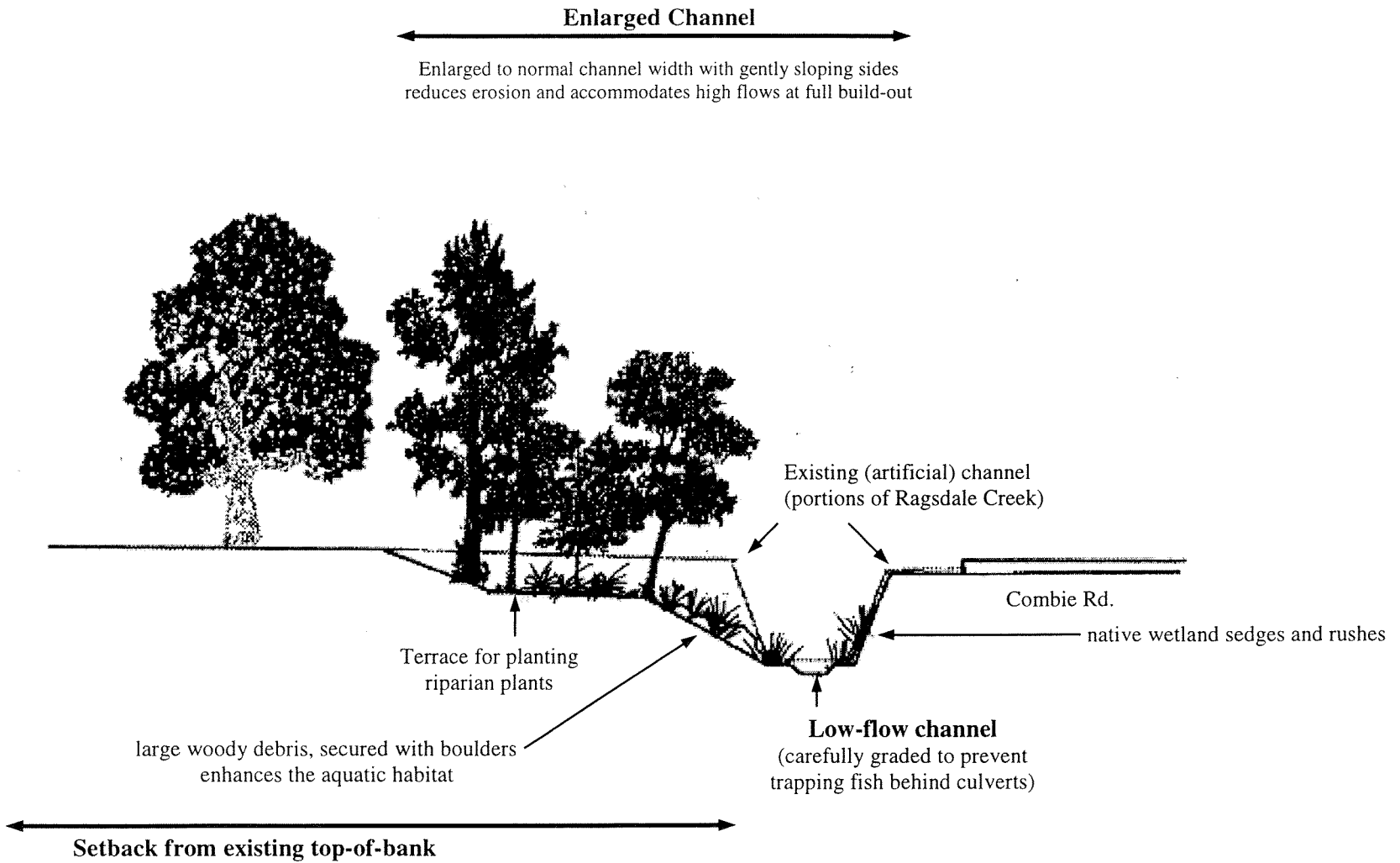
There are currently some small culvert crossings along Combie Road which transfer water from the north side of Combie Road to Ragsdale Creek. It appears that some or all of these crossings are undersized. Although this issue does not relate directly to Ragsdale Creek improvements, it is an important issue with regard to future widening and improvements to Combie Road. These minor crossings should be investigated, designed and constructed along with any improvements to Combie Road.

PARKS AND RECREATION

The Higgins Area Plan lies entirely within the boundaries of the Bear River Recreation and Park District (BRRPD). This District encompasses 120 square miles and 26,000 residents – from Lake of the Pines and Alta Sierra west to the Yuba County line. No County-owned or District-owned park land is located within the Higgins Area. Public recreation facilities – the Magnolia sports complex and one baseball field – are maintained by the District. These facilities are situated on a 6-acre parcel owned by Pleasant Ridge Elementary School District; four of the six acres are undeveloped.

At the present time, the planned multi-purpose trail on the north side of Combie Road would be maintained by the County and the pedestrian pathway on the south side of Combie Road would be maintained by individual property owners as frontage improvements, including the trail, are completed.





Ragsdale Creek Cross Section

CIRCULATION

Primary access to the Higgins Area is via Combie Road, which connects the community to SR 49. SR 49 is the primary access link to the north and south regions away from the community. A Subarea Traffic Study, conducted by Spectrum Engineering and the Nevada County Department of Transportation and Sanitation (DOTS) in 1995, projected Combie Road to have a capacity deficiency by the year 2015.

Various solutions for the anticipated Combie Road deficiencies were investigated. Some of the problems identified included congestion at the SR 49/Combie Road intersection, congestion along Combie Road, and the congestion and proximity of the intersections of Combie Road/Magnolia Road and Lakeshore Drive/Magnolia Road.

Implemented Improvements

The County recently implemented the following measures recommended in the 1995 traffic study to improve the functioning of the community's roads:

1. Installation of a right-turn pocket on Magnolia Road, from Combie Road to Lakeshore Drive.
2. Installation of two interconnected traffic signals at the intersections of Magnolia Road at Combie Road, and Magnolia Road at Lakeshore Drive.

Planned Improvements

The following measures are still necessary, as determined by the 1995 traffic study, in order to accommodate future traffic growth:

1. Widening of Combie Road to two through-traffic lanes in each direction, providing additional needed capacity to meet the projected increase in 2015 traffic volumes. A center two-way left-turn lane is also necessary at some locations. This project will be funded by DOTS and will be implemented when sufficient funds have been accumulated and the need occurs.
2. Widening of the SR 49/Combie Road intersection to provide additional through north-south state route intersection capacity. Caltrans will be implementing this project in 2001-2002.
3. Widening of SR 49 to two through-lanes in each direction. Caltrans will implement this project for the section of SR 49 south of Combie Road in 2001-2002.
4. Lengthening the northbound SR 49 to Combie Road right-turn lane. This will be completed by Caltrans in conjunction with Items 3 and 4 above.

Internal Circulation

5. Construction of a parkway to serve future commercial development at the southeast corner of Combie Road and SR 49. This parkway should be constructed to connect Combie Road one-quarter mile east of SR 49 to SR 49 one-half mile south of Combie Road. It will reduce the potential traffic impacts and disruption of traffic flow that could occur as a result of commercial development at that location. All development at this location should be accessed via the parkway. This parkway project will be implemented as development occurs.

Recommended Improvements that will Not Receive Further Consideration

Other improvements recommended by the 1995 traffic study were reviewed but proved to be cost ineffective or unacceptably disruptive to the community. Some of the alternatives considered, analyzed, and ruled out are listed below along with a brief explanation of why each was eliminated.

1. Construction of new road 1/2 mile south of Combie Road, and parallel to Combie Road from SR 49 to Combie Road 1/2 mile south of Magnolia Road.

This alternative was considered a good traffic mitigation but with excessive and avoidable environmental impacts. It also was considered to potentially provide additional growth inducing impacts to the area by significantly increasing capacity into the community. It was ruled out because of the ability to expand the existing alignment of Combie Road. Given the fact that Caltrans will desire limited access to SR 49 in the long term future, it was deemed infeasible that a full access intersection 1/2 mile south of Combie Road on S. R. 49 could be approved. Therefore this alternative was ruled out.

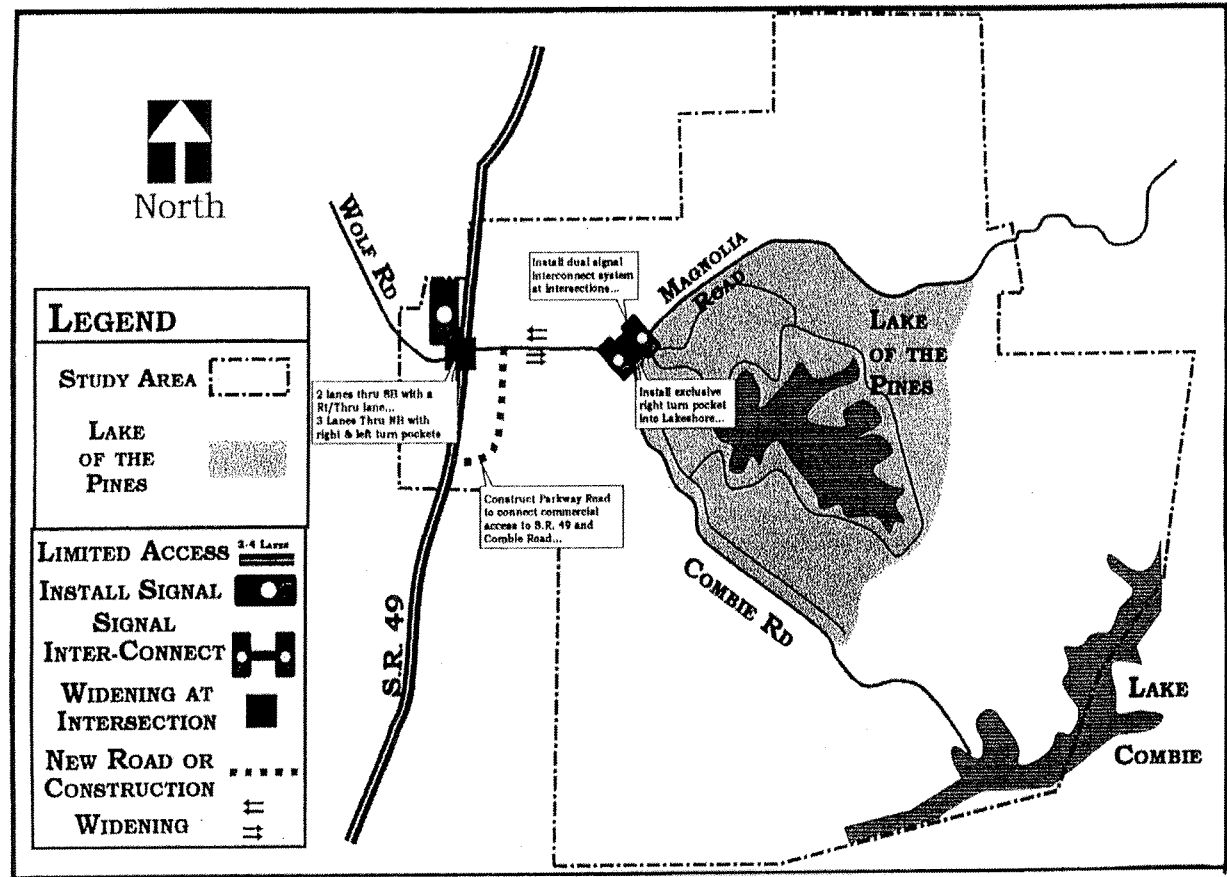
2. Utilization of a second gate into Lake of the Pines private community from Combie Road south of Magnolia Road. This alternative would divert a significant portion of the traffic now impacting Magnolia Road away from the congested areas. It has a low cost since all roads utilized are in place and under-utilized. A new security guard would need to be hired for this alternative.

Although this alternative was a good traffic mitigation, and would help significantly relieve impacts to the intersection of Magnolia Road/Lakeshore Drive, it was decided that the residential impacts to currently low volume streets within

the Lake of the Pines development would be too great to gain support by the local residents, and more especially by those impacted by such a large change in traffic patterns. Relatively low volume streets would be converted into significant collector roads, carrying much more traffic than local residents. This solution is very attractive however, because of its relatively low almost "free" cost (compared to dual signals and widening of Magnolia Road which can cost as much as \$250,000).

