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### III. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

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#### A. PROJECT SPONSOR

The project sponsor for the proposed Healdsburg 2030 General Plan (hereinafter “proposed Project” or “proposed General Plan”) is:

City of Healdsburg  
401 Grove Street  
Healdsburg, CA 95448

#### B. OVERVIEW OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

This section provides a brief overview of the Project site’s existing regional and local setting. Additional descriptions of the environmental setting as it relates to each of the environmental issues analyzed in Section IV (Environmental Impact Analysis) of this Revised Draft EIR are included in the environmental setting discussions contained within Sections IV.B through IV.P.

##### **Regional and Local Setting**

The city of Healdsburg (city) has an estimated population of 11,706 (2008) and is located in northern Sonoma County within the nine-county San Francisco Bay Region. The city is located 12 miles north of the City of Santa Rosa, which acts as the county seat. Healdsburg lies just beyond the northern edge of urban development flanking the U.S. Highway 101 corridor in Sonoma County. The Town of Windsor, with a current population of nearly 26,000, lies four miles to the south. The small unincorporated community of Geyserville is located eight miles to the north, and the City of Cloverdale is located approximately 18 miles to the north. Figure III-1 shows the regional location of the city.

The city is situated in an inland valley defined principally by U.S. Highway 101, the Russian River, surrounding agricultural lands, and the Mayacamas Mountains to the east and the Sonoma and Coast Ranges to the west. U.S. Highway 101 is the principal coastal route between San Francisco and the Oregon border. The Russian River flows through Healdsburg on its way to the Pacific Ocean, approximately 20 miles to the west. The city lies at the intersection of three rich agricultural valleys, the Russian River Valley, Dry Creek Valley and Alexander Valley. Terrain in the city varies between 100 to 430 feet in elevation. East and west beyond the agricultural lands rise subsystems of the Coastal Mountain Range.

Wet winters and dry summers characterize the Healdsburg region’s inland Mediterranean-type climate. Climate is temperate, with an average annual high of 75 degrees and an average minimum of 47 degrees. Rainfall totals can vary widely over a short distance; windward mountain areas west of Healdsburg can receive more than 60 inches of rain, while shadow areas, such as the city proper, receive about 40 inches annually.

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**Figure III-1 Regional Location Map**

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Healdsburg has historically served as an agricultural service center and a milling and distribution center for north coast lumber. More recently, the development of tourist-related businesses such as overnight accommodations, specialty retail, restaurants and wine tasting has diversified the local economy. Views of the city are described in Section IV.B (Aesthetics) and shown in Figures IV.B-5 through IV.B-10.

The Planning Area for the proposed General Plan includes incorporated Healdsburg, the unincorporated area within the City's Sphere of Influence, and non-contiguous city-owned land. The latter includes four properties totaling approximately 99 acres: the Healdsburg Municipal Airport, Healdsburg Corporation Yard, Magnolia Pump Station, and Wastewater Treatment Plant. Two unincorporated areas of the county are also located within the Planning Area. One of these unincorporated areas is located along Grove Street south of Dry Creek Road, and the other is located just north of Paul Wittke Drive, east of the intersection of Healdsburg Avenue and Chiquita Road. The City is actively pursuing annexing these two properties within the city boundaries. The Planning Area for the proposed General Plan is shown in Figure III-2. The Planning Area has been divided into 11 sub-areas for evaluation purposes, as shown in Figure III-3.

The incorporated area of the city contained 3.68 square miles in 2007, including City-owned properties outside of the city proper. Existing land uses in the city's Planning Area in 2004, including developed and vacant land, are shown in Table III-1.

**Table III-1**  
**Healdsburg Planning Area Land Uses, 2004**

<b>General Plan Designation</b>	<b>Total Acreage</b>	<b>Developed Acres</b>	<b>Vacant Acres</b>
Agricultural	16.69	16.69	0
Residential	1,733.04	1,351.22	381.82
Commercial	204.67	181.25	23.42
Mixed Uses	16.91	16.91	0
Light Industrial	124.37	113.25	11.12
Heavy Industrial	203.26	130.92	72.34
Institutional (Public & Semi-Public)	342.12	342.12	0
Open Space	432.75	N/A	N/A
<i>Source: Healdsburg 2030 General Plan Background Report, City of Healdsburg, 2009.</i>			

The City's Sphere of Influence is the probable ultimate physical boundary and service area of the city as determined by the Sonoma County Local Agency Formation Commission and includes incorporated Healdsburg and unincorporated areas. Healdsburg's Sphere of Influence encompasses approximately 3,518 acres or 5.5 square miles.

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**Figure III-2 Healdsburg 2030 General Plan Update Area**

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**Figure III-3 Development Sub-Areas**

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## **C. PROPOSED HEALDSBURG 2030 GENERAL PLAN**

### **Introduction**

The General Plan is a State-required legal document (Government Code Section 65300) that provides guidance to decision makers regarding the conservation of resources and the future physical form and character of development for a city. It is the official statement of the City regarding the extent and types of development needed to achieve the community's physical, economic, social, and environmental goals. The Healdsburg General Plan serves as a fundamental policy document of the City of Healdsburg to guide decision-making by residents, property owners, business interests, and elected and appointed City officials about public and private land use and development that shape Healdsburg's physical environment.

