

# Gaviota Coast Planning Advisory Committee



## *Working Paper # 1: Visual Resources*

*September 1, 2010*



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September 1, 2010

County of Santa Barbara – Long Range Planning Division  
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## Preface

**T**his paper is one of a series that will describe the existing physical and policy setting and provide policy analysis and recommendations for various issue areas in support of the long-term land use planning process for the Gaviota Coast. On October 20, 2009, the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors (BOS) adopted a resolution (09-309) to begin the development of a local Gaviota Coast Plan to reflect the community vision of the Gaviota Coast and guide future development over the long term. To assist with this process, the BOS formed the Gaviota Coast Planning Advisory Committee (GavPAC), an 11-member body tasked with working with the community and County staff to create and tailor policies and other planning tools to help the community realize its land use goals consistent with the communities' vision.

# Introduction



The visual character of the Gaviota Coast is dominated by its striking beauty. The traveler on Highway 101 or the railroad is treated to a variety of pleasant ocean vistas, striking rock formations, and pastoral scenes. Of the many scenic areas within Santa Barbara County, the Gaviota Coast area contains views of the highest scenic value seen by the highest number of travelers (Open Space Element, p. 41). This paper will provide background on the existing physical and policy setting, including policy approaches taken by other jurisdictions, as a resource for the Gaviota Coast Planning Advisory Committee (GavPAC) in the course of their deliberations.

# Physical Setting

# 2

The Gaviota Coast Plan Area consists of roughly 100,000 acres extending east from Jalama Beach County Park to Eagle Canyon in western Goleta (see Figure 1).

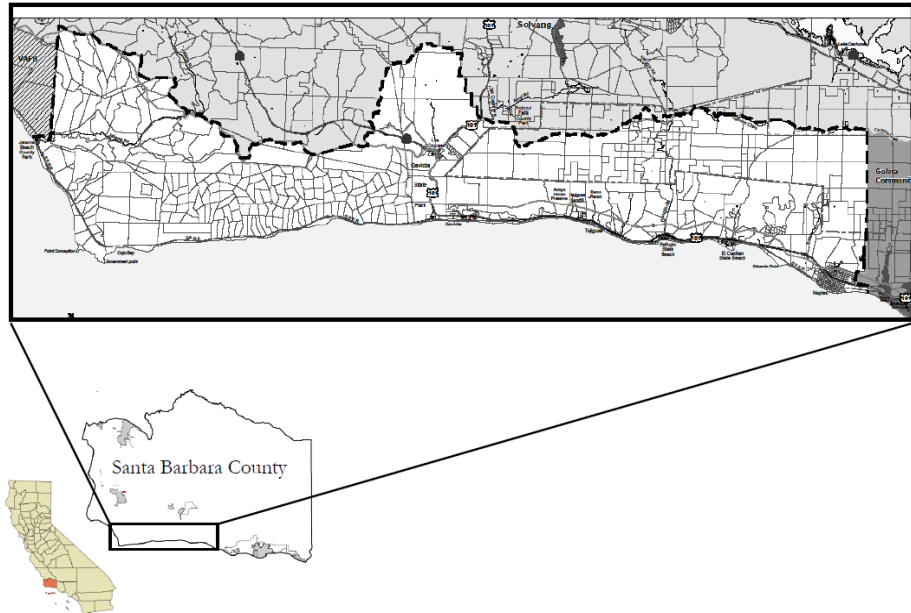


Figure 1 The Gaviota Coast Plan Area

The north-south extent of the Plan Area boundary is defined by the extent of the watersheds to the ridgeline south to the Pacific Ocean and ranges from a maximum elevation of approximately 2,500 feet down to sea level.



Figure 2 The Gaviota Coast Planning Area has a variety of scenic resources including mountains, views of the Pacific Ocean, and rolling, grassy hills (Source: Planning & Development)

The visual setting of the Gaviota Coast is very diverse (see Figure 2). Public views range from ocean to mountainous views, interesting rock formations, pastoral scenery, and glimpses of agricultural and residential structural development in addition to one large visible industrial site (see Figure 3). This visual diversity is representative of the unique geology and landscape as well as the widely distributed nature of the existing land uses.

**The PXP/Gaviota oil facility is a visually prominent industrial site near Gaviota State Park and adjacent to Highway 101**



Figure 3 Gaviota Oil Heating Facility (foreground)  
Gaviota Oil Terminal (background, since removed)  
(Source: SBCO P&D Energy Division Website)

There are various rural uses and associated visual characteristics throughout the Plan Area. Rural visual character can be defined any number of ways (see sidebar below) and can have many components or aspects. The visual setting of the Gaviota Coast is best expressed as coastal scenic and pastoral (as exemplified by Figure 2 and the cover photo). This expression is reinforced by the fact that the structural development is diffused on large ranches and residential enclaves. Hence, with the exception of the PXP/Gaviota oil facility, the built environment is largely dominated by the scenic natural features and pastoral scenes as experienced from public viewsheds.

#### **Fencing in a Rural Setting**

In the county, fences less than six feet tall and gateposts less than eight feet tall are exempt from permits (Article II, Section 35-123). Many agricultural uses for fencing have a long history and are necessary to the basic functioning of a farm or ranch. However, the use of white vinyl fencing, or other non-natural materials or bright colors, has stirred some controversy amongst those who desire to maximize compatibility with the existing scenic landscape.

# Policy Setting

## Santa Barbara County



### Visual Resources Policy Language

Visual resources policy in Santa Barbara County resides mainly in the Comprehensive General Plan. In this highest policy level, visual resources are treated separately for the urban and rural areas. Development in the urban areas of the County are reviewed for compatibility with the neighborhood context. Since there are no urban areas in the Gaviota Coast Plan Area, we focus on the rural area policies. The key policy standard for development in the rural area of the County is compatibility with and subordination to the natural environment, as written in Land Use Element Visual Resources Policy No. 2:

*In areas designated as rural on the land use plan maps, the height, scale, and design of structures shall be compatible with the character of the surrounding natural environment, except where technical requirements dictate otherwise. Structures shall be subordinate in appearance to natural landforms; shall be designed to follow the natural contours of the landscape; and shall be sited so as not to intrude into the skyline as seen from public viewing places.*

#### Rural Character Interpretation

Rural character or “Ruralness” can be perceived and described in many ways. Although commonly referred to as a discrete opposite of the urban, it can also be seen as the evolution of a landscape from the natural or open into two broad categories of “orderliness”: the urban and the rural. And of course the rural can evolve into the suburban or urban.

Starting with the landforms, rural character is perceived as various intensities of a working of the land such as open grazing, irrigated pastures, cultivated crops, orchards, vineyards and associated fencing and windrows, etc. Other important visual cues include visible livestock, tractors and other mechanical structures that indicate the active working of the land such as irrigation pipe, water tanks, windmills, power poles, etc.

Agricultural structures display a typical of visual cues related to their function as a part of agricultural activities and their function on the landscape as largely simple, efficient, weatherproof structures. Hence the prototypical barn or storage structure is very rectilinear with simple lines for easy construction and little or no ornament. The typical residential structures allowed for more detail, ornament, and color while still following the same general design. In their own way, this tradition lends structures to call attention to themselves as a purely utilitarian structure with little attempt to conform or blend in with the surrounding terrain.

This style or character is very different from other styles utilized in similar settings that attempt to minimize the visual imprint by incorporating more organic forms and natural materials to blend in with the surrounding terrain and landforms.

In addition, the policy precludes development from intruding into the skyline from public viewsheds. Identical policy language applies to the coastal zone pursuant to Coastal Land Use Plan Policy 4-3.

Developments are also required to be designed to preserve landforms and natural features and minimize cut and fill grading operations pursuant to Hillside & Watershed Protection Policy Nos. 1 & 2 (Coastal Land Use Plan Policy Nos. 3-13 & 3-14). There are additional policies that address visual issues related to some specific uses and structures that are not summarized here (see Appendix 1).

**Scenic Highways Corridor – applies to a small stretch of Highway 1 within the Plan Area. Scenic Corridor – applies to coastal Highway 101, Southern Pacific Railroad, Jalama Road.**

## Overlays

The overlay is a common planning tool to apply certain treatments to development proposals within a specific geographical area. Within the Gaviota Coast Plan Area, three overlays exist that concern scenic resources: the View Corridor Overlay, Scenic Highway Corridor, and Scenic Corridor. Of these, only the Coastal Land Use Plan View Corridor attaches a specific requirement for Design Review for development on Coastal Zone lands within the overlay (see Figure 4).

The purpose of the View Corridor Overlay is to give additional protection to areas where there are views from Highway 101 to the ocean. In addition to the Design review requirement, structural development is limited to 15 feet, with some exceptions. For the full text of the View Corridor Overlay policies, see Appendix A.

**View Corridor Overlay Properties Limited to Some Lands in the Coastal Zone South of Highway 101**

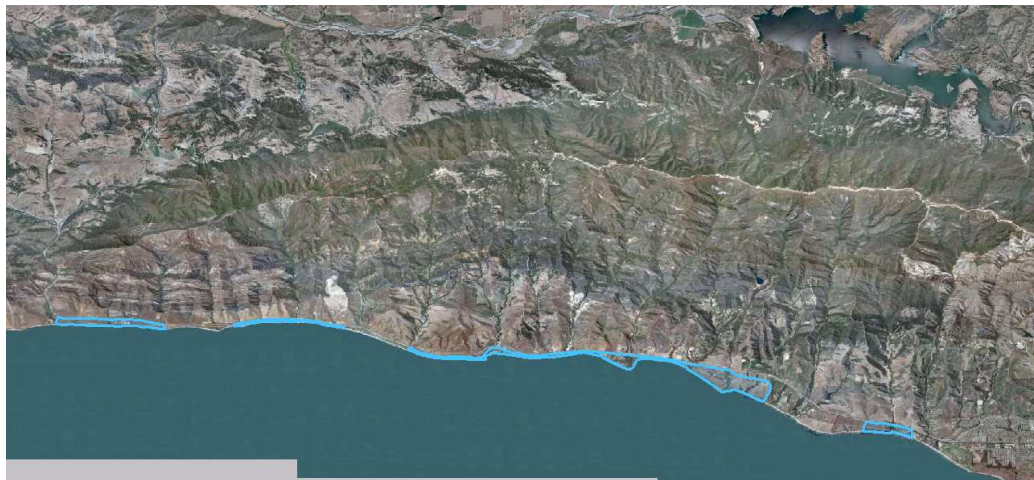


Figure 4 View Corridor Overlay Properties  
(Source: SBCO PhotoMapper 6.1)

Both the Scenic Highway Corridor and the Scenic Corridor areas highlight areas of potential scenic value without applying additional specific policy requirements. Rather, they highlight these areas for potential study for visual issues related to potential development.

The D- Design Control Overlay is utilized in other areas of the county where scenic values warrant design review for proposed development.

The purpose of the View Corridor Overlay is to give additional protection to areas where there are views from Highway 101 to the ocean. In addition to the Design review requirement, structural development is limited to 15 feet, with some exceptions. For the full text of the View Corridor Overlay policies, see Appendix A.

## **Design Review**

**The Ridgeline and Hillside Development ordinance requires Design Review for structures within 100 feet of a 16 foot or greater elevation drop**

Design Review is a process required of certain proposed development either due to the nature or location of said development. The four regional Boards of Architectural Review provide this service as a group of professional architects and landscape architects that review proposed developments for the integrity of their design and consistency with the various visual resource and related policies. The Central County Board of Architectural Review (CBAR) has jurisdiction over the Gaviota Coast Plan Area. And, as a decision-making body, can approve or deny projects which are appealable to the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors. Typical project types requiring Design Review include, Development Plans, Commercial-zoned projects, Ridgeline & Hillside projects, and projects within an overlay requiring Design Review.

## **Other Jurisdictions**

Coastal California Counties employ a wide array of planning tools in order to preserve the scenic resources of a unique area (see Figure 5, Appendix B). Monterey County uses a hierarchical approach to siting new development in the Big Sur Area, which serves to preserve the existing rural character and uniqueness of the area, while supporting community cohesiveness. The first tier of this approach prohibits all future public or private development that would be visible from Highway 1 and major public viewing areas. The second tier requires new development not visible from Highway 1 and major public viewing areas to be conditioned on the siting and design criteria set forth in the Big Sur Coast Land Use Plan (LUP). Monterey County also uses Scenic Conservation Zones as well as Conservation and Scenic Easements to protect scenic viewsheds.

### **Big Sur Coast, Monterey County**

#### Background

The Big Sur Coast is a geographically distinct portion of the Central California Coast which stretches over 70 miles in length, and is bordered by the Santa Lucia Mountains through which close to 50 streams flow on their way to the sea. The officially designated two-lane scenic Highway 1 runs the length of the Coast. Wildfire is an ever present hazard to residents during the fire season. Natural

constraints to development include availability of water, difficult access, unstable soils on steep slopes, and dangers of fire and flood. Tourism and private residential development are the strongest forces affecting management and development of the area. Around half of the planning area is Federal land, about six percent is in the State Park system, and the remainder is privately owned.

Despite the County's policies to preserve the visual resources in the Big Sur Coast area, at one point increased development had gradually encroached into areas of outstanding beauty and had resulted in poorly sited homes and public construction projects with little or no sensitivity to aesthetic values. The Big Sur Coast LUP was created partly in response to these impacts on visual resources.

### Monterey County Visual Resources Policy Compendium

#### *Big Sur Coast Land Use Plan*

- Adopted in 1996.
- Amended Monterey County Local Coastal Program.

The intent of the Big Sur Coast Land Use Plan (LUP) is to:

- Identify the urgent need for financial assistance in preserving Big Sur's natural resources and cultural heritage. Funds are specially needed to protect scenic views and to provide public access.
- Preserve scenic resources in perpetuity and to promote, wherever possible, the restoration of the natural beauty of visually degraded areas.

The Big Sur Coast LUP contains several policies pertaining to the Critical Viewshed, as listed below. The Critical Viewshed is defined as: "everything within sight of Highway 1 and major public viewing areas including turnouts, beaches and the following specific locations Soberanes Point, Garrapata Beach, Abalone Cove Vista Point, Bixby Creek Turnout, Hurricane Point Overlook, upper Sycamore Canyon Road (Highway 1 to Pais Road), Pfeiffer Beach/Cooper Beach, and specific views from Old Coast Road as defined by policy 3.8.4.4". Certain exemptions to these policies are allowed for coastal-dependent uses, existing vacant subdivisions, State Park parking, Utilities, and Highway 1 facilities, essential ranching structures, and rural service centers (i.e., existing visitor serving commercial facilities). The ordinance is structured in a hierarchical manner that focuses on resiting development outside of the critical viewshed to the extent possible. Then, the following policies for land not in the critical viewshed regarding landscaping and various design treatments are applied.

Critical Viewshed (visual resources) policies include:

1. In order to avoid creating further commitment to development within the critical viewshed all new parcels must contain building sites outside the critical viewshed.
2. The best available planning techniques shall be used to permit development of parcels partially in the critical viewshed. These may include clustering of structures, sensitive site design, design control, transfer of development credits, and other techniques designed to allow development on such parcels outside the critical viewshed.
3. Where it is determined that an alternative building site on a parcel would result in conformance to the Key Policy, then the applicant will be required to modify his proposal accordingly. Similarly, changes in the design, height, or bulk of proposed structures will be required where this will result in an approvable project.
4. New roads, grading or excavations will not be allowed to damage or intrude upon the critical viewshed. Such road construction or other work shall not commence until the entire project has completed the permit and appeal process. Grading or excavation shall include all alterations of natural landforms by earthmoving equipment. These restrictions shall not be interpreted as prohibiting restoration of severely eroded water course channels or gullying, provided a plan is submitted and approved prior to commencing work.
5. Where it is determined that a proposed development cannot be resited, redesigned, or in any other way made to conform to the basic critical viewshed policy, then the site shall be considered environmentally inappropriate for development.
6. The County will participate with other public agencies and private groups to secure adequate funds to purchase critical viewshed parcels proposed for development or to secure for use by restricted landowners, other developable land areas to which new development can be transferred. The value of parcels, for purposes of establishing purchase price, shall not be diminished by virtue of their location in the viewshed or by the policies of this section.
7. The general policy concerning replacement of structures shall be to encourage resiting or redesign in order to conform to the Key Policy. Replacement or enlargement of existing structures, or structures lost in fire or natural disaster within the critical viewshed shall be permitted on the original location on the site, provided no other less visible portion of the site is acceptable to the property owner, and provided the replacement or enlargement does not increase the visibility of the structure. Replacement or enlargement of structures outside the critical viewshed shall be permitted as

long as such replacement or enlargement does not cause the structure to intrude into critical viewshed.