3. Realignment of Combie Road (north) to create a four-way intersection at Magnolia Road and Lakeshore Drive, eliminating the existing intersection at Magnolia Road/Combie Road.

This mitigation would completely change the local street system in the vicinity of Combie Road and Magnolia Road. It eliminates the existing intersection (and associated traffic conflicts) at Combie Road/Magnolia Road by re-routing Combie Road (north) northeasterly and back towards Lakeshore Drive, essentially becoming Lakeshore Drive. Combie Road (south) would swing northeast and become Magnolia Road. Even though this alternative eliminates the congestion problem between the two existing intersections along Magnolia Road in the vicinity of Lakeshore Drive, it creates a significant impact to the surrounding community by constructing new roads near to existing development. This alternative, although a significant traffic improvement, was considered to be too disruptive an impact to the local establishments and land owners in the vicinity.



Implemented and Planned Circulation Improvements

Secondary Emergency Access

Only two primary routes currently exist within the Higgins Area: 1) Combie Road west to SR 49, and 2) Magnolia Road east to Dog Bar Road. Another route that could be used to access SR 49, as an alternative to Combie Road in the event of an emergency, is desirable. The Higgins Area will be studied as part of the Higgins Fire Protection District emergency evacuation plan. In the future, it will also be necessary to evaluate the feasibility of creating an alternative access to the Higgins Area south of Combie Road.

Vehicle Traffic Infrastructure Design Considerations

Nevada County General Plan Policy 4.19 states: “[the County shall] maintain the function and integrity of arterial and major collector roads by limiting access wherever possible. For all new development, allow access via the lowest roadway classification, consistent with safe operation of the roadways and environmental constraints.” All discretionary projects should be reviewed for compliance with this policy. Preserving the functionality of major roads requires that transporting traffic between major origins and destinations be the main consideration when reviewing requests for access to major roads.

Internal Circulation

Consistent with the above, new access encroachments should be minimized, common driveways should be utilized wherever possible, and all new encroachments should be analyzed for their effect upon the safety and efficiency of the major roads and intersections. Turn-restricting medians should be installed where necessary and the use of alternative service roads should be encouraged.

Typical cross-sections of a Community Area multi-lane street are shown on Page II-16. Four 12-foot wide lanes with 4-foot wide shoulders would characterize Combie Road. A 12-foot wide center turn lane would be constructed where appropriate. A landscaped center median, in accordance with General Plan policy 4.9, where a center turn lane is not desirable, would be a low maintenance, safe treatment consistent with the rural theme of the community village area. A meandering landscaped buffer between the vehicle traveled way and the proposed multipurpose trail would also be a desirable amenity. Suitable tree, shrub, and herbaceous plants that would be effective in landscaping the buffer are listed at the end of this chapter.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities

Pedestrian facilities are required within the Community Area pursuant to General Plan Policies 4.27, 4.32, and 4.34 (see Appendix). A map indicating proposed pedestrian and bicycle facilities within the Higgins Area is shown on the following page. The map depicts a continuous multipurpose trail on the north side of Combie and Magnolia Roads from SR 49 to the Magnolia Intermediate School on Kingston Lane. The hard-surfaced multipurpose trail would be approximately 10-foot wide, and flanked by an approximately 5-foot wide landscaped strip. The exact width of the trail and landscape buffer could vary to create a somewhat meandering path that would lend greater character to this circulation feature. The Ragsdale Creek Setback Study conducted as part of this Plan recommended that the trail be continued on the west side of SR 49. Future efforts to extend this trail west of SR 49 should continue by working with CalTrans to locate the safest crossing of the state highway and aligning the trail with that crossing.

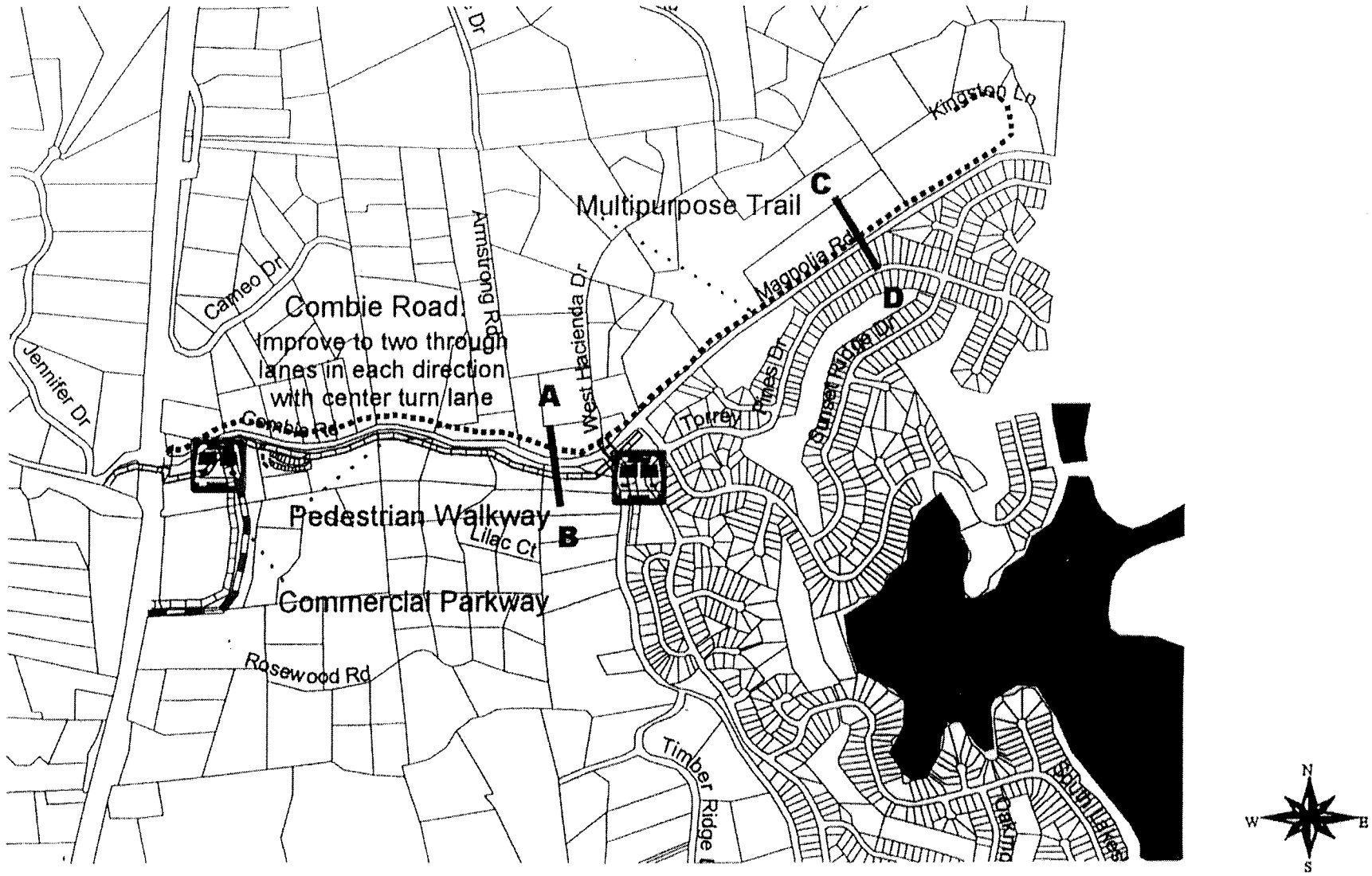
The map also depicts a five-foot wide pedestrian walkway on the south side of Combie Road from SR 49 to (south) Combie Road. The pedestrian walkway is to be constructed of a permeable surface, such as decomposed granite; it may be straight in some areas and be designed to meander in other areas. A pedestrian walkway within the commercial area southeast of the intersection of Combie Road and SR 49 provides internal and through-pedestrian circulation. Neither the multipurpose trail nor the pedestrian walkway shall be used toward satisfying open space requirements for proposed development, per the Zoning Ordinance.

Crosswalks are envisioned at the following locations:

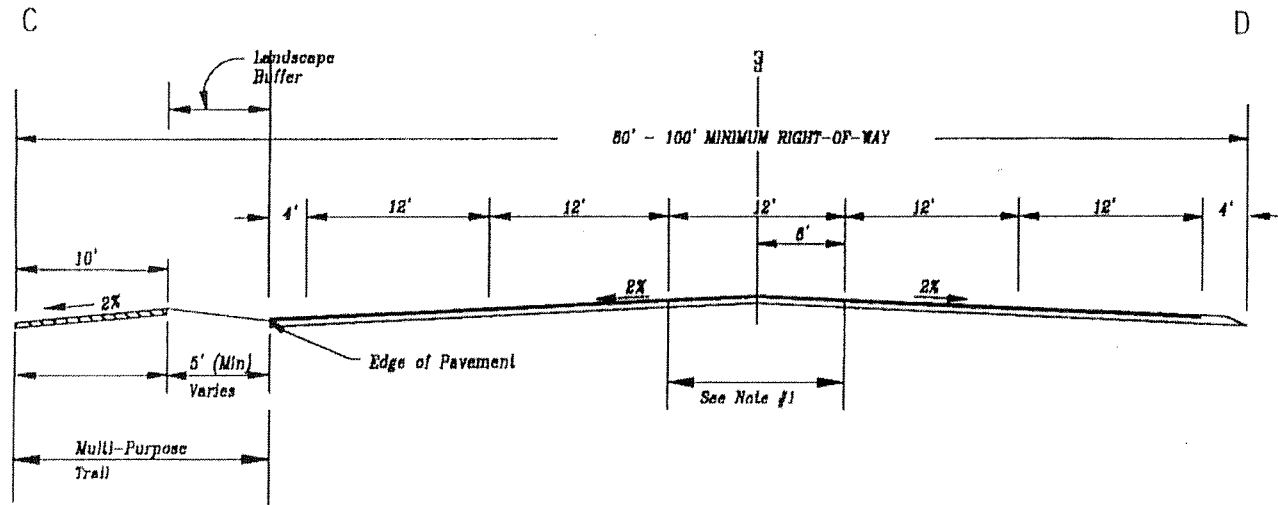
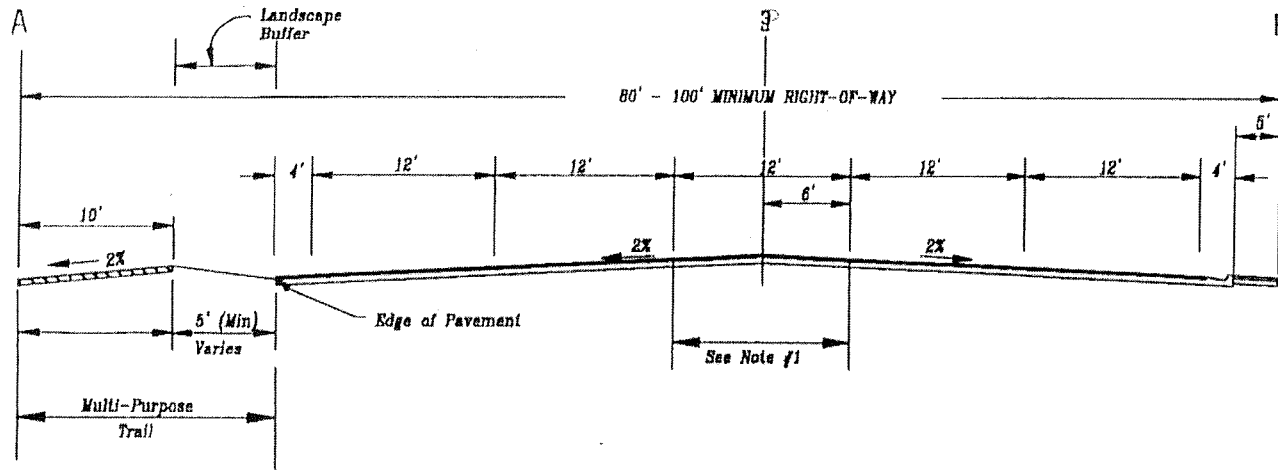
1. State Route 49 at the Combie Road / Wolf Road intersection.
2. Wolf Road at State Route 49
3. Combie Road at State Route 49
4. West Hacienda Road at Combie Road
5. South Combie Road at Magnolia Road
6. Magnolia Road at Combie Road
7. Magnolia Road at Lakeshore Drive

Vehicle Trip Reduction

All projects should be reviewed for opportunities to increase ridesharing, transit use and other means of reducing demand for additional roadway capacity. Transportation Demand Management and Transportation System Management Plans (TDM/TSM) shall be implemented when adopted.