Although the General Plan is composed of individual sections, or "elements" that individually address specific areas of concern, the General Plan itself embodies a comprehensive and integrated planning approach for the jurisdiction. All general plans must address the following topics in the form of plan elements: Land Use, Circulation, Open Space, Conservation, Noise, Safety, and Housing. They may also include optional elements in response to specific local issues, values, needs, or conditions. Other than a State-mandated five year update of the housing element, there is no requirement to update the other elements of a general plan. However, cities generally try to revise their General Plan at reasonable intervals to ensure that they reflect current conditions and to ensure that the plan is long-term in perspective, internally consistent, and up-to-date.

This section describes the Draft Healdsburg 2030 General Plan, which is the "proposed Project" or "proposed General Plan" considered in this Draft EIR. An overview of the City of Healdsburg regional and planning context, the General Plan planning process, and characteristics of the proposed General Plan are provided here as well.

### **Planning Background and Planning Process**

Healdsburg's first General Plan was adopted in 1963, when Healdsburg had approximately 5,000 residents. The City has updated the General Plan two times since the first General Plan, in 1973 and again in 1987. By the time that Healdsburg's first General Plan Update was prepared in 1973, Healdsburg's population had increased to 5,700. The 1973 General Plan Update included five elements, added goals and implementation programs, and expanded the number of policies.

By 1987, the city's population had grown to 8,495, increasing in population nearly 50 percent from 1973. The 1987 General Plan Update was much more comprehensive than the earlier General Plan versions, adding goals and policies related to public facilities and services, cultural resources, and urban design. The 1987 General Plan Update reflected a contracted sphere of influence and established a requirement for specific plans prior to the annexation of property. The 1987 General Plan also envisioned potential

increases in destination tourist demand with the construction of a hotel on the west side of the plaza and also foresaw the closure of the Boise Cascade lumber mill in Healdsburg and growth in the geothermal industry. The 1987 General Plan was amended in 1994 and 1995 to establish an Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) for the city, which restricts and limits development to specific boundaries. Other significant amendments include the redesignation of the Saggio Hills project site in 2008.

In 2001, the City initiated a comprehensive revision of the Healdsburg General Plan. While much of it continues to be relevant, the revision was undertaken to reflect current conditions and new challenges and opportunities in directing future development. As a first step in updating the General Plan, the City prepared a Background Report, which inventoried and analyzed conditions and trends in Healdsburg. Information contained in the updated Background Report was used to update the proposed General Plan and provided a contextual framework for the preparation, review, and adoption of the General Plan Update. As part of the Background Report update, the City held workshops on the background topics at Planning Commission meetings during 2002. The Background Report included a set of recommendations regarding the General Plan goals and policies then in effect and provided information on 19 subjects including air quality, agricultural resources, biological resources, cultural resources, economic development, flooding and drainage, geological hazards, housing, land use, mineral resources, noise, population and growth, parks and recreation, public services, public utilities, scenic resources, solid and hazardous waste, transportation, and urban design.

The City then prepared a proposed Policy Document, which was circulated for public review along with the draft Land Use Map and updated Background Report in October 2006. The Policy Document and Background Report together constitute the General Plan. Comments on the proposed Policy Document, proposed Land Use Map, and Updated Background Report were received during public hearings held by the Healdsburg Planning Commission and Healdsburg City Council between October 2006 and January 2007. Based on these comments, the City Council directed revisions to the initial proposed Policy Document and Background Report, and the City prepared a revised proposed Policy Document, proposed Land Use Map, and updated Background Report. These revised documents were released to the public for review on June 12, 2007, and again on October 12, 2007 following further refinement.

While the General Plan update and its DEIR were in process, the City prepared and certified an EIR in connection with the approval of the Saggio Hills project (SCH No. 2003062025), which involves the development of 258 acres in Sub-Area C with a 130 room resort hotel, 70 resort residences, a community park, a fire substation and land dedicated to the City of Healdsburg for the construction of up to 150 affordable housing units. The February 2008 General Plan DEIR evaluated the potential land use uses for the Saggio Hills project site that would have been allowed by the General Plan land use designations in effect at that time, namely 574 single-family units. Because of the subsequent Saggio Hill project approval and its effect on calculations involved in General Plan 2030 buildout projections, this Healdsburg 2030 General Plan Revised Draft EIR ("Revised Draft EIR") has been prepared to reflect (1) General Plan buildout with the Saggio Hills project; (2) the amendment to the General Plan Land Use

Map approved for Saggio Hills (see Figure III-5 in Section III); and (3) the environmental analysis included in the certified Saggio Hills EIR.

Other significant revisions to the DEIR include the quantification of the City's greenhouse gas emissions and further analysis of the effects of General Plan buildout on these emissions (see, e.g., Section IV.D). Corrections have also been made to remove minor internal inconsistencies in the evaluation of significant and unavoidable impacts and the characterization of those impacts in the prior General Plan DEIR.