8. Landowners will be encouraged to grant scenic easements to the County over portions of their land in the critical viewshed.
9. The County encourages creative public and private efforts to restore the scenic beauty of visually/impacted areas of the coast and will assist such efforts where possible.

Non-Critical Viewshed policies include:

1. So that the visual continuity may remain undisturbed, the design and siting of structures, whether residential, commercial, agricultural, or public, and access thereto, shall not detract from the natural beauty of the undeveloped skylines, ridgelines, and the shoreline.
2. New applicants, when selecting a building site, must consider the visual effects upon public views as well as the views and privacy of neighbors. The portion of a parcel least visible from public viewpoints will be considered the appropriate site for the location of new structures. New structures shall be located where existing topography or trees provide natural screening and shall not be sited on open hillsides or silhouetted ridges. Sites shall not leave excavation scars or slope disturbance. Structures and access roads shall be designed to minimize alterations of the natural landform and to avoid, insofar as feasible, removal of healthy tree cover.
3. New development should be subordinate and blend with its environment, using materials or colors that will achieve that effect. Where necessary, appropriate modifications will be required for siting, structural design, size, shape, color, textures, building materials, access, and screening.
4. Landscape screening may be used wherever a moderate extension of native forested and chaparral areas is possible. Other screening must be of similar plant or tree species.
5. Sites for new structures shall be selected to avoid the construction of visible access roads and minimize the extent of environmental and engineering problems resulting from road construction.
6. New roads providing residential, recreational, or agricultural access will be considered only where it has been demonstrated that the use of existing roads is not feasible, or that permission for the use of an existing road is shown in writing to be unobtainable from neighboring property owners.

7. New roads shall avoid steep slopes and shall be located along the margins of forested areas, along natural land contours, or within existing vegetation. Roads shall be aligned to minimize removal of native trees, and constructed to minimum standards consistent with the requirements of fire safety and emergency use. Drainage and erosion control measures must be adequate to prevent erosion. During road construction, side-casting of earth materials shall not be permitted; all materials not used for on-site fill shall be removed from the area.

8. Television antennas shall be unobtrusive.

#### *Design Standards for the Big Sur Highway*

Design standards for the Big Sur Highway state that the County should review, with the assistance of a Big Sur Highway Advisory Board, all Caltrans work that will have visual impact, including but not limited to new work, routine maintenance, or upgrading existing features (e.g., signs, road marking, clearing, cutting, filling, etc.).

California's first official scenic highway was Highway 1 from the Carmel River to the south County border (Big Sur Highway). Highway design standards include provisions for road width, Caltrans Right of Way, and the Scenic Corridor outside the Right of Way.

#### *Monterey County General Plan*

Monterey County's 2010 working draft General Plan includes policies related to visual resources in the Open Space Element, including:

- OS-1.1 Voluntary restrictions to the development potential of property located in designated visually sensitive areas shall be encouraged.
- OS-1.3 To preserve the County's scenic qualities, ridgeline development shall not be allowed. An exception to this policy may be made only after publicly noticed hearing and provided the following findings can be made:
  - The ridgeline development will not create substantially adverse visual impact when viewed from a common public viewing area ; and either
  - The proposed development better achieves the goals, policies, and objectives of the Monterey County General Plan and applicable area plan than other development alternatives; or,
  - There is no feasible alternative to the ridgeline development. Pursuant to Policy OS-1.6, in areas subject to specific plans, the ridgeline policies and regulations of the applicable specific plan shall govern.
- OS-1.5 New subdivisions shall avoid lot configurations which create building sites that will constitute ridgeline development. Siting of new

development visible from private viewing areas may be taken into consideration during the subdivision process.

- OS-1.8 Programs to encourage clustering development in rural and agricultural areas to maximize access to infrastructure, protect prime agricultural land, and reduce impacts to designated visually sensitive and critical habitat areas shall be established.
- OS-1.9 Development that protects and enhances the County's scenic qualities shall be encouraged. All Routine and Ongoing Agricultural Activities (including but not limited to: pasture and rangeland management; conversion of agricultural land to other agricultural uses; preparation of product for market, and delivery of product to market; planting, harvesting, cultivation, tillage, selection, rotation, irrigation, fallowing, and all soil preparation activities; raising of livestock, poultry, fur bearing animals, dairying, or fish; maintenance of sediment basins, stock ponds, irrigation and tail water return systems, stream bank and grade stabilization, water retention and pumping facilities, erosion control and surface drainage activities; maintenance of farm access roads, trails, and parking facilities; fencing, corrals, animal handling facilities; greenhouses, sheds, storage and outbuildings; Emergency activity that protects the health and safety of the general public) are exempt from the viewshed policies of this plan, except as noted in Policy OS-1.12.
- OS-1.11 Maintain GIS mapping for all lands containing visually sensitive resources and corridors. Mapped information shall be reanalyzed and updated at least every five years, as necessary.
- OS-1.12 The significant disruption of views from designated scenic routes shall be mitigated through use of appropriate materials, scale, lighting, and siting of development. Routine and Ongoing Agricultural Activities shall be exempt from this policy, except:
  - Large-scale agricultural processing facilities
  - Facilities governed by the Agricultural and Winery Corridor Plan
- OS-5.5 Landowners and developers shall be encourage to preserve the integrity of existing terrain and native vegetation in visually sensitive areas such as hillsides, ridge, and watersheds. Routine and Ongoing Agricultural Activities shall be exempt from this policy.

	Design Control Overlay	Residential Design Guidelines	Fencing Design Guidelines	Clustering Policies	'View Corridor Overlay'	Highway Design Standards	Landscape Design Standards	Grading Min. Policy	Ridgeline and Hillside Policies	Massing Policies	Green house Policies	Resource Mgmt District	Area Plan(s)	Tree Preservation
Santa Barbara	✓	✓			✓			✓	✓				✓	✓
Humboldt				✓	✓		✓	✓	✓				✓	
Mendocino				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					
Sonoma		✓						✓	✓				✓	✓
Marin	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓
San Mateo	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Santa Cruz	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓
Monterey	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	
SLO	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓
Ventura	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓

Figure 5 Summary of Planning Tools for Visual Resources in Coastal California Counties

## **Marin County**

Marin County is located in the North San Francisco Bay Area and is known for its distinctive natural setting and environmental and agricultural heritage as well as its affluence and progressive politics. Marin encompasses numerous environmental resources and working agricultural landscapes. Watershed planning is an overarching concern in the County's Natural Systems and Agriculture Element.

### Marin County Visual Resources Policy Compendium

#### *Marin County Single-family Residential Design Guidelines (adopted 2005)*

Single-family Residential Design Guidelines are used as a tool to realize community design objectives in the County and to create desirable new development which preserves the scenic natural setting. The Guidelines clarify and reinforce public policy objectives articulated in the Design Review findings. Certain findings, outlined in the Zoning Code (Ch 22.82.0401), must be made, prior to approval of a design review.

These design guidelines aim to give clear design direction to applicants and provide County staff, design review boards, and decision makers with the tools needed to properly evaluate development proposals within the context of County policies and standards. In addition, the Guidelines recommend that preparation of specific amendments to the Development Code should be undertaken as an implementation program to ensure that specific code revisions accurately reflect the design concepts and techniques in the Design Guidelines.

Design guidelines that may also be relevant to visual resource issues on the Gaviota Coast include:

- D-1.1 General Massing. Buildings should be divided into smaller parts, including detached buildings (e.g. garage, guest house), to reduce effective visual bulk. This is especially important in visible hillside settings.
- D-1.2 Roof Designs. Roof forms and roof lines should be broken into a series of smaller building components when viewed from the street to reflect the scale of the neighborhood, site, or hillside setting. Long, linear unbroken rooflines that exceed 50 feet are discouraged. This is especially important in visible hillside settings.
- D-1.5 Hillside Design. . . . Buildings should be cut into the hillside to reduce effective visual bulk. Excavate underground or use below grade rooms to reduce effective bulk and to provide energy-efficient and environmentally-desirable spaces. . . The slope of most of the roof should be oriented in the same direction as the natural slope . . . roof on lower levels should be used for the deck open space of upper levels.

- D-1.6 Ridgelines and Knolls . . . Buildings should not be located near visually-prominent ridgelines when other feasible locations are available. The development of new structures should be prohibited within 100 vertical feet and 300 horizontal feet of ridgelines and knolls, except in those cases where no other location is available or the County determines that circumstances may warrant greater flexibility in siting.

**Humboldt County**

Visual Resources Policy Compendium

*Land Use Element*

- UL-P20 Landscaping. All designs shall screen or soften the visual impact of new development through the use of landscaping. If appropriate, species common to the area and known fire resistant plants should be used.
- RL-P7 Clustered Rural Residential Development. Clustered rural residential development is encouraged on rural lands suitable for development consistent with planned densities. Density bonuses may be provided where significant permanent land dedications are secured.
- FR-S1 Planned Rural Development Program Clustering Incentive Options: The Planned Rural Development Program shall be a voluntary incentive based program. To qualify, identified homesite parcels must be clustered to minimize conflicts with timber harvesting and impacts to water resources, biological resources, wildland fire potential. Right-to-harvest agreements shall be secured on lands proposed for conversion to residential uses. The remaining lands most suitable for continued timber production shall be retained for permanent commercial timber production.

Tier 1 clustering program	
Density credit	Twice the existing entitlements when 90% of timberlands are protected
Protection instrument	B7 zoning or permanent conservation easement on remainder
Rezone homesite parcels	County to conduct re-zone
Tier II clustering program	
Density credit	3 times existing entitlements when 95% of timberlands are protected
Protection instrument	Permanent conservation easement on remainder
Rezone homesite parcels	County to conduct re-zone

# Policy Analysis



Santa Barbara County has a strong set of existing policies designed to minimize direct visual impacts from development, in addition to protecting against the spoiling of existing scenic vistas from public viewing places. However, this is not to say that the existing policies or implementing ordinances could not benefit from additional clarification. In addition, some aspects of visual resources on the Gaviota Coast may be unique and may warrant additional tailoring or interpretive guidelines based on this unique setting.

The main thrust of the existing rural visual policies is for development to: 1) be subordinate to the natural surroundings, 2) limit disturbance to the natural terrain, and 3) not intrude into the skyline. In general, development is required to blend into the surroundings as much as possible. This policy approach can be misconstrued as directing development to be hidden or made to be invisible. While the term subordinate is not defined by the Land Use Element,

The dictionary definition describes a relationship between items or ideas. And although the site-specific setting is a critical determining factor, the relationship between the natural environment and development is broadly interpreted as a qualitatively subservient or secondary role for development on the landscape, not absence or absolute diminishment of development. And although a more prescriptive approach can be taken, as is the case in the Big Sur area (see summary above), where visibility is prohibited in certain scenic areas, this is a decidedly different approach than the existing county policies.

Given the above description, it must also be stated that there may be certain sites where, due to the blockage of particularly scenic vistas, development is more severely restricted. The most prominent example of this is the application of the View Corridor overlay, which sets additional standards for development in areas where there is a high potential for blockage of scenic ocean views. There may be other individual sites where the potential spoilage of important vistas (e.g. rock formations) would entail severe restrictions on proposed development.

In most cases, proposed development in the Gaviota Coast Plan Area undergoes the Design Review process of the CBAR. In addition to making qualified judgments to ensure that proposed development is consistent with visual resources policy, the CBAR reviews the integrity of all aspects of development design including site layout, architecture, color, landscaping, etc. Those development applications (e.g. ministerial residential Land Use Permits) that do not trigger Design Review are not subject to this level of scrutiny. However, previous community planning efforts, including the recently-adopted Santa Ynez Valley Community Plan, have applied the D – Design Overlay to areas considered visually sensitive to require Design

Review and the additional design integrity that results, of all development within the overlay area.

Although each proposed development site is different, a systematic hierarchy of site design and treatment often emerges as an ideal approach to development, as shown below:

### **Prototypical Site Design Hierarchy**

- I. Site Selection**
  - a. Visibility
  - b. Topography
  - c. Accessibility
  - d. Resource Sensitivity
  - e. Fire Protection
  
- II. Architecture**
  - a. Design
  - b. Mass, Bulk, and Scale
  - b. Materials/Details
  - c. Colors
  
- III. Grading**
  - a. Excavation
  - b. Stepped Foundations/Basements
  - c. Retaining Walls
  - d. Berming
  
- IV. Landscape**
  - a. Visual Softening/Screening

Key to this approach is primarily site selection. This is the one design component that, when properly executed, reveals the optimum scope and treatments for a successful development from a visual policy perspective. Ideal site selection, for example, minimizes required grading, which necessitates less scarring and restorative plantings to the landscape, and so on. Hence, an ideal development site minimizes the need for landform alterations and the potentially the need for screening plantings and other treatments to feign or give the illusion of subordination to the natural setting. Granted, many properties lack such an ideal development site, and require substantial treatments such as screening landscaping, grading the development into the hillside, or berming, etc.

Of course, there are some existing tensions in the various policies which, for example, may require development to minimize visibility at the expense of increasing grading to lower finish floor elevations or create a screening berm. One way to clarify this process may be to adopt tailored design guidelines for the Plan

Area. In addition to suggested architectural styles and details of materials and colors, the guidelines can memorialize a clear site design process hierarchy which could make the Design Review process more efficient.

# Appendix A

## Santa Barbara County Visual Resources Policy Compendium

### Coastal Land Use Plan Overlay

(Available online @

[http://longrange.sbcountyplanning.org/programs/coastal\\_lup.php](http://longrange.sbcountyplanning.org/programs/coastal_lup.php))

### View Corridor

The view corridor overlay delineates areas where there are views from a principal public road to the ocean and along the coast.

### Land Use Element Policies

(Available online @

<http://longrange.sbcountyplanning.org/programs/genplanreformat/PDFdocs/LandUseElement.pdf>)

#### Visual Resources Policies

1. All commercial, industrial, and planned developments, shall be required to submit a landscaping plan to the County for approval.
2. In areas designated as rural on the land use plan maps, the height, scale, and design of structures shall be compatible with the character of the surrounding natural environment, except where technical requirements dictate otherwise. Structures shall be subordinate in appearance to natural landforms; shall be designed to follow the natural contours of the landscape; and shall be sited so as not to intrude into the skyline as seen from public viewing places.
3. In areas designated as urban on the land use plan maps and in designated rural neighborhoods, new structures shall be in conformance with the scale and character of the existing community. Clustered development, varied circulation patterns, and diverse housing types shall be encouraged.
4. Signs shall be of size, location, and appearance so as not to detract from scenic areas or views from public roads and other viewing points.
5. Utilities, including television, shall be placed underground in new developments in accordance with the rules and regulations of the California Public Utilities Commission, except where cost of undergrounding would be so high as to deny service.

### Hillside and Watershed Protection Policies

1. Plans for development shall minimize cut and fill operations. Plans requiring excessive cutting and filling may be denied if it is determined that the development could be carried out with less alteration of the natural terrain.
2. All developments shall be designed to fit the site topography, soils, geology, hydrology, and any other existing conditions and be oriented so that grading and other site preparation is kept to an absolute minimum. Natural features, landforms, and native vegetation, such as trees, shall be preserved to the maximum extent feasible. Areas of the site which are not suited to development because of known soil, geologic, flood, erosion or other hazards shall remain in open space.

### **Coastal Land Use Plan Policies**

(Available online @

[http://longrange.sbcountyplanning.org/programs/coastal\\_lup.php](http://longrange.sbcountyplanning.org/programs/coastal_lup.php))

#### **Seawalls and Shoreline Structures**

Policy 3-1: Seawalls shall not be permitted unless the County has determined that there are no other less environmentally damaging alternatives reasonably available for protection of existing principal structures. The County prefers and encourages nonstructural solutions to shoreline erosion problems, including beach replenishment, removal of endangered structures and prevention of land divisions on shorefront property subject to erosion; and, will seek solutions to shoreline hazards on a larger geographic basis than a single lot circumstance. Where permitted, seawall design and construction shall respect to the degree possible natural landforms. Adequate provision for lateral beach access shall be made and the project shall be designed to minimize visual impacts by the use of appropriate colors and materials.