For cross section details please see attached details A-B and C-D



Notes:

1. Two-way left turn lane, left turn pocket, or cobbled median, as appropriate.
2. Multipurpose trail separated from vehicle traveled way by landscaped buffer of varying width.

Cross-Sections of Combie Road between SR 49 and south Combie Road (A-B) and Magnolia Road between Combie Road and Magnolia Intermediate School (C-D).

Drought/Deer Resistant/Low Maintenance Plant List

Name	Location	Size	Drought/ Deer/ Low Maintenance	Special Features
TREES				
Celtis australis – Hackberry	Sun – Part Shade	25’ – 40’	D/D/L	Deciduous – Good Street Tree
Ginkgo bilboa ‘Fairmount’	Sun – Part Shade	30’ – 70’	D/D/L	Deciduous – Fall Color Yellow
Lagerstroemia faurei (Standard)	Sun	15’ – 30’	D/?/L	Flowers in Summer– Fall Color
Pinus halepensis – Aleppo Pine	Sun	30’ – 60’	D/D/L	Good in Poor Soil & Arid Climate – Moderate Growth
Pinus nigra – Austrian Black Pine	Sun	40’	D/D/L	Slow to Moderate Growth – Good Street Tree
Pistachia chinensis	Sun	30’ – 50	D/?/L	Fall Color – Yellow, Orange or Red
Quercus ilex – Holly Oak	Sun	40’ – 70’	D/D/L	Evergreen – Moderate Growth
Quercus phellos – Willow Oak	Sun	50’ – 70’	D/D/L	Deciduous – Moderate Growth
Quercus suber – Cork Oak	Sun	50’ – 70’	D/D/L	Evergreen – Moderate Growth
Robinia amigua ‘Purple Robe’	Sun – Part Shade	25’ – 40’	D/?/L	Deciduous – Purple Flowers
SHRUBS				
Artemisia ‘Powis Castle’	Sun	2’ – 4’	D/D/L	Silver Foliage
Artemisia ‘Silver Mound’	Sun	1’ – 2’	D/D/L	Silver Foliage
Ceanothus ‘Dark Star’	Sun – Part Shade	5’T/8’W	D/D/L	Blue Flowers in Spring
Ceanothus ‘Skylark’	Sun – Part Shade	3’T/5’W	D/D/L	Blue Flowers in Spring
Cistus ladanifer – Crimson – Spot Rock Rose	Sun	3’T/6’W	D/D/L	White Flowers in Spring
Cistus purpureus – Orchid Rock Rose	Sun	3’ – 4’	D/D/L	Orchid Flowers in Spring
Cistus salviifolius – Sage leaf Rock Rose	Sun	2’T/6’W	D/D/L	Pink Flowers in Spring
Juniperus chinensis ‘Old Gold’	Sun	3’ – 5’	D/D/L	Evergreen – With Green & Gold Foliage

List of Plants Suitable for Landscaping Between Planned Bike Path and Combie Road

Drought/Deer Resistant/Low Maintenance Plant List

Hypericum calycinum—St. Johnswort	Sun—Part Shade	18"	D/D/L	Yellow Flowers in the Spring
Juniperus conferta 'Blue Pacific'	Sun	1'T/6'W	D/D/L	Blue Green Conifer Type Foliage
Rosmarinus officinalis 'Huntington Blue' or 'Lockwood de Forest'	Sun	1' - 2'	D/D/L	Trailing Rosemary—Blue Flowers
Stachys byzantina—Lambs Ear	Sun—Part Shade	1'	D/D/L	Foliage is Wooly Gray—Pink Flower Spikes
COLOR <i>(Optional) Small Areas to be Planted for a longer Bloom Time—May Substitute Dryland Wildflowers</i>				
Achillea—Common Yarrow	Sun—Light Shade	24" - 36"	D/D/L	Pink Yellow Red or White
Achillea tomentosa—Wolly Yarrow	Sun—Light Shade	6" - 10"	D/D/L	Yellow
Calendula officinalis—Pot Marigold	Sun	12" - 24"	D/D/L	Annuals in Winter—Yellow or Orange
Coreopsis grandiflora	Sun—Part Shade	12" - 30"	D/D/L	Flowers are Yellowish Orange
Erysimum—Siberian Wallflower	Sun	2' - 4'	D/D/L	Purple Flowers—Long Bloom Time
Eschscholzia Californica—Poppy	Sun	8" - 12"	D/D/L	Orange Flowers—Spring
Euryops pectinatus	Sun	3'	D/D/L	Yellow Flowers Long Bloom Time
Kniphofia uvaria 'Dwarf' —Red-Hot Poker Plant	Sun	2'	D/D/L	Red & Yellow Flower Spikes Above the Strap Like Foliage
Narcissus—Daffodils	Sun—Part Shade	8" - 24"	D/D/L	Yellow Orange or White
Romneya coulteri—Matilija Poppy	Sun	8' Tall	D/D/L	Gray Green Foilage—9" White Flowers with Orange Center—CA Native
Zauschneria (Epilobium) California Fuchsia	Sun	1' - 2'	D/D/L	Scarlet Flowers—Bloom Time Summer to Fall—Gray Foliage—CA Native

List of Plants Suitable for Landscaping Between Planned Bike Path and Combie Road, cont.

Drought/Deer Resistant/Low Maintenance Plant List

Lavandula stoechas—Spanish Lavender	Sun	1' - 3'	D/D/L	Lavender Flowers— Attract Bees. Don't plant near the bike trail.
Nandina domestic 'Compacta'	Sun—Part Shade	3' - 4'	D/?/L	Evergreen—Red Foliage in Winter
Phormium tenax 'Maori Sunrise' or 'Yellow Wave'	Sun—Part Shade	2' - 4'	D/D/L	Strap-like Foliage—Purplish, Red & Yellow
Pinus mugo—Mugo Pine	Sun—Part Shade	2' - 4'	D/D/L	Pine Shrub
Rosmarinus officinalis 'Collingwood Ingram'	Sun	2' - 3'	D/D/L	Blue Green Foliage—Blue Flowers in Spring & Fall
Rosmarinus officinalis 'Majorca Pink'	Sun	2' - 4'	D/D/L	Blue Green Foliage—Pink Flowers in Spring & Fall
Rosmarinus officinalis 'Tuscan Blue'	Sun	4' - 6'	D/D/L	Blue Green Foliage—Dark Blue Flowers in Spring & Fall
Santolina chamaecyparissus—Lavender Cotton	Sun	2'	D/D/L	Gray Foliage—Yellow Flowers in Spring
Santolina rosmarinifolius (virens)	Sun	2'	D/D/L	Green Foliage—Yellow Flowers in Spring
Teucrium fruticans Bus Germander	Sun	4' - 8'	D/D/L	Gray Green Foliage—Blue Flowers in Spring
Teucrium chamaedrys—Germander	Sun	1' - 2'	D/D/L	Green Foliage—Pink Flowers in Spring

GROUND COVER

Arctostaphylos—Low Manzanita	Sun—Part Shade	2'T/8'W	D/?/L	Low Green Foliage—Small Pink Flowers in Spring
Cotoneaster horizontalis	Sun—Part Shade	2'T/6'W	D/D/L	Semi-Evergreen Foliage—Red Berries in Fall
Genista spachiana (Racemosa) Spanish Broom	Sun	1'T/3'W	D/D/L	Gray Green Foliage—Yellow Flowers in Spring
Helianthemum nummularium—Sun Rose	Sun	8'T/3'W	D/D/L	Flowers in Summer—Red, Orange, Yellow & White

List of Plants Suitable for Landscaping Between Planned Bike Path and Combie Road, cont.

CHAPTER III DESIGN GOALS, POLICIES & GUIDELINES

The Design Goals, Policies & Guidelines:

- Provide a Framework for Land Use Development in the Higgins Area
- Ensure Coordinated and Consistent Development
- Create a Vision for an Aesthetically-Pleasing and Functional Community Consistent with the Surroundings

Inside this chapter:

Design Goals	III-1
Design Policies	III-3
Design Guidelines	III-8

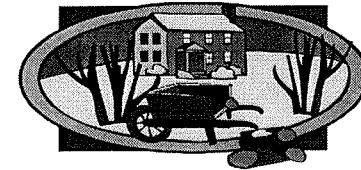
The following goals, policies and guidelines provide a planning framework to guide development in the Higgins Area and promote coherent community design. The policies and guidelines are applicable to all discretionary and ministerial project permits and provide direction for new development, including the structural rehabilitation or expansion of existing uses. The Higgins Area Plan supplements the County's Zoning Ordinance, including the Comprehensive Site Development Standards contained in Chapter II of the *Nevada County Land Use and Development Code*. The Higgins Area Plan policies and guidelines are to be used for scenic corridor review for those properties designated with a Scenic Corridor (-SC) combining district. In cases where the Plan's policies and guidelines are more restrictive or more specific than the County zoning ordinance, the Higgins Area Plan shall take precedence.

The policies and guidelines allow flexibility in project design without dictating style. They are intended to create a diverse yet harmonious environment. Through the design review process, each element should be considered within the context of the individual project, *with the objective being* that each project meets the goals of the Plan as a whole.

DESIGN GOALS

Goal I Preserve scenic resources that characterize the SR 49 and Combie Road corridors.

Undisturbed areas within the Higgins Area display abundant vegetation in a mix of foothill pines, ponderosa pines and a variety of oaks. Dense oak canopies dominate the steep slopes and riparian vegetation thrives alongside drainage courses and along Ragsdale Creek where it has not been disturbed. Oak woodlands, steep slopes, important ridgelines, streams, riparian habitat, and wetlands occur on numerous sites.



Native trees provide a strong, unifying element to development that has no other similar features. They impart visual relief between developments and contribute to the sense of area history. At buildout, it will be the retention and enhancement of natural resources that make the Higgins Area community a desirable place to live.

The SR 49/Combie Road intersection provides an important scenic entry into the Higgins Area, and all development should strive to protect the natural environs that form the scenic backdrop. A number of existing developments have preserved important scenic resources, including the Crain Center, which

preserves existing oaks, and the Combie Star Professional Building, which enhances Ragsdale Creek and preserves a highly visible landmark oak along the roadway.

Site design for new development should be based on analysis of the site's characteristics and influences, maintaining as much as possible the natural topography, drainage features, and native trees. Projects should be designed to complement rather than dominate the natural landscape.

Goal II Enhance and protect Ragsdale Creek as a common design theme throughout the Higgins Area to preserve drainage, visual, and habitat resources.

Ragsdale Creek originates near Huck Finn Lake in Lake of the Pines. From Lake of the Pines, the creek flows westerly, paralleling Combie Road primarily on the south side of the road. In its natural, undisturbed state near the intersection of Combie Road and Magnolia Road, Ragsdale Creek is overgrown and inaccessible. On the north side of Combie Road, the creek feeds into a pond that has been cleared of native brush and replanted with lawn and flowering perennials. East of the SR 49/Combie Road intersection, the creek has been artificially channelized.

The creek should be a unifying feature throughout the primary corridor of the Higgins Area, creating a potential focal point of interest for both vehicle and pedestrian traffic. However, the ditch in its present condition is a community eyesore. Where enhanced and maintained, Ragsdale Creek could provide a pleasing and inviting roadside attraction. As additional development occurs along this corridor, new infrastructure and site-specific improvements should result in continued preservation and enhancement of this valuable community resource. Where the creek bed has been channelized, property owners should be given incentives, such as reduced setbacks, to create a work of art in a new creek bed design. They could utilize slight meandering, large boulders, shrubs trees and other plants in the side slope area of the creek.