### Project Details

The proposed General Plan is a comprehensive revision and update of the Healdsburg General Plan, as amended through September 15, 2008. The proposed General Plan Policy Document includes the following nine elements:

- Land Use
- Economic Development
- Transportation
- Public Services
- Natural Resources
- Safety
- Community Design
- Historic and Cultural Resources
- Administration and Implementation

A tenth element, the 2002 Housing Element, is incorporated by reference, but is not included in the proposed General Plan. Instead, the Housing Element will be revised according to a separate process required by state law and is anticipated to be adopted by July 1, 2009. Four of these elements (Public Services, Economic Development, Community Design and Administration and Implementation) are non-mandatory. Elements in the proposed General Plan that are the equivalent of the State-required elements noted above are shown in Table III-2.

**Table III-2**  
**Location of State-Required Elements within the Proposed General Plan**

Required Element	Equivalent Element
Land Use	Land Use
Circulation	Transportation
Conservation	Land Use, Natural Resources, Safety
Open Space	Land Use, Natural Resources, Safety
Noise	Safety
Safety	Safety
<i>Source: Healdsburg Planning &amp; Building Department, 2007.</i>	

Proposed revisions to the General Plan include revising the Land Use Map and updating the General Plan Policy Document and Background Report. Revisions to the General Plan Land Use Map include deletions and additions of designations to reflect changes in the proposed General Plan Policy Document as well as the reclassification of some parcels. Revisions to the current General Plan policies and implementation programs generally fall into several categories, such as minor rewording, revisions to reflect changed conditions, changes to allowable uses and density, additions and deletions of land use designations, additions of performance standards, and additions and deletions of policies.

No changes have been made to the 2002 Housing Element as part of the proposed General Plan. The Housing Element will be revised in 2009 in concert with the revision cycle established by State law.

As described below, updates to the General Plan policies and implementation programs generally fall into several categories.

- **Minor Rewording.** Many of the revisions consist of minor rewording of policies and implementation programs without any change in intent.
- **Revisions to Reflect Changed Conditions.** Other changes include rewording or deletions of policies and implementation programs to reflect changes in conditions.
- **Changes to Uses or Density.** Land use designation have been revised to add or delete permitted uses and change allowable residential densities and floor area ratios.
- **Changes to Land Use Categories.** Includes renaming, combining, or replacing existing categories with new land use categories. All properties currently designated Highway Commercial (HC) and Mixed Commercial/Light Industrial (MCI) would be reclassified to a new Mixed Use (MU) land use category. All properties currently designated Light Industrial (LI) and Heavy Industrial (HI) would be reclassified to a new Industrial (I) land use category. All properties currently designated Recreation & Parks (RP) would be reclassified to Public/Quasi-Public (PQP) and the single property currently designated Agricultural uses would be reclassified to Open Space (OS).
- **Additions of Performance Standards.** Many policies and implementation programs were revised to include standards or redefined to strengthen and clarify the intent of the policy or to reflect Zoning Ordinance regulations.
- **Policy and Implementation Programs Deletions.** These deletions include policies and implementation programs that are either no longer applicable, are now implemented through another policy or agency, or policies that have been moved to implementation programs.
- **Policy and Implementation Programs Additions.** Consists of new policies and implementation programs added to reflect the City's goals.

Parcels that would be reclassified by the proposed General Plan are listed in Table III-3 and depicted in Figure III-4. These reclassifications are in addition to the categorical reclassifications discussed above.

**Table III-3  
Parcels Proposed for Reclassification**

APN	Address	Existing Designation	Proposed Designation
089-071-003	Adjacent to and south of 1402 Grove Street	HC	I
091-040-100 (portion) 091-040-107 091-040-110	Sub-Area B Parcels with conservation easement	VLR	OS
089-270-001 089-270-026	502 Grove 552 Grove	POR	MHR
089-130-060	20 W. Grant	POR	HR
002-302-001 002-301-001 002-314-007 002-313-006 (portion) 002-313-008 002-313-005 002-312-012 002-312-011 002-312-009 002-312-010 002-312-018	56 Healdsburg 48 Healdsburg/8 Ward 5 Palm 34 Healdsburg 30 Healdsburg 28 Healdsburg/3 S. University 18, 20, 20A Healdsburg 14 Healdsburg 6 Healdsburg 1 Front 16 S. University	SC	MU
002-071-019 002-071-001	540-542 University 536 University	DR	PQP
<i>Source: City of Healdsburg, 2008.</i>			

Based on the detailed spreadsheet included in Appendix C, buildout under the proposed Project analyzed in the Revised Draft EIR could result in the construction of 872 residential units, 339 hotel units, approximately 1.1 million square feet of commercial space and approximately 1 million square feet of industrial development. The estimate of potential development was based on the following methodology:

- For projects under construction and properties for which development has either been approved by the City of Healdsburg or a preliminary application submittal had been considered as of September 3, 2007 (the end of the EIR Notice of Preparation review period), the actual project characteristics, such as the number of dwelling units or hotel rooms, or the amount of square feet, were included in the potential development assumptions.
- The potential development of vacant and substantially underdeveloped properties designated for residential land use was estimated, in most cases, using the mid-point of the applicable designation's density range. For example, a density of 4.5 units per gross acre was assumed for a

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**Figure III-4 Healdsburg 2030 General Plan Update Proposed Land Use Changes**

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property designated “Medium Density Residential,” which allows a density of 3 to 6 units per gross acre to be developed.