#### **Hillside and Watershed Protection**

Policy 3-13: Plans for development shall minimize cut and fill operations. Plans requiring excessive cutting and filling may be denied if it is determined that the development could be carried out with less alteration of the natural terrain.

Policy 3-14: All development shall be designed to fit the site topography, soils, geology, hydrology, and any other existing conditions and be oriented so that grading and other site preparation is kept to an absolute minimum. Natural features, landforms, and native vegetation, such as trees, shall be preserved to the maximum extent feasible. Areas of the site which are not suited for development because of known soil, geologic, flood, erosion or other hazards shall remain in open space.

#### **Visual Resources**

Policy 4-1: Areas within the coastal zone which are now required to obtain approval from the County Board of Architectural Review, because of the requirements of the “D”- Design Supervision Combining Regulations or because they are within the boundaries of Ordinance #453, shall continue to be subject to design review. In addition, developments in all areas designated on the land use plan maps as Commercial, Industrial, or Planned Development and residential structures on bluff top lots shall be required to obtain plan approval from the County BAR.

Policy 4-2: All commercial, industrial, planned development, and greenhouse projects shall be required to submit a landscaping plan to the County for approval.

Policy 4-3: In areas designated as rural on the land use plan maps, the height, scale, and design of structures shall be compatible with the character of the surrounding natural environment, except where technical requirements dictate otherwise. Structures shall be subordinate in appearance to natural landforms; shall be designed to follow the natural contours of the landscape; and shall be sited so as not to intrude into the skyline as seen from public viewing places.

Policy 4-4: In areas designated as urban on the land use plan maps and in designated rural neighborhoods, new structures shall be in conformance with the scale and character of the existing community. Clustered development, varied circulation patterns, and diverse housing types shall be encouraged.

Policy 4-5: In addition to that required for safety (see Policy 3-4), further bluff setbacks may be required for oceanfront structures to minimize or avoid impacts on public views from the beach. Bluff top structures shall be set back from the bluff edge sufficiently far to insure that the structure does not infringe on views from the beach except in areas where existing structures on both sides of the proposed structure already impact public views from the beach. In such cases, the new structure shall be located no closer to the bluff’s edge than the adjacent structures.

Policy 4-6: Signs shall be of size, location, and appearance so as not to detract from scenic areas or views from public roads and other viewing points.

Policy 4-7: Utilities, including television, shall be placed underground in new developments in accordance with the rules and regulations of the California Public Utilities Commission, except where cost of undergrounding would be so high as to deny service.

Policy 4-8: The County shall request the State of California to designate that portion of Highway 101 between Winchester Canyon and Gaviota State Park as a “Scenic Highway.”

### **View Corridor Overlay Designation**

Policy 4-9: Structures shall be sited and designed to preserve unobstructed broad views of the ocean from Highway #101, and shall be clustered to the maximum extent feasible.

Policy 4-10: A landscaping plan shall be submitted to the County for approval. Landscaping when mature, shall not impede public views.

Policy 4-11: Building height shall not exceed one story or 15 feet above average finished grade, unless an increase in height would facilitate clustering of development and result in greater view protection, or a height in excess of 15 feet would not impact public views to the ocean.

### **Other Coastal Facilities**

Policy 6-26: Aquaculture facilities located in areas designated as rural on the land use plan maps shall be sited and designed to be compatible with the natural surroundings. To minimize impacts on coastal visual resources, structures shall be well-screened, and depressed below grade when feasible. Intake and outfall lines for ocean water shall be underground unless not feasible for a particular operation, i.e., salmon culture. If aboveground channels or pipes are necessary, adequate provisions for lateral beach access shall be required.

### **Coastal Dependent and Related Recreational Activities**

Policy 7-13: In order to protect natural and visual resources of the coastal zone between Ellwood and Gaviota, development of recreational facilities shall not impede views between U.S. 101 and the ocean, shall minimize grading, removal of vegetation, and paving, and be compatible with the rural character of the area. Existing natural features shall remain undisturbed to the maximum extent possible, and landscaping shall consist of drought-tolerant species.

Policy 7-29: Visitor-serving commercial recreational development in rural areas should be limited to low intensity uses, i.e., campgrounds, that are designed to protect and enhance visual resources, and minimize impacts on topography, habitats, and water resources.

Policy 8-7: Landscaping and screening shall be installed within six months of completion of new greenhouses and/or accessory buildings. Such landscaping shall reasonably block the view of greenhouse structures and parking areas from the nearest public road(s) within five years of project completion.

### **Scenic Highways Element Goals**

(Available online @

[http://longrange.sbcountyplanning.org/programs/scenichighways/scenic\\_element.php](http://longrange.sbcountyplanning.org/programs/scenichighways/scenic_element.php))

The County seeks to attain the following goals through the adoption and implementation of this Scenic Highway Element:

- a) To enhance and preserve the valuable scenic resources located along roadways within the County,
- b) To consider every proposed new highway or major realignment as an opportunity to maintain the scenic quality of the County by evaluating them for scenic highway eligibility,
- c) To help maintain the economic contribution of tourism to the County,
- d) To accommodate State planning law.

**Land Use and Development Code (LUDC)**

(Available online @ <http://www.sbcountyplanning.org/forms/index.cfm>)

**Design Control (D) Overlay Zone (35.28.080)**(not currently applicable on the Gaviota Coast)

**Purpose and intent.** The Design Control (D) overlay zone is applied where, because of visual resources and/or unique neighborhood characteristics, plans for new or altered structures require Design Review. The intent is to ensure well designed development and to protect scenic qualities, property values, and neighborhood character.

**Ridgeline and Hillside Development Guidelines (35.62.040)**(applicability is site specific)

**Purpose and intent.** This section provides for the visual protection of the County's ridgelines and hillsides by requiring that the Board of Architectural Review evaluate each proposed structure within the (applicable) areas. The intent of this Section is to encourage architectural designs and landscaping that conform to the natural topography on hillsides and ridgelines.

**Applicability.** Each structure proposed where there is a 16 drop in elevation within 100 feet in any direction from the proposed building footprint shall be subject to Design Review.

**Development Guidelines.** The following guidelines shall apply within Rural, Inner Rural, Existing Developed Rural Neighborhood (Inland area) and Rural Neighborhood (Coastal Zone) areas as designated on the Comprehensive Plan maps.

(1) The height of any structure should not exceed 16 feet wherever there is a 16 foot drop in elevation within 100 feet of the location of the proposed structure's location.

(2) Building rake and ridge line should conform to or reflect the surrounding terrain.

(3) Materials and colors should be compatible with the character of the terrain and natural surroundings of the site.

(4) Large, visually unbroken and/or exposed retaining walls should be minimized.

(5) Landscaping should be used to integrate the structure into the hillside, and shall be compatible with the adjacent vegetation.

(6) Grading shall be minimized, in compliance with the Comprehensive Plan.

(7) Development on ridgelines shall be discouraged if suitable alternative locations are available on the lot.

## **Article II (Coastal Zoning Ordinance)**

(Available online @ <http://www.sbcountyplanning.org/forms/index.cfm>)

### **Gaviota Coast Planning Area (35-66)**

1. In order to protect natural and visual resources of the Coastal Zone between Ellwood and Gaviota, development of recreational facilities shall not impede views between U. S. Highway 101 and the ocean, shall minimize grading, removal of vegetation, and paving, and be compatible with the rural character of the area. Existing natural features shall remain undisturbed to the maximum extent possible, and landscaping shall consist of drought-tolerant species.

### **Bluff Development (35-67)**

2. In addition to that required for safety, further bluff setbacks may be required for oceanfront structures to minimize or avoid impacts on public views from the beach. Blufftop structures shall be set back from the bluff edge sufficiently far to insure that the structure does not infringe on views from the beach except in areas where existing structures on both sides of the proposed structure already impact public views from the beach. In such cases, the new structure shall be located no closer to the bluff's edge than the adjacent structures.

### **View Corridor Overlay District (VC)**

**Purpose and Intent.** The purpose of this overlay district is to protect significant coastal view corridors from U. S. 101 to the ocean in areas of the County where such view corridors currently exist.

**Processing.** Any structural development in areas within the View Corridor Overlay district shall be subject to approval by the Board of Architectural Review prior to issuance of a Coastal Development Permit.

**Standards.** The Board of Architectural Review shall approve the plans if it finds conformance with the following standards:

- a. Structures shall be sited and designed to preserve unobstructed broad views of the ocean from Highway 101, and shall be clustered to the maximum extent feasible.

- b. Building height shall not exceed 15 feet above average finished grades, unless an increase in height would facilitate clustering of development and result in greater view protection, or a height in excess of 15 feet would not impact public views to the ocean, in which case the height limitations of the base zone district shall apply.
- c. Structures shall not be of an unsightly or undesirable appearance.

**D - Design Control Overlay District. (35-98)**(not currently applicable on the Gaviota Coast)

**Purpose and Intent.** The purpose of this district is to designate areas where, because of visual resources and/or unique neighborhood characteristics, plans for new or altered structures are subject to design review in compliance with Section 35-184 (Board of Architectural Review). The intent is to ensure well designed developments and to protect scenic qualities, property values, and neighborhood character.

**Ridgeline and Hillside Development Guidelines. (35-144)**(applicability is site specific)

**Purpose and Intent.** The purpose of this section is to provide for the visual protection of the County's ridgelines and hillsides by requiring the Board of Architectural Review to review all proposed structures within the (applicable) areas. The intent of this section is to encourage architectural designs and landscaping which conform to the natural topography on hillsides and ridgelines.

**Applicability.** All structures proposed to be constructed in any zone district where there is a 16 foot drop in elevation within 100 feet in any direction from the proposed building footprint shall be subject to design review.

**Development Guidelines.** The following development guidelines shall apply within Rural and Inner-Rural Areas as designated on the Local Coastal Program Maps:

- a. The height of any structure should not exceed 16 feet wherever there is a 16 foot drop in elevation within 100 feet of the proposed structural location.
- b. Building rake and ridge line should conform to or reflect the surrounding terrain.
- c. Materials and colors should be compatible with the character of the terrain and natural surroundings of the site.
- d. Large, visually unbroken and/or exposed retaining walls should be minimized.
- f. Landscaping should be used to integrate the structure into the hillside, and shall be compatible with the adjacent vegetation.

g. Grading shall be minimized, in accordance with the Comprehensive Plan goals.

h. Development on ridgelines shall be discouraged if suitable alternative locations are available on the parcel.

**ARC - Agriculture-Residential Cluster Overlay District (35-99)**(available, but not yet applied to any parcels)

**Purpose and Intent.** The purpose of this overlay district is to preserve large non-prime agricultural operations and to avoid subdivision of large ranches down to the specified minimum lot sizes. The intent is to permit residential development at a density greater than that allowed under the existing zoning district while ensuring that such development will be compatible with the long-term preservation of the agricultural operation.

**Affect of ARC Overlay District.** Land zoned ARC must be in large, non-prime agricultural operations of 10,000 acres or more (as described in the Coastal Land Use Plan) in the Gaviota Coast and North Coast planning areas for which the County has not approved land divisions. Within the ARC Overlay District, the permitted and conditionally permitted uses of land and the regulations of the base zone district shall apply as well as the additional permitted uses and regulations of the ARC.

**Preliminary Development Plan to be Included in Application for Rezoning.** Unless the Planning Commission expressly waives the requirement, an application for a rezoning to this overlay district shall include a Preliminary Development Plan as part of the application. Upon approval by the Board of Supervisors of the rezoning and Preliminary Development Plan, the Preliminary Development Plan shall be incorporated into the rezoning ordinance.

**Processing.** No permits for development including grading shall be issued except in conformance with an approved Final Development Plan

**Additional Permitted Uses.**

1. Residential development at a density greater than that allowed under the base zoning district may be permitted but shall be clustered on no more than two percent of the gross acreage of the property. The maximum density permitted shall be calculated at the rate of one dwelling unit per each two acres included in the two percent area. Residential development up to a maximum of one dwelling unit per each acre included in the two percent area may be permitted provided that the County finds that there is no potential for significant adverse environmental impact with respect to the findings set forth in Section 35-99.6, below. The two percent area is the maximum area that will be permitted to be taken out of agricultural production and committed to residential and related accessory uses. Included in the two percent area calculation are: residential units, new roads (excluding existing paved roads),

parking areas, structural coverage for non-agricultural buildings, private open space such as yards or gardens, etc.

2. A minimum of one percent of the gross acreage, including the dry sandy beach, shall be dedicated for public recreation and access and reserved for commercial visitor-serving facilities. Said one percent area shall not be required to be a contiguous area.

# Appendix B

## Other Jurisdictions Visual Resources Policy Compendium

### Humboldt County

#### Land Use Element

#### Policies

- UL-P20 Landscaping. All designs shall screen or soften the visual impact of new development through the use of landscaping. If appropriate, species common to the area and known fire resistant plants should be used.

#### Standards

- RL-P7 Clustered Rural Residential Development. Clustered rural residential development is encouraged on rural lands suitable for development consistent with planned densities. Density bonuses may be provided where significant permanent land dedications are secured.
- FR-S1 Planned Rural Development Program Clustering Incentive Options: The Planned Rural Development Program shall be a voluntary incentive based program. To qualify, identified homesite parcels must be clustered to minimize conflicts with timber harvesting and impacts to water resources, biological resources, wildland fire potential. Right-to-harvest agreements shall be secured on lands proposed for conversion to residential uses. The remaining lands most suitable for continued timber production shall be retained for permanent commercial timber production.

Tier 1 clustering program	
Density credit	Twice the existing entitlements when 90% of timberlands are protected
Protection instrument	B7 zoning or permanent conservation easement on remainder
Rezone homesite parcels	County to conduct re-zone
Tier II clustering program	
Density credit	3 times existing entitlements when 95% of timberlands are protected

Protection instrument	Permanent conservation easement on remainder
Rezone homesite parcels	County to conduct re-zone

Conservation Element

Policies

- SR-P1. Development in Identified Scenic Viewsheds. In identified scenic areas, new development shall be consistent with and subordinate to natural contours including slopes, visible hilltops and treelines, and bluffs and rock outcroppings. Visible disturbance shall be minimized to the extent feasible.
- SR-P2. Heritage Landscapes. Protect the scenic quality of mapped heritage landscape areas with appropriate land use designations and design review standards to ensure that new development preserves or enhances the heritage landscape values of the site.
- SR-P3. Scenic Roadway Protection. Protect the scenic quality of designated scenic roadways for the enjoyment of natural and scenic resources, landmarks, or points of historic and cultural interest.

Standards

- SR-S2. Scenic and Visual Quality Protection. Consider and protect the scenic and visual qualities of scenic areas as a resource of public importance. Permitted development shall be sited and designed to protect views to and along scenic areas, to minimize the alteration of natural land forms, to be visually compatible with the character of surrounding areas, and where feasible, to restore and enhance visual quality in visually degraded areas.
- SR-S1. Natural Landform Protection. Natural contours, including slopes, visible hilltops and treelines, and bluffs and rock outcroppings, shall not suffer beyond the minimum feasible disturbance compatible with development of any permitted use, and the following standards shall, at a minimum, secure these objectives:

A. Under any permitted alteration of natural landforms during construction, mineral extraction, or other approved development, the topography shall be restored to as close to natural contours as possible, and the area planted with attractive vegetation common to the area.

B. In permitted development, land form alteration for access roads and public utilities shall be minimized by running hillside roads and utility corridors along natural contours where feasible, and the optional waiving of minimum street width requirements, where proposed development densities

or use of one-way circulation patterns make this consistent with public safety, in order that necessary hillside roads may be as narrow as possible.

### Community Plans

#### Garberville Redway Benbow Alderpoint Community Plan

- GRCP-P7 Clustered Homesites for Mitchell Ranch and Tooby Flats. For the Mitchell Ranch and Tooby Flat area, homesites shall be clustered in order to: (1) maintain the maximum feasible agriculturally productive areas; (2) minimize viewshed impacts; (3) avoid archaeological resources; and (4) reduce grading and construction impacts. Subdivision design should also consider incorporation of agriculturally related recreational amenities such as horse stables to provide a centralized location for community facilities such as the Community Center and library, and other public or quasi-public uses. The zoning has not been changed in order to maintain property rights prior to the development of such facilities. When the development of key facilities takes place, the zoning should be changed to insure compatibility of future uses.