Goal III Encourage the consistent and compatible use of building materials and design elements appropriate to the visual and scenic qualities of each site.

Incorporating similar design features in adjacent developments will result in a coordinated and cohesive community appearance. No particular style or theme is mandated for the Higgins Area, so the focus of design should be on constructing a high quality development that is sensitive to the small town character of the community. The use of complementary building materials, textures, roof shapes, lighting, and colors can tie buildings of varying shapes and sizes together.

The Crain Center, the office on the northeast corner of the SR 49/Combie Road intersection, and the Combie Star Professional Building are different in scale and size but complement each other with compatible architectural details, including offset roofs, proportionate windows and doors, and projections that provide visual interest (i.e., covered porches and dormer windows).

Goal IV Use landscaping to complement and accent development.

Native oaks and grasses dominate slopes and the flatter, low-lying terrain within the Higgins Area, providing definition to the Combie Road and SR 49 corridors. As development occurs and native vegetation is removed, it is important to replace the native vegetation with landscaping, using native species wherever possible. Well-planned landscaping is an integral element of this plan. Native plants should be used to highlight new construction or to soften outdated development. Trees and shrubs should screen storage areas and outdoor equipment; however, consideration should first be given to relocating or architecturally screening unattractive features. Landscaping should be used to define pedestrian areas and open spaces.

Significant landscaped corridors are encouraged along the two primary roadways, SR 49 and Combie Road. In addition to providing a visual buffer between roadways and development and between incompatible land uses, well-planned landscaping will enhance the aesthetic quality of the built environment. Landscaping should include an abundance of trees, both deciduous and evergreen, providing shade and color during spring and summer months, and creating a contrast to an otherwise stark environment during the winter. Plant materials should always be distributed throughout parking areas, with larger islands and plantings alongside parking stalls.

Goal V Connect Higgins Corner to the high school using a multipurpose trail.

Multipurpose, non-motorized access between Higgins Corner and the high school, connecting commercial and multi-family developments, is vital to the central theme of the Higgins Area Plan. In keeping with the General Plan's "Village Center" concept, the multipurpose trails will encourage non-vehicular traffic between sites, enhance the visual quality of the corridor, and invite motorists to stop at local businesses. These trails will provide a safe way for children and others to move through the village. Where development abuts Ragsdale Creek, access to the streamside environment will increase the appeal of the trails.

DESIGN POLICIES

The design policies provide direction for a positive, cohesive community image while maintaining the quality of the physical environment of the Higgins Area. The policies are applicable to all projects; they supplement and refine the County's General Plan policies and the Zoning Ordinance, including the Comprehensive Site Development Standards contained in Chapter II of the Nevada County Land Use and Development Code.

Site Preparation and Treatment

- Policy 1** Site grading should be designed to conserve natural topographic features and appearance by minimizing the amount of cut and fill and by utilizing land form grading to blend graded slopes and benches with the natural topography consistent with the Nevada County Grading Ordinance.
- Policy 2** All cut slopes shall be landscaped or otherwise stabilized to avoid erosion and visual impacts.
- Policy 3** Ridgelines and slopes in excess of 30 percent shall be preserved.
- Policy 4** In keeping with Goal 1 of this plan to preserve the area's scenic resources, all new development shall be designed so as to impact as few native trees as feasible.
- Policy 5** Implement the Ragsdale Creek setback program according to recommendations in the Ragsdale Creek Development Setback Study as shown in the exhibits on pages III-7 and III-8. Recommended setbacks may be reduced, with mitigation, to a minimum of 25' (contingent on approval by resource agencies) on individual parcels, as described in the Setback Study and Goal 2. Property owners will have the right to request reduced setbacks to the minimum 25' where the potential impact deters/prevents development under designated zoning. Setbacks shall be measured from the top of the existing bank at the time of submittal of discretionary project applications.
- Policy 6** An erosion control plan shall be submitted and approved prior to

issuance of grading permits and improvement plans. The plan shall identify measures to minimize erosion during construction, using Best Management Practices. This could include the use of diversion ditches, interception dikes, perimeter dikes, straw bale dikes, an intercept or swale, a perimeter swale, grade stabilization structures and/or sedimentation basins or traps.

- Policy 7** The erosion control plan for each development proposal fronting Ragsdale Creek shall include plans for enhancing and maintaining the stream channel.
- Policy 8** If vegetation removed near Ragsdale Creek consists of riparian species, a riparian mitigation plan shall be prepared and submitted to the County for approval. Any enhancement/revegetation plans for the streambed and in the setback areas shall be prepared by a licensed landscape architect, experienced revegetation specialist or botanist to ensure that plantings appropriate to the stream environment are properly established.
- Policy 9** If roads or paving are proposed near Ragsdale Creek, the project proponent shall design a system for drainage runoff on the site, using Best Management Practices (BMPs) for sediment basins, sumps and oil separators, for long-term protection of water quality. Hard surfaces shall be sloped away from Ragsdale Creek with all surface runoff from the hard improvements directed to sumps and oil-separator chambers; clean water shall be discharged back into Ragsdale Creek.
- Policy 10** To minimize the potential for flooding, development affecting Ragsdale Creek along Combie Road shall provide flow capacity improvements to the creek channel, in accordance with the Drainage Section in Chapter II. Improvements may include the construction of off-stream detention ponds such that water surface returns to its base elevation within 24 hours of the applicable storm event.
- Policy 11** Ragsdale Creek shall remain an open watercourse unless roadway expansion, flood conveyance, or property ingress/egress requires improvements in limited areas.

Policy 12 Property owners shall be responsible for the maintenance of on-site drainage improvements and streambed vegetation/landscaping unless an entity is formed to assume maintenance responsibility for either improvement.

Site Design

Policy 13 In keeping with the General Plan's goals and objectives for Community Regions, development within the Higgins Area shall be encouraged at the maximum allowable densities, consistent with environmental, infrastructure and other site constraints.

Policy 14 Utility line extensions, including cable and telephone lines, shall be installed underground to minimize adverse scenic impacts.

Policy 15 The multi-purpose trail on the north side of Combie and Magnolia Roads will be constructed with public funds. Project developers will construct pedestrian paths on the south side of these roads.

Policy 16 Pathways paralleling Ragsdale Creek shall be separated from the stream channel by a minimum 5-foot-wide buffer. Landscaping shall consist of native plants, dependent upon market availability.

Policy 17 Pathways that end at or near an intersection on any site shall provide wheelchair accessibility to street crosswalks from the pathways.

Policy 18 Roof top mechanical equipment and other utility hardware (i.e., meters, satellite dishes) shall be screened from public view utilizing materials complementary to the building and colors that blend with the roof. Skylights and solar panels are allowed on rooftops if designed to fit flush on (or up to two feet above) the roof surface and if all materials are non-reflective. Vents shall be non-reflective.

Policy 19 All roofing materials shall be of non-reflective materials and shall be of colors that complement the area.

Policy 20 Awnings, if provided, shall complement the scale and appearance, including color, of the area. Awnings on a single building or adjacent buildings should be of the same approximate style and height on the building façade(s).

Policy 21 All loading, storage, and solid waste disposal areas shall be located in the least visible location and shall be hidden from direct view of roads and building entries through the use of walls and landscaping. Walls used for this purpose shall not be greater in height than the main structure and must be of the same siding material used in the structure it adjoins. All such walls shall be buffered from public view by landscaping.

Policy 22 Ground level mechanical equipment, including utility boxes, back-flow prevention devices and similar equipment, shall be located in the least conspicuous area.

Policy 23 All fencing within the Scenic Corridor combining district zone shall be landscaped to buffer its view from any public area, including roadways or on-site activity areas.

Lighting

Policy 24 Lighting shall be designed to minimize off-site glare or spill.

Policy 25 Light fixtures shall be designed and located to complement overall site appearance, minimizing visual impacts from roadway views. Lighting fixtures shall be of a non-glare, non-reflective material that is subdued in color.

Signage

Policy 26 Every non-residential project shall submit a preliminary sign plan for review as part of any development permit application. Any plans for temporary signage shall be included. Plans shall depict the overall sign design for all temporary and permanent

signs. The sizes, color scheme, lighting detail, and location proposed for each sign shall be submitted with a final comprehensive sign plan at the building permit stage.

- Policy 27** Wall signs shall be positioned on the building to complement the style and proportion of the entire building façade. Signs shall not extend above the roof fascia.
- Policy 28** New signage painted directly on building walls or roofs shall be prohibited. This standard shall not apply to murals.
- Policy 29** Temporary signage shall be located on-site and in close proximity to the uses identified. The multitude of signs associated with development, design, construction, and leasing shall be combined into one sign for each project.
- Policy 30** Temporary signs shall not be illuminated.
- Policy 31** The display of special event banners, flags, balloons, and similar advertising devices, including sandwich boards and similar signs, shall not be displayed more than 10 days before an event and shall be removed within 3 days of the end of the event.
- Policy 32** Sign hardware and electrical ducting shall be incorporated into the sign design so as not to be visible to passersby.
- Policy 33** All monument and freestanding signs shall be placed in landscaped areas.
- Policy 34** Permanently-affixed “A-frame” signs or “sandwich board” signs shall be prohibited. Sandwich boards shall not be allowed on walkways, bike paths, or along Combie Road and its shoulders.

- Policy 35** To encourage existing businesses to voluntarily upgrade their design elements and signage, as recommended in the Higgins Area Plan, the County shall, upon adoption of the Plan, mail a summary of the Plan and information on how to obtain a copy of the Plan to all business owners within the Plan area.

Fire Prevention

- Policy 36** All new commercial, industrial, and multi-family development shall be designed and sized to satisfy fireflow capabilities within the plan area. Site constraints may limit the height of buildings to ensure adequate access by fire-fighting equipment. Construction plans shall indicate compliance with current adopted Uniform Fire and Uniform Building Codes.
- Policy 37** Vegetation clearance of flammable fuels around all structures will be required in accordance with the minimum requirements of Public Resources Code Section 4291.

Sewage

- Policy 38** As a condition of approval for any new development, individual property owners will enter into an agreement with the County and the Sanitation District to annex into the Sanitation District at such time as capacity is available. Property owners must also participate in the funding of future expansions of the wastewater treatment facilities.
- Policy 39** Interim sewage disposal systems are permitted until expansion of the Wastewater Treatment Plant is completed and capacity is available.

Drainage

- Policy 40** Driveways crossing Ragsdale Creek shall be evaluated and designed to avoid flooding. Maintenance of on-site drainage improvements are the responsibility of the property owner, unless a maintenance district is formed in the future.

Policy 41 Minimum storm flows, as detailed in Chapter II in the Drainage section, shall be maintained on all projects.

Circulation

Policy 42 As funding becomes available to the County for improvements to Zone 6, Combie Road shall be widened to two through-traffic lanes in each direction and a center two-way left turn lane.

Policy 43 A parkway road, as described in Chapter II, shall be constructed as development occurs or sooner (if County-initiated) to serve future commercial development at the southeast corner of Combie Road and SR 49; development in the vicinity shall be required to provide access to the parkway.

Policy 44 In keeping with the General Plan's "Village Center" concept, new access encroachments on Combie Road shall be minimized. Each project shall share common access drives and parking, and shall be linked to adjacent development and parking areas, using roads, sidewalks and paths, where possible. Property owners shall be responsible for maintenance of on-site pathways.

Policy 45 If any properties are divided to create additional properties, new access encroachments on Combie Road shall be minimized following the requirements of Policy 44.

Policy 46 Turn-restricting medians shall be installed when deemed necessary and alternative service roads shall be encouraged.

Policy 47 A landscaped elevated center median, shall be constructed along Combie Road where a center turn lane is not desirable. This median shall be landscaped with low maintenance, drought-tolerant plants if resources to provide for upkeep of the landscaping can be secured.

Policy 48 A multi-purpose trail shall be constructed and a meandering landscaped buffer that may be comprised of plant species listed in Chapter II shall be installed on the north side of Combie and Magnolia Roads from SR 49 to the Magnolia Intermediate School on Kingston Lane.

Policy 49 A pedestrian pathway shall be constructed on the south side of Combie Road from 1/4-mile east of SR 49 to (south) Combie Road. As development occurs, each project shall contribute its pro rata share of the pathway.