- The potential development of vacant and substantially underdeveloped properties designated for commercial or industrial land uses was estimated by applying the maximum floor area ratio (FAR) allowed by the applicable land use designation, adjusted by a factor of .6 to reflect Healdsburg Zoning Ordinance development standards (such as for minimum parking and landscaping).

The potential development summarized in Appendix C does not include development applications that were filed with the City after September 3, 2007.

Except for Sub-Areas B, C and J, most of this development would occur in in-fill locations. No development is anticipated in Sub-Area K, the unincorporated area around Fitch Mountain which the City does not plan to annex and may seek to have removed from its Sphere of Influence. Development potential within the city is summarized in Table III-4; the locations of potential development are depicted in Appendix C.

**Table III-4  
Healdsburg Planning Area Potential Development**

<b>Approved/Allowed Use</b>	<b>Residential</b>	<b>Commercial</b>	<b>Industrial</b>	<b>Hotel</b>
Single-Family Residential	578 units			
Multi-Family Residential	241 units		11,892 sq. ft.	
Industrial	1 unit		995,975 sq. ft.	
Commercial		507,508 sq. ft.	6,250 sq. ft.	339 rooms
Retail		551,683 sq. ft.		
Mixed Use	52 unit	15,000 sq. ft.		
Office		20,000 sq. ft.		
<b>Totals</b>	<b>872 units</b>	<b>1,094,191 sq. ft.</b>	<b>1,014,117 sq. ft.</b>	<b>339 rooms</b>
<i>Source: City of Healdsburg Planning &amp; Building Department, 2009.</i>				

A summary of each element of the proposed General Plan is provided below.

### ***Land Use Element***

The Land Use Element is the central element of the General Plan Policy Document in that it addresses the relationship between all land uses within the city and its Planning Area. It prescribes the pattern and intensity of land use and sets forth goals, policies, and implementation measures for future development and redevelopment of land. The Land Use Element also contains standards, such as for density and floor

area ratios (FAR). Policy direction provided in the Land Use Element is guided by information contained in the General Plan Background Report, including the inventory of land contained within the Urban Growth Boundary, and the capacity to develop vacant and underutilized land in the future consistent with the policies of the General Plan.

Figure III-4 highlights the land use designations that are proposed to be changed from the existing General Plan Land Use Diagram as amended on September 15, 2008. Figure III-5 shows the Land Use Map proposed to be adopted as part of the proposed General Plan.

The land use designations included in the proposed General Plan are essentially the same as the existing General Plan. They are grouped into four primary categories: Residential, Mixed-Use, Commercial, and Industrial. Other more minor categories include Public and Quasi-Public, Open Space, and Riparian Setback. Brief descriptions of each primary category and designations within each category are provided below, along with any significant changes proposed to the existing land use designations.

### *Residential Designations*

The proposed General Plan includes residential land use designations ranging from very low to high density residential uses. In addition, a designation is provided for residential uses in the downtown Healdsburg area.

**Very Low Density Residential** The Very Low Density Residential (VLR) designation provides for detached single-family units within the density range of up to 1 dwelling unit per gross acre, public and quasi-public uses when compatible with the overall purpose and character of the designation, and other similar and compatible land uses. Density bonuses for affordable and senior housing may be granted consistent with State law and the City's housing incentives program.

Visitor accommodations, including hotels, resorts and similar and compatible land uses, are allowed where a Planned Development zoning district is applied to the property. A finding must be made during approval of the visitor accommodations that the Planned Development is compatible with the site's environment and adjacent land uses.

Significant changes to the designation's wording in the existing General Plan include the elimination of the cluster overlay zone provision that allows a density bonus, because the Planning Commission did not believe it was appropriate to increase density in the environmentally- and aesthetically-sensitive areas to which this designation applies. The other significant change is the addition of allowing visitor accommodations through the application of a Planned Development zoning district because this designation applies to undeveloped property with physical characteristics that are conducive to hotel development.

**Low Density Residential** The Low Density Residential (LR) designation provides for single-family units within the density range of 1 to 3 dwelling units per gross acre, public and quasi-public uses when

**Figure III-5 Healdsburg 2030 General Plan Update Land Use Diagram**

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compatible with the overall purpose and character of the designation, and similar and compatible uses. Clustering of lots and dwelling units is encouraged to protect natural and/or scenic resources, and/or to avoid geologic hazards. Density bonuses for affordable and senior housing may be granted consistent with State law and the City's housing incentives program.

There are no significant changes proposed to the existing wording for this land use designation because the uses and density remain appropriate for the properties to which it is applied.