#### Jacoby Creek Community Plan

- JC-P12 Residential Uses. A variety of housing types and densities should be encouraged to be located within the Urban Limit Line. New residential development shall be compatible with the scale of existing development. Clustering and individual home ownerships on large lots held in common should be encouraged

### Local Coastal Plan

#### North Coast Area Plan

##### Polices

- 3.22 Public Works. New or expanded public works facilities shall be designated and limited to accommodate needs generated by development or uses permitted consistent with the provisions of this division; provided, however, that it is the intent of the Legislature that State Highway Route 1 in rural areas of the coastal zone remain a scenic two-lane road
- 3.32 C. Public Roadway Projects. Public roadway improvement projects shall not, either individually or cumulatively, degrade environmentally sensitive habitats or coastal scenic areas
- 3.42. Visual Resource Protection. The scenic and visual qualities of coastal areas shall be considered and protected as a resource of public

importance. Permitted development shall be sited and designed to protect views to and along the ocean and scenic coastal areas, to minimize the alteration of natural land forms, to be visually compatible with the character of surrounding areas, and, where feasible, to restore and enhance visual quality in visually degraded areas. New development in highly scenic areas such as these designated in the California Coastline Preservation and Recreation Plan prepared by the Department of Parks and by local government shall be subordinate to the character of its setting.

- 3.42 A. Physical Scale and Visual Compatibility

1. No development shall be approved that is not compatible with the physical scale of development as designated in the zoning for the subject parcel; and the following criteria shall be determinative in establishing the compatibility of the proposed development:

c. for proposed development that is not the principle permitted use, or that is outside an urban limit and for other than detached residential, agricultural uses, or forestry activities regulated by CDF that the proposed development is compatible with the principle permitted use, and, in addition is either:

(1) No greater in height or bulk than is permitted for the principle use, and is otherwise compatible with the styles and visible materials of existing development or land forms in the immediate neighborhood, where such development is visible from the nearest public road.

(2) Where the project cannot feasibly conform to paragraph 1, and no other more feasible location exists, that the exterior design, and landscaping be subject to a public hearing, and shall be approved only when:

(a) There is no less environmentally damaging feasible alternative location.

(b) The proposed exterior design, and landscaping are sufficient to assure compatibility with the physical scale established by surrounding development;

- 3.42 C. Coastal Scenic Areas

1. In Coastal scenic Areas as designated in the Area Plan, it is the intent of these regulations that all development be subordinate to the character of the designated area, and to the scenic use and enjoyment of public recreational lands within these areas; and the following uniform standards and conditions shall apply to all development within said areas, in addition to the standards identified in the Area Plan:

a. New industrial and public facility development shall be limited to:

(1) Temporary storage of materials and equipment for the purpose of road and utility repair or

improvement provided that this is necessary to the repair or improvement, and no feasible site for storage of equipment or material is available outside such area.

(2) Underground utilities, telephone lines, and above ground power lines less than 30 KV.

b. Commercial uses shall be approved only where permitted by the Area Plan and zoning, and only such uses as serve the ordinary needs of tourist or recreational users of the area shall be permitted, as follows:

(1) Recreational Vehicle parks, and private campgrounds.

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c. All permitted development shall be subject to the following standards for siting and design for structures integral to agricultural use and timberland management subject to CDF requirements for special treatment areas.

(1) Siding and roofing materials shall not be of reflective materials, exception glass and corrugated roofing. Solar collectors for onsite use shall be permitted and exempt from this standard.

(2) The highest point of a structure shall not exceed 30' vertically measured from the highest point of the foundation, nor 40' from the lowest point of the foundation.

(3) Setbacks from property lines and public roads shall be as established in the Area Plan, except that in no case shall such setbacks be less than 50' from a public road, nor 30' from a property line. In areas significantly developed, 50% or greater, where the setback shall be the average of the setbacks of existing structures.

(4) Exterior lighting shall be shielded so that it is not directed beyond the boundaries of the parcel.

(5) Clearings for new homesites planned for Rural Residential development shall be limited.

(6) Timber harvests and activities related to timber management exempt from CDF regulations shall conform to timber harvesting visual standards for Special Treatment Areas.

d. Proposed development which cannot satisfy these prescriptive standards but is in conformance and compatible with the goals and objectives of this section and the area plan may be submitted to the Design Assistance Committee for review and recommendation to the Planning Commission (Resolution 83-57, 3/15/83).

- 3.42 D. Coastal View Areas

1. In Coastal View Areas as designated in the Area Plan, it is the intent of these regulations that no development shall block coastal views to the detriment of the public; and the following uniform standards and conditions shall apply to all development other than agricultural development and timberland management subject to CDF requirements for special treatment areas in said areas, and to specified developments in Coastal Scenic Areas, in addition to standards identified in the Area Plans:

a. No off-premise signs shall be permitted; and on-premise signs to a total area of 40 square feet

shall be permitted. Existing billboards (offsite signs) shall be phased out where feasible.

b. Where the use is residential, and a proposed development is between the coast, a coastal waterway, or a Coastal Scenic Area, and a coastal road affording a view of the coast, coastal waterway, or Coastal Scenic Area at that point, a development shall be approved subject to the standards of this document only on the following conditions:

(1) The development is not visible from the road or would not block any part of the view; or

(2) Where the development cannot be sited to prevent blocking any part of the view, that its height does not exceed 20 feet nor its width perpendicular to the line of view 40 feet, and that it is set back from the road at least 50 feet, and from property lines vertical to the road at least 30 feet; and

(3) The following specific policies shall only apply to development in the Big Lagoon Estates:

(a) In order to minimize visual impact and view obstruction seaward from Ocean View avenue, all utilities will be undergrounded from existing poles to any new developments on all lots within the subdivision.

(b) Outdoor lighting shall be directed in a downward direction and light rays shall not exceed the property boundaries.

c. Where the principal use is commercial or industrial, the proposal shall include a detailed plan for exterior design of all structures and signs, location and intensity of outdoor lighting, parking, and landscaping, and this plan shall be the subject of public hearing at which the following findings shall be made:

(1) That the development does not block any part of the view to the coast, coastal waterway, or Coastal Scenic Area; except that an industrial use that is both coastal-dependent and dependent on the particular site in question shall only meet this requirement where feasible.

(2) That the exterior design, lighting and landscaping combine to render the overall appearance compatible with the natural setting as seen from the road.

(3) That no development, other than landscaping, signs, utilities, wells, fences and a driveway for access to the public road where required, be located within 50 feet of the public road.

(4) That all feasible steps have been taken to minimize the visibility of parking areas from the public road.

(5) Exterior lighting shall be shielded so that it is not directed beyond the boundaries of the parcel.

(6) In addition to the provisions of this section, new development in areas planned for commercial recreation at MacDonald Creek shall be consistent with the provisions of Section 4.52B of the plan.

d. Uses other than these defined in "a" through "c" of this section shall be subject to the requirements of section in so far as these are relevant.

e. Proposed development which cannot satisfy these prescriptive standards but is in conformance and compatible with the goals and objectives of this

section and the area plan may be submitted to the Design Assistance Committee for review and recommendation to the Planning Commission (Resolution 83- 57, 3/15/83).

- 3.42. E. Design Assistance Committee

New development proposed within Coastal Scenic Areas and/or Coastal View Areas which cannot satisfy the prescriptive standards listed in Sections 3.42C and 3.42D, respectively, shall be referred to the Design Assistance Committee. The Design Assistance Committee, as defined in the implementation phase of the Local Coastal Program, shall ensure that the proposed development is compatible with the goals and objectives of this plan. Findings for approval shall include (Resolution No. 83-57, 3/15/83).

1. Consistency and compatibility with applicable elements of the County's general plan;
2. Alteration of natural landforms caused by cutting, filling, grading or clearing necessary for a building site is minimized and, as appropriate, integrated with the project.
3. That setbacks from roads and property lines are appropriate to protect the scenic and visual qualities of the site;
4. Exterior lighting is compatible with the surroundings and is not directed beyond the boundaries of the parcel;
5. Vegetation common to the area should be used to integrate the manmade with the natural environment, to screen and soften the visual impact;
6. Where feasible, new and existing utilities should be underground. When above-ground facilities are the only alternative, they should be as unobtrusive as possible;
7. Off-premise signs, which are needed to direct visitor to commercial recreation as permitted in the area plan, shall be attractively designed in keeping with the surroundings and clustered at appropriate locations. Such clustered signs should have a single design theme;
8. Timber harvest and activities related to timber management exempt from CDF regulations shall conform to timber harvesting visual standards for Special Treatment Areas;
9. Where views from public roads to the coast or coastal waterways are of concern, the height, width, and setbacks from roads and parcel lines shall be considered to retain as much of the existing view as is possible;
10. Views from public trails, beaches, or public recreation areas into the development site shall also be considered; and
11. Solar collectors for on-site use shall be exempt from this review.

## Humboldt Bay Area Plan

- 3.14B6 Electrical Transmission Lines

The California Public Utilities Commission (PUC) and the California Energy Commission are the agencies responsible for review and approval of transmission lines which includes technical and safety performance and environmental concerns. The CPUC has the authority to regulate all service, design, construction, and related activities of electrical utilities including the location and method of construction of transmission and distribution facilities. All transmission lines proposed for the coastal zone are considered developments under the Coastal Act, thus the County will have permit review authority based on the following policies.

a. Transmission line rights-of-way shall be routed to minimize impacts on the viewshed in the coastal zone, especially in highly scenic areas, and to avoid locations which are on or near habitat, recreational, or archaeological resources, whenever feasible. Scarring, grading, or other vegetative removal shall be minimized and revegetated with plants similar to those in the area.

b. Where above-ground transmission line placement would unavoidably affect views, undergrounding shall be required where it is technically and economically feasible unless it can be shown that other alternatives are less environmentally damaging. When above-ground facilities are necessary, design of the support towers shall be compatible with the surroundings to the extent safety and economic considerations allow.

c. Above-ground transmission lines should be sited so as to minimize visual impacts.

d. Siting of transmission lines should avoid the crests of roadways to minimize their visibility on distant views. Where visual impacts would be minimized, lines should cross the roadway at a downhill low elevation site or a curve in the road.

e. New major steel tower electrical transmission facilities should be consolidated with existing electrical steel-tower transmission facilities unless there are social, aesthetic or significant economic concerns.

f. Existing rights-of-way should be utilized for other related utilities to provide consolidated corridors wherever such uses are compatible or feasible.

g. Access and construction roads should be located to minimize landform alterations. Road grades and alignments should follow the contour of the land with smooth, gradual curves where possible.

#### 5. Highway 101 Corridor

The Humboldt County Board of Supervisors shall initiate the preparation of a Scenic Route Study pursuant to the adopted Scenic Highways Element of the Humboldt County General Plan for the portion of Highway 101 between Eureka and Arcata and that portion south of Fields Landing, inclusively.

The Scenic Route Study shall be prepared by the County Planning Department in cooperation with the California Department of Transportation. The content of the Study is outlined in Appendix E. A special emphasis of the study shall include opportunities for Cal-Trans, the County, and the Humboldt Bay Harbor and Conservation District to eliminate billboarding between Eureka and Arcata, through acquisition and other means, and to identify suitable areas for clustered signing.

New off-site signs may be permitted in suitable areas identified in a County and State Coastal Commission approved Scenic Route Study.

## Marin County

### Marin County Single-family Residential Design Guidelines (adopted 2005)

Design guidelines that may also be relevant to visual resource issues on the Gaviota Coast include:

- D-1.1 *General Massing*. Buildings should be divided into smaller parts, including detached buildings (e.g. garage, guest house), to reduce effective visual bulk. This is especially important in visible hillside settings.
- D-1.2 *Roof Designs*. Roof forms and roof lines should be broken into a series of smaller building components when viewed from the street to reflect the scale of the neighborhood, site, or hillside setting. Long, linear unbroken rooflines that exceed 50 feet are discouraged. This is especially important in visible hillside settings.
- D-1.5 *Hillside Design*. . . . Buildings should be cut into the hillside to reduce effective visual bulk. Excavate underground or use below grade rooms to reduce effective bulk and to provide energy-efficient and environmentally-desirable spaces. . . The slope of most of the roof should be oriented in the same direction as the natural slope . . . roof on lower levels should be used for the deck open space of upper levels.
- D-1.6 *Ridgelines and Knolls* . . . Buildings should not be located near visually-prominent ridgelines when other feasible locations are available. The development of new structures should be prohibited within 100 vertical feet and 300 horizontal feet of ridgelines and knolls, except in those cases where no other location is available or the County determines that circumstances may warrant greater flexibility in siting.

### *Design Review Process*

Marin County Zoning Code (Ch. 22.82) requires design review for all new buildings, structures and physical improvements and relocation, addition, extension and exterior changes of or to existing buildings, structures and physical improvement. Matters exempt from design review include:

1. Single-family dwellings in A, A-2, R-A, R-R, R-E, R-1, R-2 and R-3 zoning districts that contain four thousand square feet of floor

- area<sup>1</sup> or less and are thirty feet in height or less, except as required pursuant to any section of this title;
2. Agricultural buildings, structures, improvements and developments which are three hundred feet or more distant from a property line of abutting property, in separate ownerships, and which, in addition, are three hundred feet or more distant from a street;
  3. Signs other than those included in plans for a matter subject to design review;
  4. Other work determined by the planning director to be minor or incidental and within the intent and objectives of this chapter;
  5. Repairs or reconstruction work needed because of an emergency or natural disaster.

#### *Design Review Findings*

For the planning director, zoning administrator, planning commission, or board of supervisors to approve a design review, it shall be necessary that the following findings be made:

1. It is consistent with the countywide plan and any applicable community plan and local coastal program;
2. It will properly and adequately perform or satisfy its functional requirements without being unsightly or creating substantial disharmony with its locale and surroundings;
3. It will not impair, or interfere with, the development, use, or enjoyment of other property in the vicinity, or the orderly and pleasing development of the neighborhood as a whole, including public lands and rights-of-way;
4. It will not directly, or in a cumulative fashion, impair, inhibit or limit further investment or improvements in the vicinity, on the same or other properties, including public lands and rights-of-way;
5. It will be properly and adequately landscaped with maximum retention of trees and other natural material;
6. It will minimize or eliminate adverse physical or visual effects which might otherwise result from unplanned or inappropriate development, design or juxtaposition. Adverse effects may include, but are not limited to, those produced by the design and location characteristics of:

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<sup>1</sup> Floor area, as a function of triggering Design Review through Development Code standards, is measured based upon total floor area of a single-family residence, enclosed garage space, and all enclosed accessory structures.

7. The scale, mass, height, area and materials of buildings and structures,
8. Drainage systems and appurtenant structures,
9. Cut and fill or the reforming of the natural terrain, and structures appurtenant thereto such as retaining walls and bulkheads,
10. Areas, paths and rights-of-way for the containment, movement or general circulation of persons, animals, vehicles, conveyances and watercraft,
11. Other developments or improvements which may result in a diminution or elimination of sun and light exposure, views, vistas and privacy;
12. It may contain roof overhang, roofing material, and siding material that are compatible both with the principles of energy-conserving design and with the prevailing architectural style in the neighborhood.

*Nicasio Valley Planning Area Development and Design Guidelines (September 1997)*

The small, rural community of Nicasio is located in the western part of Marin County and it contains abundant natural resources and a history of agricultural operations. In the late 1970's, Nicasio Valley was on the threshold of a land use change from isolated ranching and dairy country to 'rural residential' development and therefore decided to create a Community Plan to help prevent such a change.

The setting of the valley and its proximity to an urban center make it an attractive location for affluent person to purchase property for single family use. The community was concerned about the design and siting of new residential development and about the decreasing amount of available agricultural land in light of a trend of subdivisions of large land holdings into 30 to 60 acre residential parcels.

The Nicasio Valley Community Plan goals are to encourage the preservation of agricultural land and protection of the natural beauty of the area while permitting development consistent with the plan policies and zoning regulations. The Development and Design Guidelines, created in the 1990's, include planning tools such as the use of Transfer of Development Rights (TDR), clustering of residential and agricultural support structures, minimization of grading, and equestrian land use guidelines.