Policy 50 Opportunities to increase ridesharing, transit use, and other means of reducing demand for additional roadway capacity shall be promoted as close to multifamily development as possible. The County of Nevada shall seek opportunities to provide these opportunities on County-owned properties.

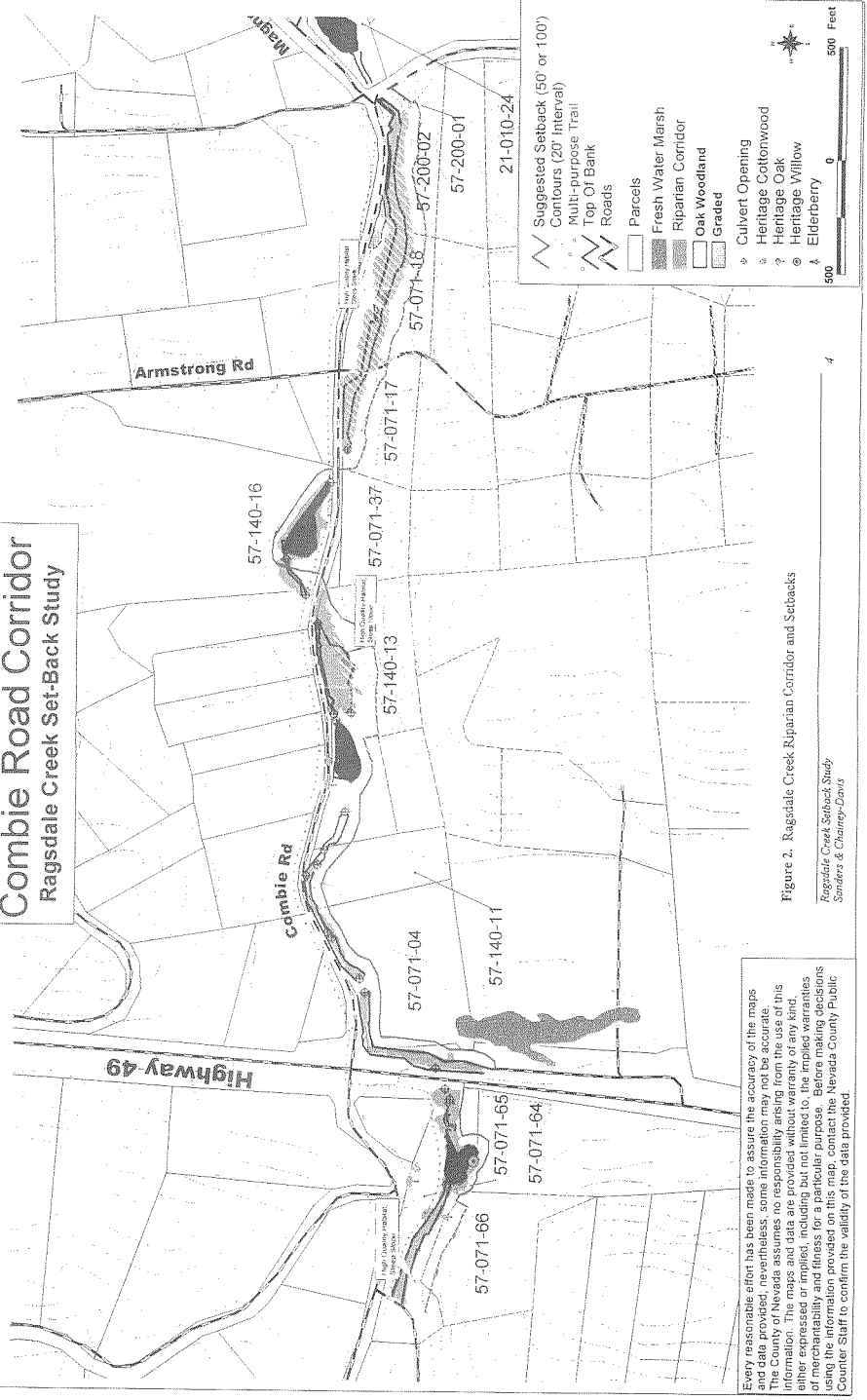
Policy 51 Provisions for a covered bus stop and parking for Gold Country Stage users shall be strongly encouraged to protect riders from rain and flooding.

Policy 52 Additional signalization along the Combie Road corridor shall be discouraged, unless warranted for public safety purposes.

PARCEL NO.	SETBACK RECOMMENDATION		COMMENTS
	South Bank*	North Bank*	
APN 57-200-01 Sans	50 feet from top of bank	No development or disturbance from top of bank to Combie Rd.	Reduced from 100 ft due to parcel's level terrain, lack of adjacent oak woodland, and current high level of disturbance at site; high potential for riparian regeneration and restoration along creek; mitigation needed for further setback reductions
APN 57-200-02	100 feet from top of bank	No development or disturbance from top of bank to Combie Rd.	Willow scrub riparian and slope of oak woodland is valuable wildlife habitat that should remain unfragmented and undisturbed; steep slope south of creek has greater risk of erosion, accelerated runoff.
APN 57-071-18	100 feet from top of bank	50 feet from top of bank; no disturbance of oak woodland north of channel.	Mix of aquatic habitats, distance from Combie Road, and unfragmented nature of riparian and oak woodland make this parcel of high wildlife value; moderate-to-steep slope south of creek has greater risk of erosion, accelerated runoff.
APN 57-071-17	100 feet from top of bank	No development or disturbance from top of bank to Combie Rd.	Willow scrub riparian and slope of oak woodland is valuable wildlife habitat that should remain unfragmented and undisturbed; moderate-to-steep slope south of creek has greater risk of erosion, accelerated runoff.
APN 57-140-16 Armstrong	50 feet from bank and edge of pond	50 feet from bank and edge of pond; no disturbance to oak woodland.	Lack of riparian vegetation and cover make this relatively low-value habitat in its current landscaped condition.
APN 57-140-13 Siegle (eastern part)	100 feet from top of bank of southern channel	No development or disturbance (other than bank protection) to Combie Rd.	Area between the two channels is valuable riparian habitat; this area and the riparian habitat south of southern channel and the slope of oak woodland above the creek should remain unfragmented; moderate-to-steep slopes have greater risk of erosion, accelerated runoff.
APN 57-140-13 Mobile Home Park, Combie Star Professional Bldg.	Already developed	Already developed	This portion of the parcel is already paved or developed up to the banks of the creek or pond.
APN 57-140-11	50 feet from top of bank	No development or disturbance from top of bank to Combie Rd.	Reduced from 100 feet because of current degraded state of the creek and level terrain, and fragmentation from culverts; some potential for riparian regeneration and restoration.
APN 57-140-04 Conkey	50 feet from top of bank	No development or disturbance from top of bank to Combie Rd.	Reduced from 100 feet because of current degraded state of the creek and level terrain; proximity to SR 49; high potential for riparian regeneration and restoration; conceptual plans already in place for riparian restoration on creek as part of mitigation for Conkey project; mitigation needed for reduced setback.
APN 57-071-65 eastern portion	50 feet from top of bank	50 feet from top of bank	Valley oak woodland, including heritage valley oaks, provide good wildlife habitat; reduced from 100 feet because pond and riparian habitat upstream is degraded, with buildings immediately to the north.
APN 57-071-65 western portion	100 feet from top of bank	50 feet from top of bank	High quality valley oak woodland and willow scrub; steep slope of oak woodland above southern bank should remain contiguous with riparian habitat; include elderberry shrub in setback; buildings encroach on northern riparian corridor.

* Setbacks are measured from the top of the existing bank at the time of submittal of discretionary project applications.

Combie Road Corridor Ragsdale Creek Set-Back Study

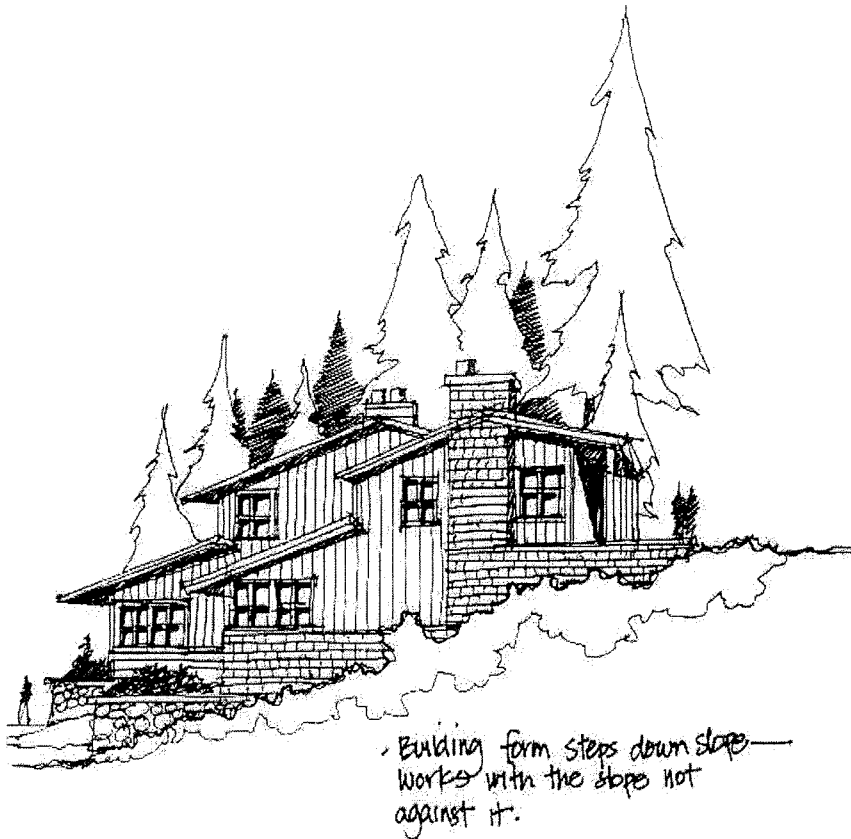


Every reasonable effort has been made to assure the accuracy of the maps and data provided herein. Some information may not be accurate. The County of Nevada and its staff do not warrant the accuracy of this information. The maps and data are provided without warranty of any kind, either expressed or implied, including but not limited to, the implied warranties of merchantability and fitness for a particular purpose. Before making decisions using the information provided on this map, contact the Nevada County Public Counter Staff to confirm the validity of the data provided.

Figure 2. Ragsdale Creek Riparian Corridor and Setbacks

Ragsdale Creek Setback Study
Sensara & Cheney-Davis

DESIGN GUIDELINES



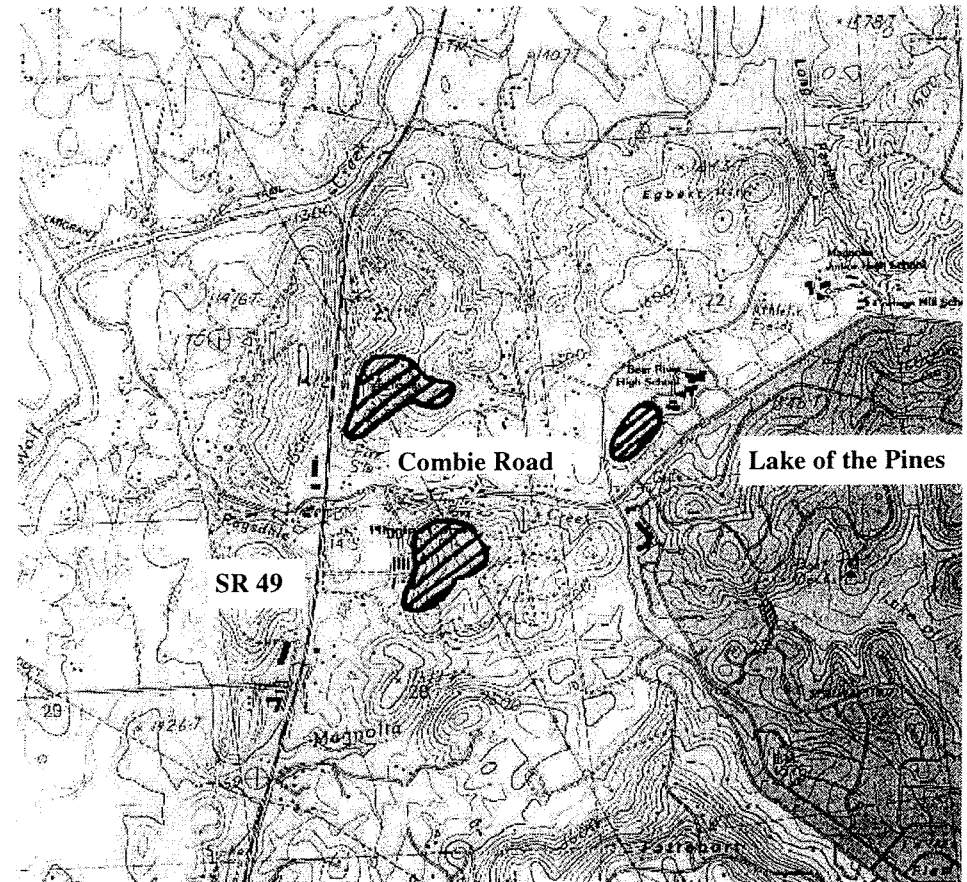
Preserving scenic resources

- Guideline 1** Development should be designed to conform to existing land forms and topography using terracing or other design or construction techniques that reduce the perceived height of new development from roadways.