**Medium Density Residential** The Medium Density Residential (MR) designation provides for single-family units within the density range of 3 to 6 dwelling units per gross acre, public and quasi-public uses when compatible with the overall purpose and character of the designation, and similar and compatible land uses. Clustering of lots and dwelling units is encouraged to protect natural and/or scenic resources, and/or to avoid geologic hazards. Residential density bonuses for affordable and senior housing may be granted consistent with State law and the City's housing incentives program. Small lot subdivisions that allow smaller than standard-sized lots in return for a restriction on dwelling size may be allowed to incorporate density bonuses to promote affordable housing production.

There are no significant changes proposed to the existing wording for this land use designation because the uses and density remain appropriate for the properties to which it is applied.

**Medium High Density Residential** The Medium High Density Residential (MHR) designation provides for single-family dwelling units on smaller than traditional lots at densities within the density range of 6 to 10 units per gross acre, public and quasi-public uses when compatible with the overall purpose and character of the designation, and similar and compatible uses. Residential density bonuses for affordable and senior housing may be granted consistent with State law and the City's housing incentives program. Small lot subdivisions that allow smaller than standard size lots in return for a restriction on dwelling size may be allowed to incorporate density bonuses to promote affordable housing production.

There are no significant changes proposed to the existing wording for this land use designation because the uses and density remain appropriate for the properties to which it is applied.

**High Density Residential** The High Density Residential (HR) designation provides for single-family units, multi-family units, and mobile home parks within the density range of 10 to 16 units per gross acre, public and quasi-public uses when compatible with the overall purpose and character of the designation, and similar and compatible uses. Residential density bonuses for affordable and senior housing may be granted consistent with State law and the City's housing incentives program. Single room occupancy units and efficiency apartments of 500 square feet or less shall be counted as one-half unit for purposes of calculating density under this land use designation.

The only significant change proposed to the existing wording for this land use designation is raising the minimum allowable density from 8 to 10 units per gross acre in order to avoid an overlap with the density range of the Medium High Density Residential designation.

**Downtown Residential** The Downtown Residential (DR) designation provides for single-family and multi-family units within the density range of 3 to 8 dwelling units per gross acre, public and quasi-public uses when compatible with the overall purpose and character of the designation, and other similar and compatible uses. Residential density bonuses may be granted for affordable and senior housing consistent with State law and the City's housing incentives program. Small lot subdivisions that allow smaller than standard size lots in return for a restriction on dwelling size may be allowed to incorporate density bonuses that promote affordable housing production.

There are no significant changes proposed to the existing wording for this land use designation because the uses and density remain appropriate for the properties to which it is applied.

#### *Mixed Use Designations*

The proposed General Plan includes three categories of mixed uses: Office/High Density Residential, Mixed Use, and Grove Street Mixed Use. The Grove Street Mixed Use land use designation would only apply to properties or portions of properties that have frontage on Grove Street.

**Office/High Density Residential** The Office/High Density Residential (O/HR) designation allows professional and administrative offices, medical and dental clinics, laboratories, day spas and similar and compatible uses. The maximum allowable FAR for non-residential uses is .50; residential floor area shall not be counted when calculating the maximum FAR. This designation also provides for multi-family units and for single-family units with a residential master plan within the density range of 8 to 16 dwelling units per gross acre, public and quasi-public uses when compatible with the overall purpose and character of the designation, and similar and compatible uses. Residential density bonuses may be granted consistent with State law and the City's housing incentives program. Single room occupancy units and efficiency units of 500 square feet or less are to be counted as one-half unit for purposes of calculating density under this land use designation.

There are no significant changes proposed to the existing wording for this land use designation, which is presently called "Professional Offices-High Density Residential," because the uses and density remain appropriate for the properties to which it is applied.

**Mixed Use** The Mixed Use (MU) designation provides for commercial uses, including retail, office, services, visitor accommodations, public and quasi-public uses when compatible with the overall purpose and character of the designation, and similar and compatible uses that serve residents and/or visitors in a manner that does not undermine the role of the downtown as the commercial center of Healdsburg. High density residential development within the density range of 10 to 16 units per acre may be combined with commercial uses when clearly subordinate to allowable commercial uses on the same site. Single room occupancy units and efficiency units of 500 square feet or less shall be counted as one-half unit for purposes of calculating density under this land use designation. Residential density bonuses may be granted consistent with State law and the City's housing incentives program. The maximum allowable



FAR for this designation is 1.0; residential floor area shall not be counted when calculating the maximum FAR.

This new designation replaces the existing Highway Commercial and Mixed Commercial/Light Industrial land use designations. It allows essentially the same uses as these designations, but eliminates the emphasis on uses that serve highway travelers and tourists because the properties with these designations also serve the community. The maximum allowable floor area ratio (FAR) is increased from 0.50 to 1.0 to promote the efficient use of properties along the city's primary activity corridors in order to minimize vehicle trips, greenhouse gas emissions and infrastructure costs, and encourage alternative modes of transportation.