# Mendocino County

## Coastal Element

### Clustering

This combining district allows for the grouping of dwellings in suitable areas when requested by the property owner as opposed to even dispersal over a larger area, enhancing and protecting the natural resources of a site while providing a buffer to adjacent resource lands. In the dwelling group all the units are developed on one parcel. This arrangement accommodates those desiring a joint development of land, a family living situation, or to provide housing for employees. Additionally, dwelling group clustering protects the productive portions of major holdings, preserves open space and reduces development costs. This special combining district is intended to be used only in conjunction with lands designated RL, FL, AG, RMR and RR-10.

A density increase of 10% and/or an application fee waiver may be utilized by the County in reviewing applications for clustering. Density increases shall be consistent with other policies of this plan, health and safety regulations and feasibility of adequate public service delivery.

### Land Use Plan Policies

- **3.5-1** State Highway 1 in rural areas of the Mendocino County coastal zone shall remain a scenic two-lane road. The scenic and visual qualities of Mendocino County coastal areas shall be considered and protected as a resource of public importance. Permitted development shall be sited and designed to protect views to and along the ocean and scenic coastal areas, to minimize the alteration of natural land forms, to be visually compatible with the character of surrounding areas and, where feasible, to restore

and enhance visual quality in visually degraded areas. New development in highly scenic areas designated by the County of Mendocino Coastal Element shall be subordinate to the character of its setting.

**3.5-3** The visual resource areas listed below are those which have been identified on the land use maps and shall be designated as "highly scenic areas," within which new development shall be subordinate to the character of its setting. Any development permitted in these areas shall provide for the protection of ocean and coastal views from public areas including highways, roads, coastal trails, vista points, beaches, parks, coastal streams, and waters used for recreational purposes.

**3.5-4** Buildings and building groups that must be sited within the highly scenic area shall be sited near the toe of a slope, below rather than on a ridge, or in or near the edge of a wooded area. Except for farm buildings, development in the middle of large open areas shall be avoided if an alternative site exists.

Minimize visual impact of development on hillsides by (1) requiring grading or construction to follow the natural contours; (2) resiting or prohibiting new development that requires grading, cutting and filling that would significantly and permanently alter or destroy the appearance of natural landforms; (3) designing structures to fit hillside sites rather than altering landform to accommodate buildings designed for level sites; (4) concentrate development near existing major vegetation, and (5) promote roof angles and exterior finish which blend with hillside. Minimize visual impacts of development on terraces by (1) avoiding development in large open areas if alternative site exists; (2) minimize the number of structures and cluster them near existing vegetation, natural landforms or artificial berms; (3) provide bluff setbacks for development adjacent to or near

**3.5-5** Providing that trees will not block coastal views from public areas such as roads, parks and trails, tree planting to screen buildings shall be encouraged. In specific areas, identified and adopted on the land use plan maps, trees currently blocking views to and along the coast shall be required to be removed or thinned as a condition of new development in those specific areas. New development shall not allow trees to block ocean views.

In circumstances in which concentrations of trees unreasonably obstruct views of the ocean, tree thinning or removal shall be made a condition of permit approval. In the enforcement of this requirement, it shall be recognized that trees often enhance views of the ocean area, commonly serve a valuable purpose in screening structures, and in the control of erosion and the undesirable growth of underbrush.

**3.5-6** Development on a parcel located partly within the highly scenic areas delineated on the Land Use Maps shall be located on the portion outside the viewshed if feasible. Highly scenic areas delineation is approximate and shall be subject to review and correction if necessary at the time of a land development proposal or application.

Where representatives of the County Planning Department, the California Coastal Commission, or the applicant are uncertain about the boundaries of the viewshed on any parcel such disagreements shall be investigated by an on-site inspection by the landowner and/or agents, County Planning Department staff member, and a representative of the California Coastal Commission.

The on-site inspection shall be coordinated by the County Planning Department and will take place within 3 weeks, weather and site conditions permitting, of

the receipt of a written request from the landowner/agent for clarification of viewshed boundaries.

If all of the members of this group agree that the boundaries of the scenic resource in question should be adjusted following the site inspection, such development should be approved only upon specific findings that the scenic resource as identified will not be significantly degraded by the proposed development. If such findings cannot be made, the development shall be denied.

If it appears that the highly scenic area delineation should be substantially extended reduced to include or exclude areas adjacent to those presently designated "highly scenic" to protect the scenic resource, this shall be accomplished through the plan amendment process.

**3.5-8** Power transmission lines shall be located along established corridors. Elsewhere transmission lines shall be located to minimize visual prominence. Where overhead transmission lines cannot be located along established corridors, and are visually intrusive within a "highly scenic area", the lines shall be placed underground west of Highway One and below ridgelines east of Highway One if technically feasible. Certain lines shall, over time, be relocated or placed underground in accord with PUC regulations (see Big River Planning Area Policy 4.7-3 and Policy 3.11-9).

Distribution lines shall be underground in new subdivisions.

**3.5-9** The location of all new access roads and driveways in rural areas shall be reviewed prior to any grading work to ensure safe location and minimum visual disturbance. Direct access to Highway 1 shall not be permitted where it is feasible to connect to an existing or proposed public road or to combine access points for two or more parcels.

#### Coastal Zoning Code

#### Visual Resource and Special Treatment Areas

(C) Development Criteria.

(1) Any development permitted in highly scenic areas shall provide for the protection of coastal views from public areas including highways, roads, coastal trails, vista points, beaches, parks, coastal streams, and waters used for recreational purposes.

(2) In highly scenic areas west of Highway 1 as identified on the Coastal Element land use plan maps, new development shall be limited to eighteen (18) feet above natural grade, unless an increase in height would not affect public views to the ocean or be out of character with surrounding structures.

(3) New development shall be subordinate to the natural setting and minimize reflective surfaces. In highly scenic areas, building materials including siding

and roof materials shall be selected to blend in hue and brightness with their surroundings.

(4) All proposed divisions of land and boundary line adjustments within highly scenic areas shall be analyzed for consistency of potential future development with the regulations of this Chapter, and no division of land or boundary line adjustment shall be approved if development of resulting parcel(s) would be inconsistent with this Chapter.

(5) Buildings and building groups that must be sited in highly scenic areas shall be sited:

- (a) Near the toe of a slope;
- (b) Below rather than on a ridge; and
- (c) In or near a wooded area.

(6) Minimize visual impact of development on hillsides by the following criteria:

- (a) Requiring grading or construction to follow the natural contours;
- (b) Resiting or prohibiting new development that requires grading, cutting and filling that would significantly and permanently alter or destroy the appearance of natural landforms;
- (c) Designing structures to fit hillside sites rather than altering landform to accommodate buildings designed for level sites;
- (d) Concentrate development near existing major vegetation, and
- (e) Promote roof angles and exterior finish which blend with hillside.

(7) Minimize visual impacts of development on terraces by the following criteria:

- (a) Avoiding development, other than farm buildings, in large open areas if alternative site exists;
- (b) Minimize the number of structures and cluster them near existing vegetation, natural landforms or artificial berms;
- (c) Provide bluff setbacks for development adjacent to or near public areas along the shoreline;
- (d) Design development to be in scale with rural character of the area.

(8) Minimize visual impact of development on ridges by the following criteria:

- (a) Prohibiting development that projects above the ridgeline;
- (b) If no alternative site is available below the ridgeline, development shall be sited and designed to reduce visual impacts by utilizing existing vegetation, structural orientation, landscaping, and shall be limited to a single story above the natural elevation;
- (c) Prohibiting removal of tree masses which destroy the ridgeline silhouette.

(9) In specific areas, as designated on the Land Use Maps and other circumstances in which concentrations of trees unreasonably obstruct views to and along the ocean and scenic coastal areas, tree thinning or removal shall be made a condition of permit approval.

(10) Tree planting to screen buildings shall be encouraged, however, new development shall not allow trees to interfere with coastal/ocean views from public areas.

- (11) Power transmission lines shall be located along established corridors where possible and where the corridors are not visually intrusive.
- (12) Power distribution lines shall be placed underground in designated "highly scenic areas" west of Highway 1 and in new subdivisions. East of Highway 1, power lines shall be placed below ridgelines if technically feasible.
- (13) Access roads and driveways shall be sited such that they cause minimum visual disturbance and shall not directly access Highway 1 where an alternate configuration is feasible. (Ord. No. 3785 (part), adopted 1991)

Sonoma

Zoning Code

Scenic Design Combining District

Scenic Resources Combining District

Sec. 26-64-020. – Community separators and scenic landscape units

(a) All structures, except certain telecommunications facilities as provided for in Section 26-64-040, located within community separators and scenic landscape units illustrated on Figures OS-5a through OS-5i, inclusive, of the general plan open space element and included within the SR district shall be subject to the following criteria:

- (1) Structures shall be sited below exposed ridgelines;
- (2) Structures shall use natural landforms and existing vegetation to screen them from view from public roads. On exposed sites, screening with native, fire resistant plants may be required;
- (3) Cuts and fills are discouraged, and where practical, driveways are screened from public view;
- (4) Utilities are placed underground where economically practical;

The above criteria shall not apply to agricultural accessory structures which do not require a use permit in the district with which this district is combined.

In the event that compliance with these standards would make a parcel unbuildable, structures shall be sited where minimum visual impacts would result.

(b) In addition to the criteria listed in subsection (a) of this section, the following standards shall apply to subdivisions within community separators and scenic landscape units and included within the SR district unless otherwise provided herein:

- (1) Building envelopes shall be established for structures. Use of height limitations should be considered, if necessary to further mitigate visual impacts;
- (2) Clustering shall be used to reduce visual impact where consistent with the applicable base district;

(3) Building sites and roadways shall be located to preserve trees and tree stands as provided in Section 26-88-040(m) of this chapter;

(4) To the extent allowed by law, dedication of a permanent scenic or agricultural easement shall be required at the time of subdivision for projects in community separators. Consider requiring such easements in critical scenic landscape units pursuant to general plan Policy OS-2g.

(c) Where development occurs on parcels located both within scenic landscape units and adjacent to scenic corridors, the more restrictive provisions set forth in this article shall apply.

(d) Additional or varied development may be allowed in designated community separators and scenic landscape units in accordance with general plan Policies OS-1c, and OS-2c, respectively.

(e) Minor timberland conversions shall be allowed within community separators and scenic landscape units, subject to compliance with the requirements of this article and Section 2-88-140.

(f) Certain single-family dwelling units and appurtenant structures within the area covered by the Taylor Mountain/Sonoma Mountain development guidelines shall be subject to Section 26-90-050, as specified therein. Where the provisions of this section conflict with the provisions of Section 26-90-050, the general plan, or any applicable area plan, the more restrictive provisions shall apply.

(Ord. No. 5132 § 2, 1999; Ord. No. 4985 § 1(d), 1996; Ord. No. 4973 § 12(a), 1996; Ord. No. 4643, 1993.)

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Sec. 26-64-030. - Scenic corridors.

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The following provisions shall apply to properties along scenic corridors illustrated on Figures OS-5a through OS-5i, inclusive, of the general plan open space element unless otherwise provided herein:

(a) All structures located within scenic corridors established outside of the urban service area boundaries shown on Figures LU-5a through LU-5i, inclusive, of the general plan land use element shall be subject to the setbacks of thirty percent (30%) of the depth of the lot to a maximum of two hundred feet (200') from the centerline of the road. Development within the setback shall be prohibited with the following exceptions, where such uses are allowed by the base district with which this district is combined:

(1) New barns and similar agricultural support structures which are added to existing farm complexes provided that such structures proposed within a state scenic highway or where local design review exists by community choice in an adopted specific or area plan are subject to design review;

- (2) New barns and similar agricultural support structures which do not require a use permit in this chapter; provided, however, that such structures proposed within a State Scenic Highway or where local design review exists by community choice in an adopted specific or area plan are subject to design review;
  - (3) Maintenance, restoration, reconstruction or minor expansion of existing structures;
  - (4) Certain telecommunication facilities as provided in Section 26-64-040;
  - (5) Other new structures provided they are subject to design review and
    - (i) They are associated with existing structures,
    - (ii) There is no other reasonable location for the structure,
    - (iii) The location within the setback is necessary for the use, or
    - (iv) Existing vegetation and topography screen the use;
  - (6) Compliance with the setback would render the parcel unbuildable;
  - (7) Satellite dishes which are not visible from the roadway.
- (b) Where the scenic corridor setback provided for in Section 26-64-030(a), conflicts with the scenic corridor setback along Highway 12 established by Ordinance 1810, the latter shall apply.
- (c) A building setback of twenty feet (20') shall be applied along the Highway 101 scenic corridor to properties which are within the urban service area boundaries shown on Figures LU-5b, -5c, -5e, -5g, and -5h of the general plan land use element, to be reserved for landscaping.
- (d) Where development occurs on parcels located both within scenic landscape units and adjacent to scenic corridors, the more restrictive provisions set forth in this article shall apply.
- (e) Building permits within the setback established in Section 26-64-030(a) along Bohemian Highway between Occidental and Freestone and Bodega Highway between Bodega and Freestone shall be referred to the county landmarks commission for review and recommendation. (Ord. No. 4973 § 12(b), 1996; Ord. No. 4643, 1993.)

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Sec. 26-64-050. - Design review approval.

- (a) All plans for land divisions or development projects shall be reviewed and approved, conditionally approved, or denied by the planning director on the basis of compliance with the provisions of this article. Where a use permit is required and following design review approval, development plans shall be reviewed and acted upon by the board of zoning adjustments/planning

commission. Where a local citizen's committee has been recognized by the board of supervisors, development plans shall be submitted to such committee for review and advisory recommendation prior to action by the planning director.

(b) For purposes of this section, "development project" means construction, alteration, or modification of a residential, commercial, or industrial structure or appurtenant structure, except as follows. Agricultural uses and structures, including agricultural employee housing and farm family dwellings, are exempt from design review under this section to the extent consistent with the agricultural resources and open space elements of the Sonoma County general plan or other sections of this chapter.

(c) Nothing in this section is intended to trigger the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act beyond what would exist in the absence of this section.

(Ord. 5132 § 3, 1999.)

Open Space and Resource Conservation Element  
Goals & Objectives

- GOAL OSRC-1:** Preserve the visual identities of communities by maintaining open space areas between cities and communities.
- Objective OSRC-1.1:** Preserve important open space areas in the Community Separators shown on Figures OSRC-5a through OSRC-5i of the Open Space and Resource Conservation Element.
- GOAL OSRC-2:** Retain the largely open, scenic character of important Scenic Landscape Units.
- Objective OSRC-2.1:** Retain a rural, scenic character in Scenic Landscape Units with very low intensities of development. Avoid their inclusion within spheres of influence for public service providers.
- Objective OSRC-2.2:** Protect the ridges and crests of prominent hills in Scenic Landscape Units from the silhouetting of structures against the skyline.
- Objective OSRC-2.3:** Protect hills and ridges in Scenic Landscape Units from cuts and fills.
- GOAL OSRC-6:** Preserve the unique rural and natural character of Sonoma County for residents, businesses, visitors and future generations.
- Objective OSRC-6.1:** Develop Rural Character Design Guidelines to achieve the following: preservation of existing site features contributing to rural character; siting of buildings and development features to blend in with the surrounding landscape; and allowance for rural design features in rural areas.

**Objective OSRC-6.2:** Establish Rural Character as a primary criterion for review of discretionary projects, but not including administrative design review for single family homes on existing lots

Policies

**Policy OSRC-1f:** Unless there are existing design guidelines that have been adopted for the affected area, require that new structures within Community Separators meet the following criteria:

- (1) Site and design structures to take maximum advantage of existing topography and vegetation in order to substantially screen them from view from public roads.
- (2) Minimize cuts and fills on hills and ridges.
- (3) Minimize the removal of trees and other mature vegetation; avoid removal of specimen trees, tree groupings, and windbreaks.
- (4) Where existing topography and vegetation would not screen structures from view from public roads, install landscaping consisting of native vegetation in natural groupings that fits with the character of the area in order to substantially screen structures from view. Screening with native, fire retardant plants may be required.
- (5) Design structures to use building materials and color schemes that blend with the natural landscape and vegetation.
- (6) To the extent feasible, cluster structures on each parcel within existing built areas, and near existing natural features such as tree groupings.
- (7) Utilities are underground where economically practical.
- (8) On hills and ridges, avoid structures that project above the silhouette of the hill or ridge against the sky as viewed from public roads, and substantially screen driveways from view where practical.  
Exempt agricultural accessory structures proposed on parcels in the Diverse Agriculture, Land Extensive Agriculture, Land Intensive Agriculture, and Resources and Rural Development land use categories, and on parcels in the Rural Residential land use category with Agriculture and Residential (AR) Zoning, from this policy if their use does not require a use permit in the Development Code. If compliance with these standards would make a parcel unbuildable, site structures where minimum visual impacts would result.