- Guideline 2** The alignment of roadways and driveways should follow the contours of the site. Meandering roadways minimize the need for cuts and fills, preserve natural drainage patterns, and are easily negotiated.
- Guideline 3** Abrupt grade changes near property lines should be avoided.
- Guideline 4** Grade changes within tree driplines should be avoided.
- Guideline 5** Existing on-site trees should be incorporated into the overall landscaping design. New landscaping should respect and utilize existing landscape elements.
- Guideline 6** Pursuant to the Zoning Ordinance (Section 4.2.10 Permanent Open Space/Maximum Impervious Surface), the locations of required open space areas should be determined on a site-by-site case, based on features such as preserving sensitive resources, maintaining appropriate public views, topography, and tree cover. Where open space is dictated by sensitive resources, any additional required open space can be located to serve as a buffer around the resources. Ragsdale Creek and open space areas, not including pedestrian path/multi-purpose trail areas, will serve toward meeting open space requirements.
- Guideline 7** Clustering should be used in a project design, where appropriate, to maximize open space and minimize disturbance of natural resources.
- Guideline 8** Prominent ridgelines should be preserved in order to maintain the identity and environmental quality of the Plan area. Three important ridgelines are identified in the figure on the following page.
- Guideline 9** Existing tree cover along prominent ridgelines should be retained.

Ragsdale Creek Enhancement and Preservation

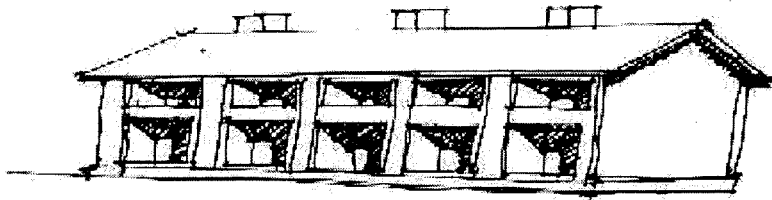
- Guideline 10** To protect water quality, vegetation on parcels adjacent to Ragsdale Creek should be preserved and/or enhanced where possible. Refer to Page II-11 for an illustration of a cross section of Ragsdale Creek and pages III-7 and III-8 for setback recommendations for parcels fronting Ragsdale Creek. If site or environmental constraints warrant a reduction in the recommended setbacks, measures to preserve and/or enhance the riparian corridor as outlined in the Ragsdale Creek Development Setback Study should be implemented.
- Guideline 11** Improvements to Ragsdale Creek should strive to create a natural-appearing stream. A design supporting a low-flow channel and creating gentle side-slopes with low herbaceous native vegetation (e.g., rushes, sedges, grasses) is encouraged where not in conflict with conveyance of flood water flows. Landscaping and lawns may also be appropriate where no potential to adversely affect the creek exists.
- Guideline 12** To retain a natural and riparian appearance, if bank stabilization techniques are necessary, the preferred method for planting along the stream banks should include the use of wire mesh over soil implanted with live cuttings, rather than the use of rock rip-rap.
- Guideline 13** The side-slopes of Ragsdale Creek should be landscaped with low-growing native grasses, rushes and sedges to provide habitat and prevent erosion, while maintaining flood capacity. The terrace above Ragsdale Creek that is not developed as pathway should be landscaped with native species.



Important Ridgelines in the Higgins Area

Structural Design

- Guideline 14** New development should be designed to complement rather than dominate surroundings. The height and scale of new buildings should be proportionate to adjacent development, transitioning from the height of adjacent development to the maximum height of the proposed building.
- Guideline 15** Whenever possible, new buildings should be designed to avoid long, monotonous rows of buildings.
- Guideline 16** Architectural styles on adjacent properties should be complementary.
- Guideline 17** To avoid flat, monotonous façades or “boxlike” structures, plans should provide for a change in the planes of walls or variation in roof form, providing diversity and visual interest. Horizontal or vertical wall articulation should be expressed through the use of wall offsets, recessed entries, bay windows, projecting wing walls, roof overhangs, second floor setbacks, canopies, porches, or other structural projections.



facade of building is broken up to lessen mass of the building and define the individuality of units

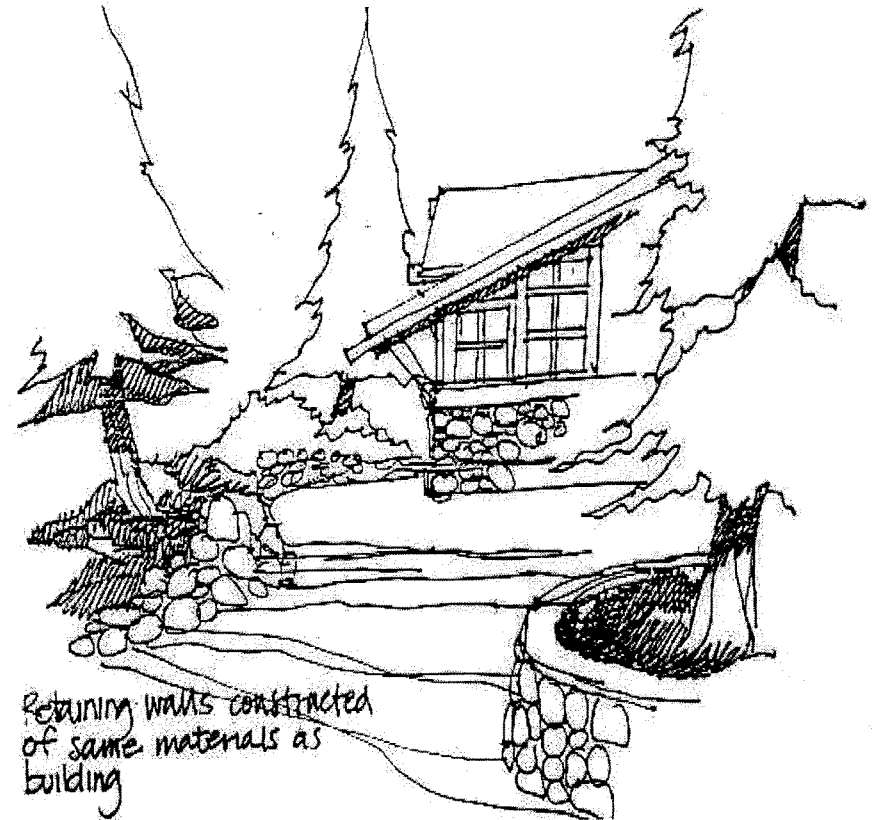


Design of new structures should utilize design elements of adjacent existing structures:

- access
- orientation
- floor levels
- stepped roof lines & pitches
- window types & sizes
- porches

- Guideline 18** Architectural detailing should be used to enhance the overall effect of new or remodeled structures. Details should be simple and understated to avoid a cluttered appearance. Each building should incorporate trim, window, or doorway treatments. Detail treatment shall be provided to all visible sides of the structure.
- Guideline 19** Building components such as windows, doors, eaves, and parapets should be in proportion to the building and should be located in a manner that complements the design of the building as well as serving their intended functions.
- Guideline 20** Colors and tones should be compatible throughout the Higgins Area to achieve continuity and to avoid a cluttered, chaotic look. Jarring contrasts in color should be avoided. Muted, soft colors are encouraged on large wall expanses, avoiding intense white color. Complementary, brighter colors should be reserved for trims and accents.

- Guideline 21** Multi-pitched roofs are encouraged. Flat roofs, A-framed roofs, and piecemeal mansard roofs are discouraged.
- Guideline 22** Brightly colored roofs or shiny, untreated roofing materials should be avoided.
- Guideline 23** Selective use of awnings and canopies is encouraged as an integral part of the building design to provide shelter for pedestrians, an element of scale and visual interest, and solar shading for windows and storefronts. Signage on awnings should be limited to the awning flap or valance.
- Guideline 24** Building materials should be selected to complement the site and adjacent development. The use of similar materials provides a strong link that unifies varying architectural features of multiple buildings.
- Guideline 25** Natural materials should be incorporated into building walls whenever possible. The use of stained or painted wood, natural stone, rock and brick are encouraged. Concrete tilt-ups must be face/refaced with approval of any new construction or remodel project.
- Guideline 26** Service areas and outdoor storage areas, including vehicle repair facilities, should be designed to be shielded from public views and/or neighboring properties by screening or orienting bay openings away from adjacent streets or public areas.
- Guideline 27** Chain-link fencing should be landscaped/screened to buffer the view from the Combie Road and SR 49 corridors.
- Guideline 28** Where fencing or walls are appropriate, they should be designed to be as aesthetically-pleasing as possible. The scale, color, and materials used should complement the site and associated buildings.
- Guideline 29** Retaining walls over five feet tall should be designed so as not to create one long, monotonous wall. Landscaping may be used to screen them from view. The design of retaining walls shall complement the building style, materials and colors used on the site.



Lighting

- Guideline 30** Directional and indirect lighting should primarily be used for pedestrian illumination, with building lights limited to those needed for safe and secure building access. External building light fixtures should be fully shielded and directed downward.
- Guideline 31** Soft illumination of landscaped areas or architectural elements is encouraged if it is used proportionately to enhance the development.
- Guideline 32** External light fixtures, poles, and their foundations should be compatible with and complementary to the style of the surrounding development. Light standards should be sized in scale with their surroundings.
- Guideline 33** Lighting levels should be no more than required to perform the various tasks for which they are intended. During non-business hours, lighting should be at levels only necessary for security purposes.

Signage

- Guideline 34** Sign colors and materials should reflect the overall character of the Higgins Area and complement the design of each site's development.
- Guideline 35** Sign colors should be selected to contribute to legibility and design integrity. Contrast between the background and the letter or symbol colors will make the sign easier to read. Too many different colors should be avoided.
- Guideline 36** Materials encouraged for signage include carved or sand blasted wood signs, painted wood signs, and wood/masonry combinations for the base of freestanding signs.
- Guideline 37** Indirect, exterior illuminated lighting for signs is encouraged.
- Guideline 38** Monument signs are allowed for complexes with one or more businesses and are encouraged.
- Guideline 39** Freestanding signs, including monument signs, should have either individually illuminated letters or be externally illuminated.
- Guideline 40** Informational and directory signs are encouraged if used sparingly and not as a means of advertising or promotion. Directional signage should be organized in a visually logical order, and be of simple design communicating with a minimum of words and graphics which direct or inform. Directional signs may be monument signs, kiosks, or wall signs.