**Grove Street Mixed Use** The Grove Street Mixed Use (GMU) land use designation is applicable to properties or portions of properties that have frontage on Grove Street as provided for in the Grove Street Neighborhood Plan. This designation is intended to allow stores, personal services, and offices that are primarily resident-serving in character while preserving the overall residential character of the area, and public and quasi-public uses when compatible with the overall purpose and character of the designation.

One single-family home is allowed per lot in this designation, except on lots of at least 12,500 square feet where two dwelling units are allowed. Residences may be combined with commercial uses if the residences are located above or behind the commercial use. Residential density bonuses may be granted consistent with State law and the City's housing incentives program.

There are no significant changes proposed to the existing wording for this land use designation, which is presently called "Mixed Use," because the uses and density remain appropriate for the properties to which it is applied.

### *Commercial Designations*

The proposed General Plan includes three categories of commercial land uses: Service Commercial, Downtown Commercial, and Medical Office.

**Service Commercial** The Service Commercial (SC) classification provides for stores, offices, restaurants, personal and commercial services; public and quasi-public uses when compatible with the overall purpose and character of the designation; and similar and compatible uses in a manner that does not undermine the role of the downtown as the commercial center of Healdsburg. The maximum allowable FAR for non-residential uses is 0.80; residential floor area shall not be counted when calculating the maximum FAR. High Density Residential uses of 10 to 16 units per acre may be permitted in this designation when clearly subordinate to allowable commercial uses. Residential density bonuses may be granted consistent with State law and the City's housing incentives program. Single room occupancy units and efficiency units of 500 square feet or less shall be counted as one-half unit for purposes of calculating density under this land use designation. The only significant change to this designation is an increase in the maximum allowable floor area ratio (FAR) from 0.50 to 0.80 to promote

the efficient use of properties along the city's primary activity corridors in order to minimize vehicle trips, greenhouse gas emissions and infrastructure costs, and encourage alternative modes of transportation.

**Downtown Commercial** The Downtown Commercial (DC) designation provides for a broad range of commercial and office uses, such as hotels, retail, restaurants and personal services; public and quasi-public uses when compatible with the overall purpose and character of the designation; and similar and compatible uses. Pedestrian-oriented uses on the ground floor are encouraged.

High Density Residential uses of 10 to 16 units per acre may be permitted when clearly subordinate to allowable commercial uses on the same site. Residential density bonuses may be granted consistent with State law and the City's housing incentives program. Single room occupancy units and efficiency units of 500 square feet or less shall be counted as one-half unit for purposes of calculating density under this land use designation. The maximum allowable FAR is 2.0 for non-residential uses, except for properties fronting the Plaza, where the maximum allowable FAR is 3.0 to reflect historic heights and floor levels of buildings. Residential floor area shall not be counted when calculating the maximum FAR.

There are no significant changes proposed to the existing wording for this land use designation because the uses and density remain appropriate for the properties to which it is applied.

**Medical Office** The Medical Office (MO) designation provides for medical offices, such as doctors' offices, medical clinics and laboratories, public and quasi-public uses when compatible with the overall purpose and character of the designation, and similar and compatible uses. Residential uses are prohibited. The maximum allowable floor area ratio is .50.

There are no significant changes proposed to the existing wording for this land use designation, which is presently called "Medical Professional Offices," because the uses and density remain appropriate for the properties to which it is applied.

### *Industrial Designation*

The proposed General Plan includes a single category for industrial land uses.

**Industrial** The Industrial (I) designation provides for industrial parks, manufacturing, warehouses, wineries, lumber mills and storage yards, research/office parks, health clubs, offices accessory to an allowed use or in buildings that were built for that purpose, public and quasi-public uses when compatible with the overall purpose and character of the designation, and similar and compatible uses. Uses that generate significant off-site impacts or have an extraordinarily high impact on city sewer, water or electric services are discouraged unless there are off-setting public benefits. The maximum allowable FAR for non-residential uses is .50; residential floor area shall not be counted when calculating the maximum FAR.

Multi-family residences for owners and/or employees of on-site industrial uses, including live/work facilities, single room occupancy units and efficiency units are allowed at a density of up to 16 dwelling units per gross acre if they are reserved for on-site workforce housing and are clearly subordinate to the industrial uses. Residential density bonuses may be granted consistent with State law and the City's housing incentives program. Single room occupancy units and efficiency apartments of 500 square feet or less shall be counted as one-half unit for purposes of calculating density under this land use designation.

This new designation replaces the existing Light Industrial and Heavy Industrial land use designations in order to simplify the City's regulations. It allows essentially the same uses and density as the existing designations because they remain appropriate for the properties to which the designation is applied.

#### *Other Designations*

Other land use categories in the proposed General Plan include Public and Quasi-Public, Open Space, and Riparian Setback.

**Public and Quasi-Public** The Public and Quasi-Public (PQP) designation provides for government-owned facilities, public and private schools, parks and quasi-public uses. New residential uses are prohibited, with the exception of transitional and emergency housing facilities and dwellings for watch or caretaking personnel associated with commercial or industrial uses. The maximum allowable floor area ratio is 1.0.