Exempt telecommunication facilities if they meet the siting and design criteria of the Scenic Resources (SR) Zoning District.\*

The following policies, in addition to those of the Land Use Element, shall be used to achieve these objectives:

Policy OSRC-2a: Avoid amendments to increase residential density in Scenic Landscape Units in excess of one unit per ten acres. The land use plan may designate a lower density or larger minimum lot size.\*

Policy OSRC-2b: Avoid commercial or industrial uses in Scenic Landscape Units other than those that are permitted by the agricultural or resource land use categories.\*

Policy OSRC-2c: Apply the Scenic Resources combining district consistent with this element to all lands located within Scenic Landscape Units.\*

Policy OSRC-2d: Unless there are existing design guidelines that have been adopted for the affected area, require that new structures within Scenic Landscape Units meet the following criteria:

(1) Site and design structures to take maximum advantage of existing topography and vegetation in order to substantially screen them from view from public roads.

(2) Minimize cuts and fills on hills and ridges.

(3) Minimize the removal of trees and other mature vegetation. Avoid removal of specimen trees, tree groupings, and windbreaks.

(4) Where existing topography and vegetation would not screen structures from view from public roads, install landscaping consisting of native vegetation in natural groupings that fits with the character of the area in order to substantially screen structures from view. Screening with native, fire retardant plants may be required.

Design structures to use building materials and color schemes that blend with the natural landscape and vegetation.

(6) On hills and ridges, avoid structures that project above the silhouette of the hill or ridge against the sky as viewed from public roads and substantially screen driveways from view where practical.

(7) To the extent feasible, cluster structures on each parcel within existing built areas and near existing natural features such as tree groupings.

Exempt agricultural accessory structures proposed on parcels in the Diverse Agriculture, Land Extensive Agriculture, Land Intensive Agriculture, and Resources and Rural Development land use categories, and on parcels in the Rural Residential land use category with Agriculture and Residential (AR) Zoning, from this policy if their use does not require a use permit in the Development Code. If compliance with these standards would make a parcel unbuildable, site structures where minimum visual impacts would result. Exempt telecommunication facilities if they meet the siting and design criteria of the Scenic Resources (SR) Zoning District.\*

**Policy OSRC-6a:** Develop design guidelines for discretionary projects in rural areas, but not including administrative design review for single family homes on existing lots, that protect and reflect the rural character of Sonoma County. Use the following general design principles until these Design Guidelines are adopted, while assuring that Design Guidelines for agricultural support uses on agricultural lands are consistent with Policy AR-9h of the Agricultural Resources Element.

- (1) New structures blend into the surrounding landscape, rather than stand out.
- (2) Landscaping is included and is designed to blend in with the character of the area.
- (3) Paved areas are minimized and allow for informal parking areas.
- (4) Adequate space is provided for natural site amenities.
- (5) Exterior lighting and signage is minimized.\*

# San Mateo County

## General Plan

The County will:

### 4.1 Protection of Visual Quality

- a. Protect and enhance the natural visual quality of San Mateo County.
- b. Encourage positive visual quality for all development and minimize adverse visual impacts.
- c. Encourage citizen awareness and interest in San Mateo County's scenic resources.

### 4.2 Protection of Shorelines

- a. Protect and enhance the visual quality of and from shorelines of bodies of water including lakes, reservoirs, streams, bays, ocean, sloughs.
- b. Maximize the preservation of significant public ocean views.

### 4.15 Supplemental Design Guidelines for Communities

Encourage the preparation of supplemental site and architectural design guidelines for communities that include, but are not limited to, criteria that reflect local conditions, characteristics and design objectives and are flexible enough to allow individual creativity.

### 4.21 Scenic Corridors

Protect and enhance the visual quality of scenic corridors by managing the location and appearance of structural development.

### 4.23 Rural Development Design Concept.

Regulate the location and siting of structures in rural areas to encourage positive visual quality in relation to the scenic character of the natural landscape.

## Rural Site Planning

### 4.24 Location of Structures

- a. Locate, site and design all structures and paved areas to carefully conform with the natural vegetation, landforms and topography of the site so that their presence is compatible with the pre-existing character of the site.
- b. Locate and design future structures to minimize the impacts of noise, light, glare and odors on adjacent properties and roads.
- c. Locate structures adjacent to or in forested areas rather than in open grasslands, wherever possible and make compatible with timber harvesting activities and use of solar energy.

#### 4.25 Earthwork Operations

- a. Keep grading or earth-moving operations to a minimum.
- b. Where grading is necessary, make graded areas blend with adjacent landforms through the use of contour grading rather than harsh cutting or terracing of the site.

#### 4.29 Landscaping and Screening

- a. Provide a smooth transition between development and adjacent forested or open space areas through the use of landscaping.
- b. Limit landscaping in open grasslands to areas immediately surrounding structures.
- c. Where it is appropriate to screen uses from view, use natural vegetation rather than solid fencing.

#### 4.30 Public Utilities

Encourage the placement of new and existing public utility lines underground.

#### 4.31 Roads

Locate and develop roads which are integrated well with the physical environment.

#### 4.32 Rural Design Review District

Regulate the site planning of all development in rural areas by using a consolidated set of design standards.

### ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN STANDARDS FOR RURAL SCENIC CORRIDORS

#### 4.47 Topography and Vegetation

Design structures which conform to the natural topography and blend rather than conflict with the natural vegetation.

#### 4.48 Scale

Design structures which are compatible in size and scale with their building site and surrounding environment, including adjacent man-made or natural features.

### SITE PLANNING FOR RURAL SCENIC CORRIDORS

#### 4.56 Cluster Development

In scenic corridors, discourage high density clustering or grouping of residential uses which are highly visible from the road.

#### 4.66 Fences

Encourage fences which minimize visual impact.

### Rural Land Use Plan

The Skyline amendment also established clear policy direction for the preservation of the open space character of the rural area by adopting policies aimed at conserving and protecting the visual, timber and watershed resources which give the area its unique character, and establishing compatible land use designations that are consistent with this goal.<sup>36</sup> The policies did not result in zoning changes in the rural lands, but rather directed that the impacts of new development activity on the area's scenic and timber resources be carefully monitored on an ongoing basis

### Visual Quality

#### GREENHOUSE STRUCTURES

Greenhouses, glass one-story structures used to grow flowers, present a unique problem in managing the visual quality of the landscape. The architectural features, construction materials, colors and siting requirements for these buildings are often perceived as visually unattractive. Typically, greenhouses are rectangular or cylindrical in shape, long, one story in height and have glass walls and roofs that are painted white. Greenhouses are usually developed in uniformly aligned groupings in sunny, open areas. Because the appearance and siting of these structures tends to be totally dissimilar to surrounding natural landscape features, the visual effect is often obtrusive. To mitigate the impact upon the visual quality of the landscape, the following siting techniques should be considered: staggered rather than uniform placement to lessen the massiveness; vegetative or bermed screening and imaginative painting.

### Zoning Ordinance

#### Resource Management District

In San Mateo County, the largest amount of rural land is in the RM and RM/CZ zoning districts. The RM zone is a general open space zone that allows, by right, agricultural and low density residential uses. Other uses such as hotels, restaurants and commercial recreation facilities are allowed upon securing a use permit. Density is determined by an analysis of the environmental factors in a density matrix, including slope, floodplains and geologic hazards. There is no minimum lot size. Rather, density credits allowed by the evaluation of different environmental factors can be distributed in the manner best achieving the conservation of scenic and resource values. Clustering of development is encouraged in this zoning district. In addition to the density analysis, each proposed project must conform to a series of environmental review criteria. In the Coastal Zone, a large amount of rural land is in the RM/CZ zoning district. This zoning district has different density matrix criteria and, due to the more sensitive nature of the land resources, a different set of environmental review criteria for each proposed project.

Significant Tree Ordinance (Section 12,030)

Requires permit to cut, remove or destroy trees within 100' from R-O-W of any scenic road. Requires Planning Commission approval to substantially alter vegetation within a scenic corridor.

# Santa Cruz County

## General Plan

### Conservation and Open Space Element

#### 5.10.8 Significant Tree Removal Ordinance

(LCP) Maintain the standards in the County's existing ordinance which regulates the removal of significant trees and other major vegetation in the Coastal Zone, and provide appropriate protection for significant trees and other major vegetation in areas of the County located within the Urban Services Line.

## Land Use Element

### Objective 2.22 Coastal Dependent Development

(LCP) To ensure priority for coastal-dependent and coastal-related development over other development on the coast.

#### Policies 2.22.1 Priority of Uses within the Coastal Zone

(LCP) Maintain a hierarchy of land use priorities within the Coastal Zone:

First Priority: Agriculture and coastal-dependent industry

Second Priority: Recreation, including public parks; visitor serving commercial uses; and coastal recreation facilities.

Third Priority: Private residential, general industrial, and general commercial uses.

#### 2.22.2 Maintaining Priority Uses

(LCP) Prohibit the conversion of any existing priority use to another use, except for another use of equal or higher priority.

#### 2.3.4 Rural Development Clustering

(LCP) Where proposed development on an existing parcel of record exceeds a density of one dwelling

(or equivalent) per parcel, require development envelopes to be clustered as appropriate to minimize grading, impervious surfaces, and overall site disturbance.

## Community Design Element

### Objective 8.6 Building Design

To encourage building design that addresses the neighborhood and community context; utilizes scale appropriate to adjacent development; and incorporates design elements that are appropriate to surrounding uses and the type of land use planned for the area.

#### **8.6.4 Review of Large Dwellings**

Recognize that large single residences may have significant adverse visual impacts on the community and require new single-family residences larger than 7,000 square feet in floor area and additions larger than 10 percent of residential structures larger than 7,000 square feet in floor area to be consistent with all design criteria of the Visual Resources section of the General Plan and LCP Land Use Plan and the Zoning ordinance.

#### **8.6.5 Designing With the Environment**

Development shall maintain a complementary relationship with the natural environment and shall be low-profile and stepped-down on hillsides.

#### **8.6.6 Protecting Ridgetops and Natural Landforms**

(LCP) Protect ridgetops and prominent natural landforms such as cliffs, bluffs, dunes, rock outcroppings, and other significant natural features from development. In connection with discretionary review, apply the following criteria:

- (a) Development on ridgetops shall be avoided if other developable land exists on the property.
- (b) Prohibit the removal of tree masses when such removal would erode the silhouette of the ridgeline form. Consider the cumulative effects of tree removal on the ridgeline silhouette.
- (c) Restrict the height and placement of buildings and structures to prevent their projection above the ridgeline or treeline. Restrict structures and structural projections adjacent to prominent natural land forms. Prohibit the creation of new parcels which would require structures to project above the ridgeline, treeline or along the edge of prominent natural landforms. (See Visual Resources section within the Conservation and Open Space chapter.)
- (d) Require exterior materials and colors to blend with the natural landform and tree backdrops. With respect to the issuance of administrative permits, advise all applicants that they should design and site their structures to conform to the above policies.

#### **Objective 8.7 Landscape Design**

To ensure that landscaping relates to the building and site design, site conditions, and adjacent properties; and that plant materials are suitable to the design and site conditions.

#### **Policies**

##### **8.7.1 Landscape Conditions for Development**

When landscaping is required as a condition of permit approval, utilize the Zoning ordinance and the Urban Forestry Master Plan as a guide to require the landscape design to relate to the building and the site design; require plant materials appropriate to the site conditions with consideration for growth

pattern, color, texture, solar access, maintenance, and water conservation; and require fencing, walls, site furniture and lighting to be designed to be integral and compatible elements of the building and landscape design.

### **8.7.2 Utilize Native Species in Rural Areas**

Require as a condition of development permit approval, revegetation and landscaping for rural projects to utilize drought tolerant species with a predominance of plants being native species appropriate to the site and recommend these landscape practices for ministerial permit projects.

## Title 13 Planning and Zoning Regulations

### Zoning Regulations (13.10)

13.10.325 Large dwelling permit requirements and design guidelines.

(a) Approvals. No residential structure shall be constructed which will result in 7,000 square feet of floor area or larger, exclusive of accessory structures associated with the residential use, unless a Level V approval is obtained pursuant to the provisions of this Section.

(b) Findings. All applications subject to this subsection shall be approved only if one or more of the following findings can be made:

(i) The proposed structure is compatible with its surroundings given the neighborhood, locational or environmental context and its design is consistent with the Large Dwelling Design Guidelines in subsection (d) below; or

(ii) The proposed structure, due to site conditions, or mitigation measures approved as part of the application, will be adequately screened from public view and will not adversely impact public viewsheds, neighboring property privacy or solar access, and its design is consistent with the Large Dwelling Design Guidelines set forth in subsection (d) below. (For structures within the Coastal Zone requiring a Coastal permit approval, additional findings shall be made pursuant to Section 13.20.110).

(c) Conditions. Conditions of project approvals made pursuant to this subsection may include mitigation measures necessary to preserve the neighborhood character in which the proposed structure(s) will be located, to preserve neighboring property privacy or solar access, and/or to screen the structure(s) from the road. Such measures may include, but are not limited to: house and accessory structure resiting, additional landscape screening and house redesign, including possible reduction in floor area.

(d) Large Dwelling Design Guidelines. New large dwellings and related accessory structures regulated by this Section are subject to the following design guidelines. The intent of these guidelines is to assist the applicant in meeting the requirements of the large dwelling regulations, and to assist the Urban Designer and Zoning Administrator in reviewing applications.

Large dwellings and their related accessory structure should be designed so that:

1. Changes in the natural topography of the building site are minimized.

2. Grading cuts and fills are minimized, and when allowed, are balanced.
  3. House design and accessory structure horizontal elements follow hillside contours, where applicable.
  4. Colors and material are used to reduce the appearance of building bulk. Use of earthtone colors is encouraged.
  5. Building height appearance is minimized by varying the height of roof elements and setting back higher portions of the structure from prominent viewpoints.
  6. Ridgeline silhouettes remain unbroken by building elements. Building envelopes should be allocated to the lower portions of hillside lots, where feasible.
  7. The structure(s) is compatible in terms of proportion, size, mass and height with homes within the surrounding neighborhood.
  8. Architectural features break up massing. This can be accomplished by varying roof lines, puncturing large wall expanses with bay windows or recessed wall planes, or using a combination of vertical and horizontal architectural elements.
  9. Landscaping helps blend the structure(s) with the natural environmental setting of the site. This can be done by preserving existing vegetation as much as possible, siting the structure(s) to take advantage of existing trees and land forms, and by planting fast-growing, native landscaping to screen elements visible from viewpoints located off the parcel on which the structure is located.
  10. The view to adjacent properties is controlled. This can be done by minimizing second-story windows facing close neighboring properties, orienting upper floor balconies and decks toward large yard areas, locating the structure on the site as far from property lines as possible, and using landscaping to enhance privacy.
  11. The location of the structure(s) on the site minimizes view blockage within public viewsheds. (Ord. 4097, 12/11/90; 4119, 3/5/91; 4122, 4/9/91; Ord. 4133, 6/4/91; Ord. 4286, 12/14/93)
- 13.10.632 Agricultural processing and storage facilities.
- (a) Food processing facilities, such as cider pressing, jelly and jam making or honey making, shall be allowed in any agricultural zone district and the "SU" zone district when:
    1. the processing facility is incidental to the primary agricultural production use on site;
    2. the food processed is limited to that produced on-site;
    3. meets all Environmental Health sewage disposal requirements.
  - (b) Facilities for processing, packing, drying, storage and refrigeration of agricultural products shall be developed and maintained according to the following standards.
    1. Mitigations shall be required for any adverse visual impacts of facilities greater than 5,000 sq. ft. which will be visible from designated scenic roads, beaches or recreation facilities. Mitigations may include such measures as vegetative screening or other landscaping, materials which produce less glare, berming, and/or arrangement of structures on the site to minimize bulky

appearance. Facilities shall not be located where they would block ocean views from designated public areas.