Public places & pedestrian amenities

- Guideline 41** Parking lots should be divided into a series of connected lots, using landscaped islands to reduce the visual impact of paved areas in excess of 5,000 square feet.
- Guideline 42** To accent pedestrian features and emphasize storefront entries, crosswalks and entries to parking areas should use a combination of colors, textures, and materials that provide contrast with driving aisles. To break the monotony of lengthy walkways, textured or colored concrete in combination with regular concrete is appropriate.
- Guideline 43** The multi-purpose trail on the north side of Combie and Magnolia Roads should be designed to prevent silt accumulation or ponding from rain storms by using all-weather, wheelchair accessible surfacing.
- Guideline 44** The five-foot pedestrian path, generally paralleling Ragsdale Creek, on the south side of Combie Road should be constructed with a permeable surface, such as decomposed granite, to retain a natural appearance, while encouraging pedestrian usage.
- Guideline 45** Public transportation stops should be located near park-and-ride facilities and/or within walking distance of the pedestrian pathways.
- Guideline 46** Property owners should create public spaces, providing a setting for pedestrian activity (e.g., benches, lighting, and directional signs) where appropriate and feasible in public areas.

Landscaping

- Guideline 47** Landscape plans should create aesthetically pleasing sites and incorporate any natural features. Natural features may include trees and other vegetation, interesting ground forms, rocks, water, or views. Where planted landscaping will adjoin existing native vegetation that will be retained, the planted materials should blend and transition with the native vegetation.

- Guideline 48** Landscaping should relate to the scale of the structures on a site and with landscaping on adjacent sites.
- Guideline 49** Landscaping should accent the overall design theme of a project through the use of structures, arbors, and trellises where appropriate.
- Guideline 50** In areas of frequent pedestrian use, cluster landscaping is encouraged. Cluster landscaping may consist of tall canopy trees, smaller understory trees, shrubs, and ground-cover.
- Guideline 51** A street median, preferably landscaped, is encouraged on Combie Road, between SR 49 and Magnolia Road. Planting should include drought-tolerant, cluster landscaping with seasonal leaf and flower changes.
- Guideline 52** Landscaped planters should be used where appropriate to delineate street entrances, patterns of on-site circulation, including the main interior circulation route, and pedestrian routes. Planted areas bordering SR 49 and Combie Road should include berming where possible.
- Guideline 53** The form, mass, and profile of individual buildings and architectural features shall be designed to blend with the natural terrain and to preserve the character and profile of the slope. Techniques may include 1) the use of split pads, stepped footings and grade separations to permit structures to step up to the natural slope; 2) detaching parts of a dwelling (e.g. a garage or carport); and 3) placing structures partially underground or utilizing below-grade rooms.
- Guideline 54** Existing trees that are equal to or greater than six inches in diameter at breast height should be retained to the greatest extent possible. Methods for tree retention should be listed on any construction or grading permit.

CHAPTER IV PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

The following projects could be performed in a *relatively short period* of time by County staff, as workloads permit. Volunteer labor would substantially reduce costs and expedite projects.

- Send a summary of the Plan and information on how to obtain a copy of the Plan to all business owners in Higgins Area.
- Request that the County expedite sign permit reviews or waive fees for businesses seeking compliance for 18 months, as incentive for bringing signs into compliance with the Higgins Area Plan.
- Encourage fuel modification and the addition of a pedestrian pathway and resting bench on the PG&E property.

The following projects are expected to take *longer* to implement, as resources become available or alternative funding sources are developed.

- Widen Combie Road from Magnolia Road to State Route 49 to two through-traffic lanes in each direction and a center two-way left turn lane.
- Connect Higgins Corner to the high school using a bike/pedestrian pathway.
- Widen the State Route 49-Combie Road intersection.
- Widen State Route 49 to two through-lanes in each direction.
- Lengthen northbound State Route 49-to-Combie Road right turn lane.
- Provide linkages to development in the form of common driveways.
- Complete annexation of all properties in the Higgins Area Plan into the Sanitation District.
- Expand Lake of the Pines wastewater treatment plant.
- Expand N.I.D. water treatment facilities.

Plan Implementation:

- Will be achieved by commitment on the part of the County and Higgins Area community members.
- Will be conducted in the near term, long term, and on a project-by-project basis.
- Will occur as funding from existing sources is provided or as new funding mechanisms become available.

The following projects will occur *as all building permits are processed* or as County projects are initiated:

- Landscape to complement and accent development.
- Design all development so as to protect the greatest number of native trees as possible.
- Enhance and protect Ragsdale Creek.
- Annex individual properties in the Higgins Area into the Sanitation District when capacity is available.
- Construct pedestrian pathways/multi-purpose trails.
- Provide paths or sidewalks to link adjacent developments.
- Landscape the area between the multi-purpose trail and Combie Road.
- Construct a parkway to serve future commercial development at the southeast corner of Combie Road and State Route 49.
- Implement flood conveyance improvements along Ragsdale Creek.

FINANCING MECHANISMS

Funding mechanisms to ensure maintenance of drainage improvements and landscaping will require investigation of the following alternatives:

1. As development occurs, require property owners to install and maintain improvements.
2. Create an entity (i.e., CSA, Improvement District, private property owners association, Lighting and Landscaping Districts, etc.); Must be consistent with Prop 218, req. assessment proceeding with majority vote, or special tax (two-thirds) election.

CHAPTER V REFERENCES

Nevada County. December 1995. Nevada County General Plan. Prepared with the assistance of Harland Bartholomew & Associates, Inc. (Sacramento, CA).

Nevada County Department of Transportation and Sanitation. November 1998. Lake of the Pines Wastewater Treatment Facilities: Phase 1 Preliminary Engineering Feasibility Study. Prepared by Berryman & Henigar.

Nevada County Department of Transportation and Sanitation. January 1999. Preliminary Hydrology and Hydraulics Report: Higgins Area Plan.

Nevada Irrigation District. April 1989. Lake of the Pines Water System Master Plan Update.

Spectrum Engineering, in association with Nevada County DOTS July 1995. NCTC Traffic Studies for the Subareas of Alta Sierra, Lake of the Pines and Lake Wildwood/Penn Valley.

Susan Sanders Biological Consulting. September 1999. Ragsdale Creek Development Setback Study, Higgins Area, Nevada County, California.

Nevada County. January 1997. Land Use and Development Code Zoning Regulations. Section L-II 36.7 Page 337.2. The text of this section is provided as follows:

“‘SP’ District (Note 96-9) - Higgins Corner/Lake of the Pines Village Center:

An Area Plan/Community Plan shall be prepared for the Village Center. The intent of the Plan is not to forestall or otherwise alter General Plan implementation. Rather, it shall be to provide comprehensive planning for:

- Community identity and design including site planning, landscaping, protection of natural and historic features, architecture, signage, and recognition of environmental constraints including traffic, noise, steep slopes, and floodplains. The design elements of the Plan shall be used as the Scenic Corridor Plan for both Combie Road and SR 49.
- Project design ensuring the community’s character and distinctiveness, promote visual continuity and cohesiveness in style, encourage visual relief, ensure varied architectural forms, patterns, and styles unified through landscaping and selected architectural features, protect natural resources, and ensure consistent community design features including, but not limited to, scale, height, bulk, materials, cohesiveness, colors, roof pitch, roof eaves and the preservation of privacy.
- Circulation, including pedestrian and bicycle facilities, alleviation of traffic on Combie Road to the extent possible, and internal circulation within and between individual properties.
- Provision for public facilities, particularly water, sewer, and drainage, as well as interim facilities to address such needs.
- Enhancement of Ragsdale Creek as development proceeds to ensure adequate flood flow conveyance as well as a naturalized system to act as a visual and biotic buffer.”

APPENDIX

Nevada County General Plan/Higgins Area Plan Relationship

The Higgins Area Plan supplements the Nevada County General Plan by providing additional detail specifically applicable to the Higgins Area.

The Higgins Area Plan was specifically designed to be consistent with a number of Nevada County General Plan policies, which are listed below. Additional General Plan policies are included in the list below that are especially relevant to the Higgins Area, and any proposed development should be reviewed for consistency with these policies. All projects in the Higgins Area, as in the entire County, shall be consistent with the General Plan.

LAND USE

Policy 1.7

The County shall prepare and adopt comprehensive Site Development Standards. These standards shall be used during the “project site review process” to provide a consistent approach for addressing the presence of sensitive environmental features and/or natural constraint; clustering and provision of open space as part of site development; the potential for land use conflicts between uses; and the potential for public health hazards.

The County shall prepare and adopt specific and comprehensive Site Development Standards which shall be applicable to all development projects in *Community Regions* and *Rural Regions* and protective of the County’s unique character, providing guidance for:

- a. Protection of environmentally sensitive resources;
- b. Provision of open space as part of site development;
- c. Prevention and reduction of fire hazards;
- d. Maintenance and enhancement of vegetation and landscaping;
- e. Prevention and reduction of flood hazards;
- f. Transitions between uses and multiple-use site development;
- g. Community design;
- h. Buffering and screening to mitigate adverse effects;
- i. Incentives to provide for access to public resources and open space; and
- j. Protection of important agricultural, mineral, and timber resources.

The standards shall identify the basic requirements for site development in the County, including, at a minimum, standards to mitigate the impact of development on environmentally sensitive resources as referenced in the following criteria:

Wetlands, as delineated in the National Wetlands Inventory (NWI);
 Major deer migration corridors, critical range, and critical fawning areas as defined by State Fish and Game's Migratory Deer Range Maps;
 Landmark oaks, defined as any oak 36" or greater at dbh;
 Landmark groves, defines as areas with 33+% canopy closure based on CDF's Hardwoods Map;
 Rare and endangered species, as found in NDDDB and Inventory of Rare and Endangered Vascular Plants of California, 1994;
 Riparian corridors within 100 feet of intermittent or perennial water courses, as shown on USGS quad maps;
 Significant cultural resources, as defined by Appendix K of CEQA;
 Floodplains, as defined by FEMA, precluding development and land disturbance within floodways and restricting development within the floodway fringe, through the establishment of floodplain setbacks and associated development regulation;
 Important agricultural lands, as defined by the State Important Farmland map;
 Significant mineral areas, defined by State DM&G's MRZ-2 classification maps;
 Earthquake faults, as defined by the State Fault Map of California, 1975, or as determined by the State DM&G;
 Avalanche hazard, as defined by Avalanche Hazard Study;
 Steep slopes (30+%);
 Areas with high erosion potential, as delineated in Figure 3.3 of the Nevada County Master Environmental Inventory;
 Areas subject to fire hazards, as defined by the State Department of Forestry's Fire Hazard Zone Map; and
 Visually important ridgelines and viewsheds, as defined by standards developed by Policy 18.3 of the General Plan.

Where such resources are present, the standards shall require that professional field inventory and review shall be undertaken to delineate the extent of the resource and determine the impact of the proposed development. The following siting and design measures shall be implemented as appropriate to meet the performance criteria:

- Identification of building envelopes;
- Conservation easements/deed restrictions;
- Use of common vs. individual driveways;
- Specification of location and type of fencing;
- Identification of setbacks and/or buffers;
- Development restrictions;
- Use of Transfer of Development Rights; and
- Offsite mitigation/mitigation banking.

The County shall approve a project for a discretionary permit only if it can be demonstrated that the project as designed and sited meets the intent of the SDS performance criteria.

Policy 1.18

Clustering of development is an effective and direct means to provide for the maintenance of the rural quality of life and protection of environmental resources which are important to Nevada County. Therefore, submittal of a clustering option of all land divisions shall be required within the Estate, Rural, and Forest General Plan land use designation in order to maintain the open, pastoral character of development which gives definition to the Rural Regions, and to protect environmental features by preserving areas containing such features as Open Space. This clustering evaluation shall utilize U.S.G.S. maps as the basic level of information.

In all other residential use designations (including Residential, Urban Single-Family, Urban Medium Density, and Urban High Density), clustering

of development shall be strongly encouraged to maintain viable open space onsite which will contribute to open space linkages through and between land use areas. In addition, submittal of a clustering option shall be required in these land use designations and clustering shall be encouraged for all discretionary projects where environmentally sensitive resources, as defined in Policy 1.17, are present.

Clustering may be achieved by building site clustering with creation of permanent open space; restriction of buildable area on individual lots; or other means which are consistent with the protection of the natural resources and environmental characteristics on the site.

No specific amount or ratio of open space shall be required; however, the amount of open space shall not be less than the amount of land area on the site subject to significant environmental features, as defined in Policy 1.17. Where the entire site is affected by significant environmental features, cluster development shall occur on the least sensitive habitat or resource area, as defined by an environmental analysis. Within such defined areas, minimum subdivision parcel size shall be limited to that which is needed to meet water and sewage disposal standards, as determined by the Department of Environmental Health.