There are no significant changes proposed to the existing wording for this land use designation because the uses and density remain appropriate for the properties to which it is applied. However, a maximum floor area ratio standard has been added to be consistent with the other land use categories.

**Open Space** The Open Space (OS) designation provides for agricultural and other open space uses, residential uses at a density of up to .20 dwelling units per gross acre, and industrial uses directly related to on-site agricultural uses. Residential units within this designation are encouraged to be clustered to protect natural and scenic resources and to preserve open space. Residential density bonuses may be granted consistent with State density bonus law and the City's housing incentives program.

There are no significant changes proposed to the existing wording for this land use designation. However, the Agriculture land use designation has been incorporated into the Open Space designation because its allowable uses and density are virtually identical and the designation applies to only one property.

**Riparian Setback** The Riparian Setback (RS) designation provides for a 100-foot setback from the Russian River, a 35-foot setback from Foss Creek, and a 25-foot setback from other streams with riparian vegetation and/or aquatic life, as measured from the top of the existing or proposed bank, whichever is

greater. The riparian setback requirements will apply to the east side of the Russian River north of Healdsburg Avenue only upon cessation of current sand and gravel extraction operations.

There are no changes proposed to the existing wording for this land use designation because its provisions remain appropriate for the properties to which it is applied.

### *Special Study Areas*

Five areas of the city are identified as warranting further study beyond the Elements contained in the proposed General Plan, including the possible development of an area plan or similar planning document. These Special Study Areas were selected because of their unique locations or functions in the city. Provided below are brief descriptions of the Special Study Areas. The characteristics and challenges for each of these areas, as they existed in 2007, are described further in the proposed General Plan.

**North Entry Study Area** This area extends from Healdsburg Avenue at its northernmost point within the city limits, at the south end of Alexander Valley, along Healdsburg Avenue to the south. This section of Healdsburg Avenue has the character of a rural road, with no curbs, defined pavement edges, or pedestrian or bicycle facilities.

**Dry Creek Entry Study Area** The Dry Creek Entry Study Area is located between U.S. Highway 101 and Healdsburg Avenue. The Study Area is a major entryway to the city for visitors from Dry Creek Valley and U.S. Highway 101. Land uses along the corridor include motels, restaurants, service stations, a truck storage lot, and a liquor store. Pedestrian and bicycle facilities are limited in this area.

**Central Healdsburg Entry Study Area** The Central Healdsburg Entry Study Area includes the section of Healdsburg Avenue extending north from the U.S. Highway 101 Central Healdsburg freeway exit, approximately one-third mile to the five-way intersection of Healdsburg Avenue, Mill Street, and Vine Street. Land uses along this portion of Healdsburg Avenue include fast food restaurants, a gas station, a strip commercial center, a lumber mill, several dilapidated vacant buildings, and a vacant site.

**Depot Study Area** The historic Healdsburg train depot at Fitch and Harmon Streets was selected in 1999 as the site of an intermodal transportation center to provide a common transfer point among public transportation systems and automobiles. Improvements at the depot will include a park-and-ride lot, local and regional bus stops and renovation of the historic depot and freight buildings. The North Coast Rail Authority plans to restart freight service in 2008, which would pass through the depot area. If the Sonoma-Marín Area Rail Transit, a regional transit district, is successful in re-establishing intercity passenger rail system in Sonoma and Marin County, the depot would be its stop in Healdsburg.

**Old Redwood Highway Study Area** Identified as Sub-Area J in the Healdsburg Planning Area, this area is bound by the South Healdsburg Avenue freeway interchange on the south, Memorial Bridge and the Syar Industries property on the north, the city limits on the east and Russian River on the west. This area was annexed by the City of Healdsburg in 1979 primarily for the purpose of extending city services and

utilities. Development east of the Russian River will also require construction of collection facilities and a new sewer lift station to pump wastewater to the other side of the river. Currently this area is unsewered, and sewage treatment is presently limited to individual septic systems. In addition, this area does not have water service and existing development must rely on private water wells. A major constraint to providing sewer and water service in this area is the need to span the Russian River with a major sewer trunk line and water line, as well as the need to construct an additional sewer lift station to serve the area.

Current development on the east side of Healdsburg Avenue includes a lumber yard, a lumber mill, warehousing, light manufacturing, a gravel processing plant, a restaurant and a park and ride lot near the freeway off-ramp. Memorial Beach, a county-owned recreational facility, gravel processing and earthmoving equipment storage is located on the west side of the street. Approximately 49 acres within this area are vacant. The area is designated Industrial, with the exception of several properties that adjoin the freeway on the west side of Healdsburg Avenue, which are designated Mixed Use, and Memorial Beach, which is designated Public/Quasi-Public.

#### ***Economic Development Element***

The Economic Development Element provides goals and policies to promote economic development and stability in Healdsburg. Proposed General Plan policies seek to maximize economic opportunities; including ensuring a diversified employment base and meeting the commercial needs of residents and visitors.