2. Storm water runoff drainage shall be retained on-site in areas of primary groundwater recharge capacity; in other areas, the drainage shall be detained onsite such that the rate of runoff leaving the site after the project is no greater than the rate before the project. Drainage plans may be prepared by the applicant unless engineered plans are required by the building official.

3. On-site parking shall be provided commensurate with the need created by the proposed use.

4. Site preparation for buildings shall comply with regulations of the County Grading Ordinance (Chapter 16.20).

5. Buildings used for labor operations (such as parking sheds or cold storage facilities) shall locate building entrances and window openings away from adjacent commercial agricultural lands unless the use conforms to the 200 ft. agricultural buffer setback or the siting of the use is approved by the Agricultural Policy Advisory Commission through Agricultural Buffer Review.

6. The facility shall be designed and sized to serve primarily the produce grown on-site.

7. To the maximum extent possible any such facility shall be located on the non-productive portions of the property, or on that portion of the property that is least productive for agricultural purposes.

#### 13.10.633 Agricultural service establishments.

(a) Agricultural Service Establishments shall be allowed in the "A" zone district according to the following criteria:

1. The parcel shall be located on an arterial roadway.

2. The parcel shall not be contiguous to or located on the opposite side of a street or road from a property in the "R-1" or "RA" zone district.

3. One or more of the following conditions shall be present on the site:

(i) The size of the parcel is not greater than 2 1/2 acres.

(ii) The parcel, or portion of the parcel proposed for the use, shall be separated from surrounding lands by natural or human-made barriers such as streams, major topographical changes, public roadways or development of similar uses.

(iii) 60% or more of the land area of the parcel is utilized as an agricultural service establishment use as of January 1, 1985.

4. The proposed use must not create the potential for conflicts with surrounding agricultural lands.

(b) Agricultural Service Establishments, where permitted under Section 13.10.633(a) shall be developed and maintained according to the following standards:

1. Mitigations shall be required for any adverse visual impacts of facilities greater than 5,000 sq. ft. which will be visible from designated scenic roads, beaches or recreation facilities.

Mitigations may include such measures as vegetative screening or other landscaping, materials which produce less glare, berming, and/or arrangement

of structures on the site to minimize bulky appearance. Facilities shall not be located where they would block ocean views from designated public areas.

2. Storm water runoff drainage shall be retained on-site in areas of primary groundwater recharge capacity; in other areas, the drainage shall be detained on-site such that the rate of runoff leaving the site after the project is no greater than the rate before the project. Drainage plans may be prepared by the applicant unless engineered plans are required by the building official.

3. On-site parking shall be provided commensurate with the need created by the proposed use.

4. Site preparation for buildings shall comply with regulations of the County Grading Ordinance (Chapter 16.20).

5. The use shall comply with the Agricultural Buffer Setback as specified by Section 16.50.095.

#### 13.10.636 Greenhouses.

(a) New Greenhouse Development. New greenhouses over five hundred (500) square feet in area, where allowed pursuant to a Use Approval in the basic zone district, shall be developed and maintained to the following standards:

(1) Mitigations shall be required for any adverse visual impacts of greenhouses which will be visible from designated scenic roads, beaches or recreation facilities. Mitigations may include such measures as vegetative screening or other landscaping, materials which produce less glare, berming, and/or arrangement of structures on the site to minimize bulky appearance. Greenhouses shall not be located where they would block public ocean views. Mitigations shall be compatible with light and ventilation needs of the greenhouse operations.

(2) Storm water runoff drainage shall be retained on-site in areas of primary groundwater recharge capacity; in other areas, the drainage shall be detained onsite such that the rate of runoff leaving the site after the project is no greater than the rate before the project. Drainage plans may be prepared by the applicant unless engineered plans are required by the building official.

(3) Discarded greenhouse coverings shall be disposed of promptly according to plans submitted by the applicant.

(4) On-site parking shall be provided commensurate with the need created by the proposed use.

(5) The removal of indigenous prime farmland soil used as a growing medium for container plants which are sold intact shall not be allowed.

(6) Flooring or impervious surfacing within the greenhouse structure which impairs long-term soil capabilities shall be limited to the minimum area needed for access, loading and storage. The use of long-term sterilants under impervious surfacing shall not be allowed.

(7) Greenhouse structures shall be designed to maximize energy efficiency and to use alternative energy sources, where feasible.

(8) Open ventilation shall be provided, when feasible. When exhaust fans are shown to be necessary, the fans should be located away from nonagricultural land uses and should maximize energy efficiency.

(9) Irrigation systems shall be water conserving.

(b) Conforming Greenhouse Replacement. The following conditions must be met in order for an existing conforming greenhouse to be reconstructed, replaced or structurally altered without a prior Use Approval:

(1) The new or altered greenhouse must conform to the existing setbacks and height limits of the zone district.

(2) The project must be accompanied by plans, which may be prepared by the applicant, for drainage, screening of outdoor storage and adequate on-site parking relative to the proposed use.

(3) Discarded greenhouse coverings must be disposed of promptly according to plans submitted by the applicant.

(c) Non-conforming Greenhouse Replacement. The replacement, reconstruction or structural alteration of a non-conforming greenhouse of any size in any zone district shall be allowed without the requirement of a Use Approval provided that the replacement, reconstruction or structural alteration meets the following conditions:

(1) The new or altered greenhouse shall cover an area no larger than that of the original greenhouse.

(2) The new or altered greenhouse shall be no higher than twenty-two (22) feet and in no case obstruct the existing solar access for habitable structures or agricultural uses on adjoining properties.

(3) The project shall be accompanied by plans, which may be prepared by the applicant, for drainage, for screening of any outdoor storage, and for adequate on-site parking relative to the proposed use.

(4) Discarded greenhouse coverings shall be disposed of promptly according to plans submitted by the applicant. (Ord. 839, 11/28/62; 1156, 2/15/66; 1682, 2/15/72; 2769, 9/11/79; 2822, 12/4/79; 3015, 12/2/80; 3051, 3/10/81; 3186, 1/12/82; 3223, 4/27/82; 3344, 11/23/82; 3432, 8/23/83)

### Coastal Zone Regulations (13.20)

#### Design Criteria

##### 13.20.130 Design criteria for coastal zone developments.

###### (a) General

1. Applicability. The Coastal Zone Design Criteria are applicable to any development requiring a Coastal Zone Approval.

2. Conformance with Development Standards and Design Criteria of Basic Zones. All required project Design Criteria and use standards and conditions of Chapters 13.10, 13.11 and Section 13.20.140 et seq. shall be met in addition to the criteria of this section. (Ord. 4346, 12/13/94)

3. Exceptions. Exceptions to the Coastal Zone Design Criteria may be allowed in conjunction with granting of a Coastal Zone Approval (Level V or higher) when the following findings can be made:

(i) The project meets the general intent of the Coastal Zone Design Criteria.

(ii) The exception will result in a project design quality equivalent to that produced by adherence to the required Design Criteria and will be equally protective of the natural and visual environments.

(iii) The project will be consistent with the Visual Resource Policies of the General Plan and Local Coastal Program Land Use Plan. (Ord. 4346, 12/13/94)

(b) Entire Coastal Zone. The following Design Criteria shall apply to projects sited anywhere in the coastal zone:

1. Visual Compatibility. All new development shall be sited, designed and landscaped to be visually compatible and integrated with the character of surrounding neighborhoods or areas.

2. Minimum Site Disturbance. Grading, earth moving, and removal of major vegetation shall be minimized. Developers shall be encouraged to maintain all mature trees over 6 inches in diameter except where circumstances require their removal, such as obstruction of the building site, dead or diseased trees, or nuisance species. Special landscape features (rock outcroppings, prominent natural landforms, tree groupings) shall be retained.

3. Ridgeline Development. Structures located near ridges shall be sited and designed not to project above the ridgeline or tree canopy at the ridgeline. Land divisions which would create parcels whose only building site would be exposed on a ridgetop shall not be permitted.

4. Landscaping. When a landscaping plan is required, new or replacement vegetation shall be compatible with surrounding vegetation and shall be suitable to the climate, soil, and ecological characteristics of the area. The County's adopted Landscape Criteria shall be used as a guide.

5. All second story development located in significant public viewsheds (including adjacent to shoreline fronting roads, public accessways, parks, beaches, trails, natural areas, etc.) shall be sited and designed so that it does not cantilever toward, loom over, or otherwise adversely impact such significant public viewsheds and community character.

6. Front yard averaging shall only be allowed where the front setback so established does not adversely impact significant public viewsheds (including those associated with shoreline fronting roads, public accessways, parks, beaches, trails, natural areas, etc.) and community character.

(c) Rural Scenic Resources. The following Design Criteria shall apply to all projects located in designated rural scenic resource areas (Ord. 4346, 12/13/94):

1. Location of Development. Development shall be located, if possible, on parts of the site not visible or least visible from the public view. Development shall not block views of the shoreline from scenic road turnouts, rest stops or vista points.

2. Site Planning. Development shall be sited and designed to fit the physical setting carefully so that its presence is subordinate to the natural character of the site, maintaining the natural features (streams, major drainage, mature trees, dominant vegetative communities). Screening and landscaping suitable to the site shall be used to soften the visual impact of development in the viewshed.

3. Building Design. Structures shall be designed to fit the topography of the site with minimal cutting, grading, or filling for construction. Pitched, rather than flat roofs, which are surfaced with non-reflective materials except for solar energy devices shall be encouraged. Natural materials and colors which blend with the vegetative cover of the site shall be used, or if the structure is located in an existing cluster of buildings, colors and materials shall repeat or harmonize with those in the cluster.

4. Large Agricultural Structures. The visual impact of large agricultural structures shall be minimized by:

- (i) Locating the structure within or near an existing group of buildings.
- (ii) Using materials and colors which blend with the building cluster or the natural vegetative cover of the site (except for greenhouses).
- (iii) Using landscaping to screen or soften the appearance of the structure.

5. Restoration. Feasible elimination or mitigation of unsightly, visually disruptive or degrading elements such as junk heaps, unnatural obstructions, grading scars, or structures incompatible with the area shall be included in site development. The requirement for restoration of visually blighted areas shall be in scale with the size of the proposed project.

6. Signs. Signs shall minimize disruption of the scenic qualities of the viewshed.

(i) Materials, scale, location and orientation of signs shall harmonize with surrounding elements.

(ii) Directly lighted, brightly colored, rotating, reflective, blinking, flashing or moving signs are prohibited.

(iii) Illumination of signs shall be permitted only for state and county directional and informational signs, except in designated commercial and visitor serving zone districts.

(iv) In the Highway 1 viewshed, except within the Davenport commercial area, only CALTRANS standard signs and public parks, or parking lot identification signs, shall be permitted to be visible from the highway. These signs shall be of natural unobtrusive materials and colors.

(d) Beach Viewsheds. The following Design Criteria shall apply to all projects located on blufftops and visible from beaches.

1. Blufftop Development. Blufftop development and landscaping (e.g., decks, patios, structures, trees, shrubs, etc.) in rural areas shall be set back from the bluff edge a sufficient distance to be out of sight from the shoreline, or if infeasible, not visually intrusive. In urban areas of the viewshed, site development shall conform to (c) 2 and 3 above.

2. Beaches. The scenic integrity of open beaches shall be maintained:

- (i) No new permanent structures on open beaches shall be allowed, except where permitted pursuant to Chapter 16.10 (Geologic Hazards) or Chapter 16.20 (Grading Regulations).

(ii) The design of permitted structures shall minimize visual intrusion, and shall incorporate materials and finishes which harmonize with the character of the area. Natural materials are preferred. (Ord. 3435, 8/23/83; 3487, 12/20/83; Ord. 5042 §§ 4, 5, 5/5/09)

13.20.140 Special areas design criteria.

(a) Applicability. The Special Area Design Criteria of Sections 13.20.141 et seq. are applicable to all developments requiring a Coastal Zone Approval within the applicable area as designated by the General Plan and Local Coastal Program Land Use Plan.

(b) Exceptions. Exceptions to the Special Area Design Criteria may be allowed in conjunction with the granting of a Coastal Zone Approval when the following findings can be made:

1. The project meets the general intent of the Coastal Zone Design Criteria.

2. The exception will result in a project design quality equivalent to that produced by adherence to the required Design Criteria and will be equally protective of the physical and visual environments.

3. The project will be consistent with the Visual Resource Policies of the General Plan and Local Coastal Program Land Use Plan. (Ord. 3435, 8/23/83; Ord. 4346, 12/13/94)

**13.20.141 Bonny Doon Special Scenic Area design criteria.**

(a) The unusual sandstone formations in the Bonny Doon Special Scenic Area shall be preserved. Development shall not be located on or within fifty feet of these formations.

(b) Land divisions which would create parcels whose only building site is exposed within the viewshed of an adjacent scenic road shall not be permitted. (Ord. 3435, 8/23/83)

13.20.142 Swanton Road Area design criteria.

(a) No development within the Swanton Road Special Scenic Area shall be visible in the viewshed of either Swanton Road or Highway 1.

(b) Land divisions which would create parcels whose only building site is exposed and impossible to screen completely within the Swanton Road viewshed or Highway 1 viewshed between the Swanton Road intersections shall not be permitted.

(c) In the Swanton Road area within the viewshed of Highway 1, special landscaping conditions, parcel recombination, density transfer or other appropriate means shall be required so as to locate any new development outside the viewshed, where possible, or in any case, minimize the visual impact from Highway 1. (Ord. 3435, 8/23/83; 4346, 12/13/94)

# Monterey County – Big Sur Coast

## Design Standards for the Big Sur Highway (August 1980)

- Design standards state that the County should review, with the assistance of a Big Sur Highway Advisory Board, all Caltrans work that will have visual impact, including but not limited to new work, routine maintenance, or upgrading existing features (e.g., signs, road marking, clearing, cutting, filling, etc.)

California's first official scenic highway was Highway 1 from the Carmel River to the south County border (Big Sur Highway). Highway design standards include provisions for road width, Caltrans Right of Way, and the Scenic Corridor outside the Right of Way.

Existing Policies Related to Visual Resources in the Monterey County General Plan (2010 working draft)

Monterey County's 2010 working draft of their General Plan includes policies related to visual resources in the Open Space Element, including:

- OS-1.1 Voluntary restrictions to the development potential of property located in designated visually sensitive areas shall be encouraged.
- OS-1.3 To preserve the County's scenic qualities, ridgeline development shall not be allowed. An exception to this policy may be made only after publicly noticed hearing and provided the following findings can be made:
  - The ridgeline development will not create substantially adverse visual impact when viewed from a common public viewing area ; and either
  - The proposed development better achieves the goals, policies, and objectives of the Monterey County General Plan and applicable area plan than other development alternatives; or,
  - There is no feasible alternative to the ridgeline development. Pursuant to Policy OS-1.6, in areas subject to specific plans, the ridgeline policies and regulations of the applicable specific plan shall govern.
- OS-1.5 New subdivisions shall avoid lot configurations which create building sites that will constitute ridgeline development. Siting of new development visible from private viewing areas may be taken into consideration during the subdivision process.
- OS-1.8 Programs to encourage clustering development in rural and agricultural areas to maximize access to infrastructure, protect prime agricultural land, and reduce impacts to designated visually sensitive and critical habitat areas shall be established.
- OS-1.9 Development that protects and enhances the County's scenic qualities shall be encouraged. All Routine and Ongoing Agricultural

Activities are exempt from the viewshed policies of this plan, except as noted in Policy OS-1.12.

- OS-1.11 Maintain GIS mapping for all lands containing visually sensitive resources and corridors. Mapped information shall be reanalyzed and updated at least every five years, as necessary.
- OS-1.12 The significant disruption of views from designated scenic routes shall be mitigated through use of appropriate materials, scale, lighting, and siting of development. Routine and Ongoing Agricultural Activities shall be exempt from this policy, except:
  - Large-scale agricultural processing facilities
  - Facilities governed by the Agricultural and Winery Corridor Plan
- OS-5.5 Landowners and developers shall be encourage to preserve the integrity of existing terrain and native vegetation in visually sensitive areas such as hillsides, ridge, and watersheds. Routine and Ongoing Agricultural Activities shall be exempt from this policy.