Open space created through clustering shall be assured of permanent maintenance as open space by mechanisms such as, but not limited to, dedication, permanent easement, irrevocable trust, deed restrictions, or another mechanism assuring its permanent status.

The allowable number of dwelling units for any clustered development shall not exceed the number of units determined by dividing the total acreage of a parcel by the maximum permitted density specified in Policy 1.22 for the land use designation in which the parcel is located.

PUBLIC FACILITIES

- Policy 3.21** Where water, sewer and other underground utilities are extended through undeveloped natural area, consideration shall be given to restoration or areas of cut, back-fill and grading. All surfaces shall be revegetated with appropriate ground covers and plant materials.
- Policy 3.22** The County shall encourage the purveyors or aerial public utilities to install said utilities underground, pursuant to PUC rules.
- Policy 3.23** The visual affects of telephone transmission lines and high voltage utility transmission lines shall be mitigated wherever feasible so that they are inconspicuous from Scenic Highways and viewsheds.
- Policy 3.27** Standards for telecommunication facilities shall be included in the Comprehensive Site Development Standards, including but not limited to standards for setback, screening, angle of sight requirements, and visual compatibility.

CIRCULATION

- Policy 4.3** The minimum acceptable level of service (LOS) for areas identified as *Community Regions* in the General Plan shall be LOS D, except where the existing LOS is less than D. In those situations, the LOS shall not be allowed to be less than the existing. Level of services shall be based on the highest peak hour of weekday traffic.
- Policy 4.4** The land use pattern reflected in the Nevada County General Plan Land Use Map is correlated with the future ability of the transportation system, including the major roadway network, to adequately serve said land uses based upon the service criteria and levels of service identified in Policy 4.,1, Policy 4.3, Policy 3.1 and Policy 3.10. All General Plan amendments shall be required to show that the proposed development is also corre-

lated with the future provision of transportation facilities and levels of service according to the same criteria.

- Policy 4.5** Monitor the County and State road system to work toward timely solutions to documented safety problems and appropriate improvements for those components of the road system that are either at or approaching a level of service below D in *Community Regions* and a level of service below C in *Rural Regions*. Monitoring shall occur through a report from the Nevada County Department of Transportation to the Board of Supervisors and Planning Commission, timed to complement each biennial update of the Nevada County Regional Transportation Plan. (RTP).
- Policy 4.6** The County Road Improvement Program (RIP) shall be maintained and updated annually. Such update shall demonstrate consistency with the Nevada County General Plan and shall identify and establish a schedule for needed improvement projects and identify sources of funding for each improvement, as the basis for determining the roadway capacity available to support new development.
- Policy 4.8** Where it is determined by the County that a County road, road segment or intersection no longer provides the desirable acceptable level of service as defined in Policy 4.1 and Policy 4.3, the County shall take action to ensure compatibility between future growth and the road system.
- Policy 4.10** In the absence of an approved plan and funding program to provide needed roadway improvement, and where the County has determined that there is no feasible project mitigation, the County may deny those amendments to the General Plan that exacerbate an identified deficiency in local or State roads or highways.
- Policy 4.11** Implement a comprehensive program that imposes development fees in amount sufficient to mitigate the cumulative impact of development on the regional (non-local) highway and roadway network as defined in the Nevada County Road Functional Classification Plan and as shown on the Nevada County Circulation Plan Maps.
- The comprehensive development fee structure shall ensure that future growth fully mitigates its direct and cumulative impacts upon the County and, where possible, the State transportation system.
- Policy 4.12** New roads not shown on the General Plan Land Use Maps as part of the regional and non-through access local road systems identified in the Nevada County Road Functional Classification Plan shall not be constructed at public expense, but shall be provided as site improvements for each development project as necessary to provide safe, appropriate access.
- Policy 4.13** Transportation infrastructure required for a project shall be constructed or secured in another manner, or shall be a part of the Nevada County Road Improvement Program to ensure construction in a timely manner.
- Policy 4.17** Prepare and implement a comprehensive Transportation System Management program, to increase the number of people carried by the local road system without increasing the designed capacity of the system.
- Policy 4.19** Maintain the function and integrity of arterial and major collector roads by limiting access wherever possible. For all new development, allow access via the lowest roadway classification, consistent with safe operation of the roadways and environmental constraints.
- Policy 4.20** In the review of all discretionary permits, the County shall consider the effect of the proposed development on the area-wide transportation network and the effect of the proposed development on the road network and other transportation facilities in the immediate vicinity of the project site.
- Policy 4.22** Nevada County shall continue to work through the Nevada County Transportation Commission towards an integrated intracounty and intercounty

regional transportation system.

- Policy 4.26** Require consideration of the feasibility of providing transit alternative to automobile transportation in all discretionary project review. As part of the development review process, require consideration of ways to reduce dependence on the auto in all discretionary and ministerial non-residential projects. For projects generating 50 or more employees, an analysis shall be prepared by the applicant documenting means to reduce auto dependence. Wherever feasible, measures documented in the analysis shall be incorporated into the project. This process shall be coordinated with the applicable Transportation Management Association (TMA) or successor agencies.
- Policy 4.27** Nevada County shall cooperate with the Nevada County Transportation Commission, to prepare and implement a Pedestrian Master plan that provides for a comprehensive system of sidewalks, pathways and trails within established Community Boundaries that are designed to encourage pedestrian use. Emphasis will be placed on connecting residential areas to commercial and industrial areas; development of direct, efficient, safe and aesthetically pleasing routes; and practical mechanisms for utilizing existing public and quasi-public rights-of-way for pedestrian use.
- Policy 4.29** Nevada County, through the Department of Services for Transportation, Aviation and Recreation (STAR), shall work with local Transportation Management Associations (TMAs) to increase opportunities for ridesharing, transit use and other means of reducing demand for additional roadway capacity.
- Policy 4.32** For all discretionary permits with *Community Regions*, as defined in Policy 1.1 and as shown on the General Plan Land Use Maps, sidewalks are encouraged as frontage improvements for all non-residential projects, and for all residential projects with an overall density greater than one dwelling unit per gross acre, or pedestrian use shall be included within the roadway prism.
- Policy 4.34** County road improvement projects shall incorporate improvements consistent with the Nevada County Pedestrian and Bicycle Master plans. Impact fees shall be adopted to offset costs of constructing these facilities.
- Policy 4.37** Nevada County shall continue to require environmentally sound practices for transportation facility construction and maintenance. New roads or improvements to the existing road system and all trails and pathways shall be located, constructed and maintained in a manner compatible with the environment.

NATURAL RESOURCES

- Policy 6.6** Provide for, where feasible, continued access to open space and public resources by ensuring that all discretionary projects are consistent with development of the Nevada County Non-Motorized Trails Mater Plan.
- Policy 11.7** Through the development and application of Comprehensive Site Development Standards, and project environmental review, establish and enforce minimum building setback lines from perennial streams and significant wetlands that are adequate to protect stream and wetland resources values.
- Policy 11.8** Utilize voluntary clustering of development to preserve stream corridors, riparian habitat, wetlands, and floodplains.
- Policy 13.2** As part of the Comprehensive Site Development Standards, include standards to minimize removal of existing vegetation and require installation and long-term maintenance of landscaping in setbacks and buffer areas. These standards shall be applicable to all discretionary projects and to all ministerial projects other than a single-family residence located on an individual lot. Tree removal may be allowed where necessary to comply with public right-of-way development or dedication, or development of required site access and public utilities. Individual trees or groups of trees

shall be protected during construction to prevent damage to the trees and their root systems. Vegetation in proximity to structures shall conform to applicable fire protection standards.

Policy 13.3 As part of the Comprehensive Site Development Standards, require the maximum feasible use of drought tolerant native plant species for landscaping of all new multi-family residential, commercial, industrial and public projects. Invasive, non-native plants, as determined by a landscape architect or other similar expert, that may displace native vegetation on adjoining undeveloped lands shall not be used. Landscaping with native trees and shrubs shall be encourage to proved suitable habitat for native wildlife, particularly in proposed open space uses of future development.

Policy 13.4H Non-development buffers shall be maintained adjacent to perennial stream corridors through the use of clustering, the designation of a Planned Development ,or the implementation of other siting and design tools. Buffers shall be sufficient in size to protect the stream corridor for movement, as well as provide some adjacent upland habitat for foraging.

Policy 13.8 As part of the Comprehensive Site Development Standards, include measures applicable to all discretionary and ministerial projects to minimize disturbance of heritage and landmark trees and groves. These measures shall include, but are not limited to, requirements for on-site vegetation inventories and mandatory clustering of development in areas likely to support such vegetation or habitat.

AESTHETICS

Policy 18.1 The County shall prepare Community Design Guidelines applicable to the various General Plan Designations and zoning classifications, and adopt such guidelines as part of Comprehensive Site Development Standards, to be used in the project site review of all discretionary and ministerial project permits. The guidelines may include, but not be limited to the following:

- a. Community identity
- b. Preservation of natural landforms
- c. Protection and management of viewsheds
- d. Protection and management of river corridors and other significant streams

These Guidelines shall be the base design standards applicable to all projects. Area-specific Design Guidelines, where adopted by the County pursuant to Policy 18.2, shall be applicable in addition to the base guidelines within the specified area.

Policy 18.2 The County may adopt Specific Design Guidelines for areas within *Community Regions*, *Rural Places*, and *Rural Centers* to provide for the maintenance of community identity, scenic resources and historic sites and areas.

The Specific Design Guidelines may include, but not be limited to standards which:

- a. Reflect the distinctions among and transitions between different areas within *Community Regions*;
- b. Reflect and retain the historic character of the area by requiring designs consistent with historic buildings, areas and sites related to a project;
- c. Reflect and retain the rural and small-town character of the County;
- d. Address building height and bulk at locations of visual sensitivity;
- e. Encourage consistent thematic use of building materials and design elements appropriate to the visual and scenic qualities of specific areas

- f. Encourage cluster-type development of office, commercial uses, and residential uses to enhance open space;
- g. Encourage office and commercial development to provide safe, functional and attractive pedestrian connections and, where appropriate, social places (e.g., seating, landscaped patio areas, etc.);
- h. Locate parking areas out of view from road traffic where conditions permit and provide measures to reduce the impacts of large paved areas;
- i. Encourage building designs which provide customer entrance from pedestrian and parking areas, with customer-friendly store fronts facing pedestrian areas;
- j. Provide uniform criteria for project design review; and
- k. Encourage landscape treatment to enhance the built environment, including the preservation, long-term maintenance, and use of drought-tolerant native species.

Specific Design Guidelines shall be implemented through the regulations of the "D" Design Combining District of the County zoning ordinance,.

- Policy 18.3A** To provide for scenic stream corridor protection along designated streams, the County shall prepare standards and procedures whereby local groups, associations, or similar organizations can, after first obtaining 66% or more of landowner concurrence, apply for designation of a segment of any stream as a local scenic stream corridor. The applicants sponsoring such designations shall prepare their application consistent with the County prepared standards and procedures, and process their application similar to other planning applications.
- Policy 18.4** Nevada County shall not permit the use of billboards due to unmitigable, significant adverse effects upon aesthetic values and upon scenic values which contribute to the value of tourism to the local economy. The County shall adopt regulations requiring the removal of existing billboards on a five-year amortized basis.
- Policy 18.5** Nevada County shall not permit the continued use of non-conforming signs. The County shall adopt regulations requiring the removal of existing non-conforming signs on a five-year amortized basis.
- Policy 18.6** Discretionary development in *Rural Regions* and in *Community Regions* near the Community Boundary shall, wherever possible, preserve natural landmarks and avoid ridge-line placement of structures.
- Policy 18.7** Encourage protection of scenic corridors wherever feasible.
- Policy 18.7A** The County shall promote a compact development pattern to protect open space buffers between communities and to maintain a geographic distinction between communities.
- Policy 18.10** New and replacement road system lighting shall utilize fixtures and light sources that minimize night-time light pollution, without compromising traffic safety.
- Policy 18.11** New Commercial, Industrial and Multiple Family development shall utilize fixtures and light sources that minimize night time light pollution.
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