#### ***Transportation Element***

The Transportation Element contains goals and policies related to the transportation system in Healdsburg, including streets and highways, the public transit network, bicycle routes, pedestrian connections, and a potential commuter rail line. Goals and policies are identified, addressing each of the alternative modes with the objective of creating a safe, efficient, and convenient transportation system.

#### ***Public Services Element***

The Public Services Element provides goals, policies and implementation measures directed towards providing facilities and services that are important to residents' safety and quality of life. These facilities and services include drainage facilities, sewer and water lines, wastewater treatment plants, electrical utility infrastructure, passive and active recreation, police, fire, education and health care.

#### ***Natural Resources Element***

The Natural Resources Element provides goals, policies and implementation measures directed towards protecting and improving the city's water, agriculture, mineral, air, plant, wildlife and scenic resources.

***Safety Element***

The Safety Element provides goals, policies and implementation measures directed towards preventing the loss of lives, injuries, and property damage due to geologic hazards, flooding, fire, crime, hazardous materials and noise.

***Community Design Element***

The Community Design Element addresses the visual quality and character of the built environment of Healdsburg. The major topics addressed by Community Design policies include downtown, major city entries, neighborhood design, and hillside development.

***Historic and Cultural Resources Element***

The Historic and Cultural Resources Element establishes goals and policies for identifying and preserving significant historic and Native American cultural resources. Resources include buildings and neighborhoods of historic architectural significance, places of special historic or archaeological value, and other features that have special value to the community.

***Administration and Implementation Element***

The Administration and Implementation Element provides goals and implementation measures for administering updates and changes to the General Plan. This Element also includes measures to ensure efficient city government practices.

**D. PROJECT OBJECTIVES**

In 2001, the City initiated a comprehensive revision of the Healdsburg General Plan. While much of it continued to be relevant, the City undertook the revision because the plan needed to be updated to reflect current conditions and new challenges and opportunities in directing future development.

The proposed General Plan includes a number of guiding principles, as shown in Table III-5, that are intended to promote future land uses and development that are properly planned to preserve, protect and enhance Healdsburg's small-town character and unique quality of life, while providing for economic development and for community services and facilities that capitalize on Healdsburg's location and natural resource assets. These principles are organized around the topics of identity, balance, sustainability, mobility, vitality, livability, and safety and are considered the objectives of the General Plan.

**Table III-5  
Proposed Healdsburg General Plan Guiding Principles**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Principle</b>
Identity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain Healdsburg's role within the region</li> <li>• Promote City-centered growth</li> <li>• Protect the City's scenic hillsides and ridgelines</li> <li>• Respect the City's past and its roots</li> <li>• Protect neighborhood character</li> <li>• Project and enhance the downtown and its plaza</li> <li>• Enhance gateways and strengthen primary corridors</li> <li>• Embrace the River</li> </ul>
Balance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Balance resident and visitor needs</li> <li>• Manage residential growth to ensure a measured pace of development</li> <li>• Promote a mix of housing types and affordable housing distributed throughout the community</li> <li>• Ensure that infrastructure and services keep pace with development</li> <li>• Maintain a jobs/housing balance</li> </ul>
Sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protect agricultural resources</li> <li>• Protect the environment</li> <li>• Foster principles of sustainability and conservation</li> <li>• Protect and enhance the natural habitat of Healdsburg's waterways</li> <li>• Preserve and enhance Healdsburg's urban forest</li> </ul>
Mobility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote safe and convenient transportation alternatives</li> <li>• Promote connectivity among neighborhoods and throughout the city</li> <li>• Maintain and improve operation of the Healdsburg Municipal Airport</li> </ul>
Vitality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide an open and inviting business climate, a balanced economic environment, and a diverse tax base</li> <li>• Support local businesses and industries</li> <li>• Protect and enhance qualities that attract visitors to the city</li> </ul>
Livability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Foster high quality design</li> <li>• Maximize opportunities for active and passive recreation</li> <li>• Promote educational opportunities</li> <li>• Meet health care needs</li> </ul>
Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minimize hazards to life and property</li> <li>• Protect and improve Healdsburg's acoustic environment</li> </ul>
<i>Source: Healdsburg 2030 General Plan Policy Document January 2009 Draft, City of Healdsburg, 2009.</i>	

## **E. ANTICIPATED ADOPTION AND IMPLEMENTATION**

City Council approval is necessary to adopt the proposed General Plan, including certification of this EIR. This EIR may also be used to address future actions to implement the General Plan, including

implementing Zoning Ordinance revisions, or may serve as the basis for identifying the scope of subsequent environmental review for actions that require additional environmental analysis, such as the specific development proposals that are consistent with the General Plan.

Approval of the proposed General Plan will include land use designation changes. Once adopted, the Healdsburg 2030 General Plan will serve as a fundamental policy document of the City of Healdsburg to guide decision-making by residents, property owners, business interests, and elected and appointed City officials about public and private land use and development that shape Healdsburg's physical environment.

Implementation of the proposed General Plan would occur through actions taken by the Healdsburg City Council, its appointed officials, and City staff in the exercise of the City's corporate and police powers, and through regulation of property by the Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances, building codes and similar regulations, specific plans, and the City's capital improvements program.