### Big Sur Coast Land Use Plan

The intent of the Big Sur Coast LUP is to:

- Identify the urgent need for financial assistance in preserving Big Sur's natural resources and cultural heritage. Funds are specially needed to protect scenic views and to provide public access.
- Preserve scenic resources in perpetuity and to promote, wherever possible, the restoration of the natural beauty of visually degraded areas.

The Big Sur Coast LUP contains several policies pertaining to the Critical Viewshed, as listed below. Certain exemptions to these policies are allowed for coastal-dependent uses, existing vacant subdivisions, State Park parking, Utilities, and Highway 1 facilities, essential ranching structures, and rural service centers (i.e., existing visitor serving commercial facilities). Critical Viewshed (visual resources) policies include:

1. In order to avoid creating further commitment to development within the critical viewshed all new parcels must contain building sites outside the critical viewshed.
2. The best available planning techniques shall be used to permit development of parcels partially in the critical viewshed. These may include clustering of structures, sensitive site design, design control, transfer of development credits, and other techniques designed to allow development on such parcels outside the critical viewshed.
3. Where it is determined that an alternative building site on a parcel would result in conformance to the Key Policy, then the applicant will be required to modify his proposal accordingly. Similarly, changes in the design, height, or bulk of proposed structures will be required where this will result in an approvable project.
4. New roads, grading or excavations will not be allowed to damage or intrude upon the critical viewshed. Such road construction or other work

shall not commence until the entire project has completed the permit and appeal process. Grading or excavation shall include all alterations of natural landforms by earthmoving equipment. These restrictions shall not be interpreted as prohibiting restoration of severely eroded water course channels or gullying, provided a plan is submitted and approved prior to commencing work.

5. Where it is determined that a proposed development cannot be resited, redesigned, or in any other way made to conform to the basic critical viewshed policy, then the site shall be considered environmentally inappropriate for development.
6. The County will participate with other public agencies and private groups to secure adequate funds to purchase critical viewshed parcels proposed for development or to secure for use by restricted landowners, other developable land areas to which new development can be transferred. The value of parcels, for purposes of establishing purchase price, shall not be diminished by virtue of their location in the viewshed or by the policies of this section.
7. The general policy concerning replacement of structures shall be to encourage resiting or redesign in order to conform to the Key Policy. Replacement or enlargement of existing structures, or structures lost in fire or natural disaster within the critical viewshed shall be permitted on the original location on the site, provided no other less visible portion of the site is acceptable to the property owner, and provided the replacement or enlargement does not increase the visibility of the structure. Replacement or enlargement of structures outside the critical viewshed shall be permitted as long as such replacement or enlargement does not cause the structure to intrude into critical viewshed.
8. Landowners will be encouraged to grant scenic easements to the County over portions of their land in the critical viewshed.
9. The County encourages creative public and private efforts to restore the scenic beauty of visually/impacted areas of the coast and will assist such efforts where possible.

# San Luis Obispo County

## Conservation and Open Space Element Guidelines and Standards

The following list includes the kinds of guidelines or standards that should be considered in regulating development to protect visual resources:

**Visual Analysis.** Preparation of a visual analysis by a licensed architect, a licensed landscape architect or other qualified person should be done to determine the scenic quality and sensitivity of the site to development, and potential issues to be addressed by development.

**Site Design.** Structures should be sited and designed to take maximum advantage of existing topography and vegetation in order to screen them from public roads and places such as parks or lakes. Proposed structures should be located so that they do not silhouette against the sky on any prominent ridgelines.

**Clustering.** To the extent feasible, structures should be clustered on each parcel within existing built areas and/or near existing natural features such as tree groupings or the toe of slopes. On hills and ridges, highly visible open areas should be avoided; structures that project above the ridge or silhouette against the sky as viewed from public roads should be avoided; and driveways should be substantially screened from view where practical.

**Grading.** Grading, cuts, fills and development should be avoided on hills and ridges that are visible from public roads or places, or minimized where avoidance is not possible. Where feasible, contours of the finished surface should blend with adjacent natural terrain to achieve a consistent grade and natural appearance.

**Tree Preservation.** Building sites and roadways should be sited to preserve significant existing tree stands and significant oak trees. The removal of trees and other mature vegetation for development or fire protection purposes should be avoided, or minimized where avoidance is not possible. Special care should be given to avoid the removal of large “specimen” trees, tree groupings, and windbreaks that add historical character.

**Landscaping.** Development projects should use natural landforms and vegetation to screen development. Where that cannot be done, it is preferred to screen development with native vegetation that is compatible with the scenic resource being protected and which does not obstruct public vistas. A landscaping plan should be prepared by a licensed architect, licensed landscape architect, or other qualified person. Landscape screening should exist or be

planted so that there will be at least 50 percent screening at plant maturity, continuing for the life of structures that are visible from Highway One. The landscape screening should consist of native or low water-using vegetation (no invasive species) that is fire resistant. Screening or backdrop vegetation should be located and planted in conformance with CDF requirements for fire safety. The landscape screening should maximize use of evergreen trees and large-growing shrubs that have shapes similar to existing vegetation. At least 50 percent of the plant materials should consist of fast-growing species that will provide a landscape screen while the slower-growing species mature. The required landscape screening should be reasonably maintained for the life of the structure.

**Structure design.** Minimize building height and mass by using low-profile design that may include partially sinking structures below grade. Minimize the visibility of structures by using colors that blend with colors of the surrounding environment. When structures silhouette against the sky on prominent ridgelines as viewed from scenic roads, include hip roofs with a pitch that causes the building to appear to recede from public view.

**Building exterior.** Building exteriors should use non-reflective materials. Exterior siding should be stucco, masonry, brick, wood or wood-appearing materials, or other natural appearing materials. Other siding materials may be used if they are found to be in harmony with the surrounding natural environment.

#### ROADWAY DESIGN

County and State road and highway development projects can greatly affect the visual quality on and near scenic roadways. Scenic Corridor studies and designations should guide all County and State road and highway development projects. In the absence of a designated Scenic Corridor, the following interim guidelines should apply to projects on any of the candidate Scenic Corridor roadways.

1) **Road Alignment.** Design and alignment of a Scenic Corridor roadway should include preservation and enhancement of scenic resources, as well as considerations of safety and capacity.

2) **Environmental Review.** Where standard roadway design or roadway realignment would significantly degrade a scenic feature or preclude visual access to a scenic feature, design alternatives should be considered through preparation of an environmental impact report.

3) **Character Defining Features.** Design characteristics such as curves, changes of direction and topography that provide identity to individual Scenic Corridors should be preserved to the maximum extent feasible.

4) **Grading.** Grading for new cuts or fills should avoid significant impacts to scenic resources if possible or be minimized. Angular cuts and fills should be avoided to the maximum extent feasible. All grading should be contoured to match with the surrounding terrain. Maximum effort should be made to balance cut and fill onsite.

5) **Planting / Landscaping.**

- a. The County or applicable public agency should use extensive California native and/or drought tolerant landscaping to screen existing public facilities within scenic corridors. (OSP25 Implementation no. 3)
- b. Fire-resistant native plants and trees should be utilized in any roadside landscaping along scenic corridor roadways.
- c. Where previous plant material has been washed away or destroyed (due to excessive rainfall, fire, grading, etc.) erosion-controlling plants should be planted to prevent erosion and mud/landslides, and hillsides and slopes should either be hydro-seeded or terraced and then planted with native fire-resistant plants.
- d. Outstanding specimens of existing trees and plants located within the public right-of way of a Scenic Corridor should be retained to the maximum extent feasible within the same public right-of-way.
- e. Low-growing ground cover and/or shrubs should be utilized as parkway planting along Scenic Corridors in order to avoid blocking a desirable view of a scenic feature. Plant material size at maturity, as well as overall scale of plants within the landscaped area, should be carefully studied during site analysis and design.

#### Coastal Land Use Plan

### POLICIES FOR VISUAL AND SCENIC RESOURCES

#### **Policy 1: Protection of Visual and Scenic Resources**

Unique and attractive features of the landscape, including but not limited to unusual landforms, scenic vistas and sensitive habitats are to be preserved protected, and in visually degraded areas restored where feasible. [THIS POLICY SHALL BE IMPLEMENTED AS A STANDARD.]

#### **Policy 2: Site Selection for New Development**

Permitted development shall be sited so as to protect views to and along the ocean and scenic coastal areas. Wherever possible, site selection for new development is to emphasize locations not visible from major public view corridors. In particular, new development should utilize slope created "pockets" to shield development and minimize visual intrusion. [THIS POLICY SHALL BE IMPLEMENTED AS A STANDARD.]

#### **Policy 3: Stringline Method for Siting New Development**

In a developed area where new construction is generally infilling and is otherwise consistent with Local Coastal Plan policies, no part of a proposed new structure, including decks, shall be built farther onto a beachfront than a line drawn between the most seaward portions of the adjoining structures; except where the shoreline has substantial variations in landform between adjacent lots in which case the average setback of the adjoining lots shall be used. At all times, this setback must be adequate to ensure geologic stability in accordance with the policies of the Hazards chapter. [THIS POLICY SHALL BE IMPLEMENTED PURSUANT TO SECTION 23.04.118 OF THE CZLUO.]

**Policy 4: New Development in Rural Areas**

New development shall be sited to minimize its visibility from public view corridors. Structures shall be designed (height, bulk, style) to be subordinate to, and blend with, the rural character of the area. New development which cannot be sited outside of public view corridors is to be screened utilizing native vegetation; however, such vegetation, when mature, must also be selected and sited in such a manner as to not obstruct major public views. New land divisions whose only building site would be on a highly visible slope or ridgetop shall be prohibited. [THIS POLICY SHALL BE IMPLEMENTED AS A STANDARD AND PURSUANT TO SECTION 23.04.021 OF THE CZLUO.]

**Policy 5: Landform Alterations**

Grading, earthmoving, major vegetation removal and other landform alterations within public view corridors are to be minimized. Where feasible, contours of the finished surface are to blend with adjacent natural terrain to achieve a consistent grade and natural appearance. [THIS POLICY SHALL BE IMPLEMENTED AS A STANDARD AND PURSUANT TO SECTION 23.05.034 OF THE CZLUO.]

**Policy 11: Development on Coastal Bluffs**

New development on bluff faces shall be limited to public access stairways and shoreline protection structures. Permitted development shall be sited and designed to be compatible with the natural features of the landform as much as feasible. New development on bluff tops shall be designed and sited to minimize visual intrusion on adjacent sandy beaches. [THIS POLICY SHALL BE IMPLEMENTED AS A STANDARD.]

County Land Use Code

**E. Screening materials substitution.** Where screening is required by this Title to be a solid fence or wall, the following materials may be substituted through adjustment (Section 22.70.030), except a solid fence or wall must be used where screening is required adjacent to a residential use or category.

1. Landscape screen. Screening plant materials may be substituted for a wall or fence, where:

a. Proposed plant materials are certified in writing by a registered landscape architect, certified nurseryman or licensed landscape contractor as having the capability of achieving 60 percent of total view blockage within 18 months of installation, and 100 percent of total view blockage within 36 months of installation; and b. The applicant agrees in writing to install solid fencing after the expiration of 36 months, and posts a performance bond or other appropriate security approved by the County for one hundred percent of the estimated cost to install solid fencing, in the event that the planting has not totally blocked the view of areas required to be screened.

2. Berms. A landscaped berm may be substituted for a wall or fence provided that the combination of berm and landscaping is not less than the required height of the fence or wall, and that the berm is constructed with a maximum slope of 3:1, with side slopes designed and planted to prevent erosion, and with a rounded surface a minimum of two feet in width at the highest point of the berm, extending the length of the berm.

3. Slatted chain-link fencing. Chain-link fencing with slats and landscaping may be substituted for a solid wall or fence in an Industrial category, except where screening or fencing is required adjacent to another land use category.

# Ventura County

## General Plan

The goals, policies and programs which apply to scenic resources include:

### **1.7.1 Goals**

1. Preserve and protect the significant open views and visual resources of the County.
2. Protect the visual resources within the viewshed of lakes and State and County designated scenic highways, and other scenic areas as may be identified by an area plan.
3. Enhance and maintain the visual appearance of buildings and developments

### **1.7.2 Policies**

1. Notwithstanding Policy 1.7.2-2, discretionary development which would significantly degrade visual resources or significantly alter or obscure public views of visual resources shall be prohibited unless no feasible mitigation measures are available and the decision-making body determines there are overriding considerations.
2. Scenic Resource Areas, which are depicted on the Resource Protection Map (Figure 1), shall be subject to the Scenic Resource Protection (SRP) Overlay Zone provisions and standards set forth in the Non-Coastal Zoning Ordinance, which include the following:
  - (1) Any request for grading, structures or vegetation removal per the standards of the SRP Overlay Zone shall be evaluated through a discretionary permit.
  - (2) Removal, damaging or destruction of protected trees shall be in compliance with the County's "Tree Protection Regulations" of the Non-Coastal Zoning Ordinance.
  - (3) All discretionary development shall be sited and designed to:
    - a. Prevent significant degradation of the scenic view or vista;
    - b. Minimize alteration of the natural topography, physical features and vegetation;
    - c. Utilize native plants indigenous to the area for re-vegetation, whenever possible;
    - d. Avoid silhouetting of structures on ridge tops that are within public view.
    - e. Use colors and materials that are designed to blend in with the natural surroundings.
    - f. Minimize lighting that causes glare, illuminates adjacent properties, or is directed skyward in rural areas
  - (4) No on-site freestanding advertising signs in excess of four feet in height and no freestanding off-site advertising signs shall be permitted.Federally-owned land is not subject to the Scenic Resource Protection Overlay Zone and is not subject to any permit requirements as specified under (1) or (2) above. To the extent possible, the agencies responsible for the administration of land use activities on Federally owned land should consider Policies 1.7.2-2(3)

and (4) above in the planning and administration of new land uses within Scenic Resource Areas.

3. Proposed undergrounding of overhead utilities within Scenic Resource Areas shall be given first priority by the Public Works Agency in utilizing the County's allocation of Utility Undergrounding Funds.

4. The Planning Division shall continue to implement the landscaping requirements of the Zoning Ordinance and the "Guide to Landscape Plans" to enhance the appearance of discretionary development.

### **1.7.3 Programs**

1. The Planning Division, in coordination with appropriate State and local agencies, will inventory and take steps to preserve and maintain unique natural features, and other scenic resources. These areas could be included in future Scenic Resource Areas for consideration by the Board of Supervisors to be incorporated into the Resource Protection Map.

2. The Planning Division will continue to seek official State Scenic Highway designations for County designated Scenic Highways.

### Coastal Zone Ordinances

#### **Sec. 8177-4.2.7**

Except within the existing South Coast community, as shown on the south coast subarea Land Use Plan map, all development proposals located within 1000 feet of publicly owned park lands shall be sited and designed to mitigate potential adverse visual impacts upon park lands. Appropriate mitigation measures include additional landscaping, use of natural materials, low building profiles, earth tone colors, and the like. Development shall not be sited within 500 feet of a park boundary unless no alternative siting on the property is possible consistent with the policies of the Plan.

#### **Sec. 8175-5.17 - Grading and Brush Removal**

The following standards shall apply to all developments involving more than 50 cubic yards of grading or more than one-half acre of brush removal. Public Works Agency and Resource Management Agency staff shall review all proposals in the coastal zone for conformance with these standards.

(REPEALED AS 8175-5.4 AND RE-ENACTED AS 8175-5.17 BY ORD.3882-12/20/88)

#### **Sec. 8175-5.17.1**

Grading plans shall minimize cut and fill operations. If it is determined that a project is feasible with less alteration of the natural terrain than is proposed, that project shall be denied.

#### **Sec. 8175-5.17.2**

All development shall be designed to minimize impacts and alterations of physical features and processes of the site (i.e., geological, soils, hydrological,

water percolation and runoff) to the maximum extent feasible. The clearing of land (grading and brush removal) is prohibited during the winter rainy season (November 15 – April 15).

**Sec. 8177-4.2.6**

Development shall not be sited on ridgelines or hilltops when alternative sites on the parcel are available, and shall not be sited on the crest of major ridgelines.