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Memorandum

Date: March 11, 2009
To: Jim Louie and Adam Cline
From: Jeff Henderson and Elizabeth Boyd
Subject: Neighborhood Agricultural/Tourist Centers in Suisun Valley

Distribution:

As described within the General Plan, Suisun Valley is intended to serve as a destination for visitors interested in local wine production and local produce. Commercial land use designations are expanded in several Neighborhood Agricultural Centers in Suisun Valley. Eight locations for Neighborhood Agricultural/Tourist Centers were proposed within the General Plan:

- ▶ Gomer School
- ▶ Rockville Road
- ▶ North Connector
- ▶ Morrison Lane
- ▶ Iwama Market
- ▶ Rockville Corner
- ▶ Mankas Corner
- ▶ Cordelia Rd and Thomasson Lane

Neighborhood Agricultural/Tourist Centers (ATCs) provide for areas supporting complementary tourist commercial facilities that are compatible with surrounding agricultural uses. In addition, permitted uses should enhance the agricultural character of surrounding areas, develop brand recognition, and create a destination for tourists. Permitted uses include small hotels, restaurants, retail shops, and facilities for the sale of local produce.

The maximum acreage that can be devoted to ATCs within the Suisun Valley pursuant to the General Plan is 75 acres. This memorandum describes three alternative strategies to distribute these 75 acres among the eight potential Agricultural/Tourist Center sites. Each alternative consists of a development objective, a list of potentially affected landowners, and advantages and challenges (pros and cons).

Several attachments accompany this memorandum. The first is a map of the existing centers. The three maps that follow illustrate the location and sizes of each center within each alternative described below. The following table compares the existing centers with the three alternatives. GIS data was used to estimate the size of affected parcels. Table 2, on the last page, shows the various uses allowed in Suisun Valley, including the uses allowed within ATCs.

Table 1: Acreages Compared Among Alternatives

		Acres			
		Existing	Alternative 1	Alternative 2	Alternative 3
1	Gomer School	0.5	6.2	9.1	9.1
2	Rockville Road	0.0	3.5	0.0*	2.2
3	North Connector	0.0	22.4	22.8	23.6
4	Morrison Lane	1.5	3.7	7.6	9.9
5	Iwama Store	1.7	4.2	1.7	4.2
6	Rockville Corner	9.4	9.4	9.4	15.3
7	Mankas Corner	1.8	4.8	7.3	7.3
8	Cordelia Rd and Thomasson Ln	0.0	3.5	2.3	2.3
General Plan Acreage		75.0	75.0	75.0	75.0
Difference (Leftover Acreage)		60.2	17.4	14.8	1.0
Total		15.6	57.6	60.2	74.0

* In Alternative 2, the Rockville Road center is combined with the North Connector center.

ALTERNATIVE 1

Objective

Maximize North Connector as the main site, account for acreage of existing ATCs, and distribute moderate portions of remaining acreages among the seven remaining proposed ATCs.

Opportunities

1. North Connector acts as the marquis gateway to the valley.
2. Centers are located throughout the valley.
3. Additional acreage is available for future flexibility.

Challenges

1. A method to distribute "leftover" acreage fairly will be important as part of this alternative.

ALTERNATIVE 2

Establish three main centers that focus on the Abernathy Road entrance to Suisun Valley. Combine the Rockville Road and North Connector centers to create a large center on both sides of Abernathy Road, create a larger center at Gomer School, and enlarge Mankas Corner to bring people deeper into the valley. Morrison Lane is expanded slightly and other existing sites remain as they are.

Opportunities

1. There are three focal points in this example, located on Abernathy Road at varying distances from I-80. The North Connector center captures pass-through traffic from the freeway, Gomer

School is large enough to act as a central destination, and the existing potential of Mankas Corner is enhanced. Each appeals to a different type of visitor. The North Connector center serves casual valley visitors on their way somewhere else. Gomer School serves visitors seeking to get involved in planned activities or special events, or desiring a more “authentic” experience. Mankas Corner serves visitors seeking the hidden treasure and the authentic Suisun Valley experience. Each center brings the visitor deeper into the valley and provides increasing levels of history and visitor information.

2. This Alternative focuses infrastructure improvements on Abernathy Road – conceptually providing benefits to multiple centers from a more limited set of improvements.
3. The North Connector site occupies both sides of Abernathy Road, allowing more visibility and accessibility to visitors.
4. Overall number of centers is reduced – potentially reducing competition among them.

Challenges

1. Visitors may miss the experience on the western portion of the valley as the emphasis is on the east.
2. ATCs occupy both sides of Abernathy Road at Rockville Road/North Connector and are increasingly visible. This could overwhelm the look of the valley.
3. A method to distribute “leftover” acreage fairly will be important as part of this alternative.

ALTERNATIVE 3

Maximize ATC acreage across the entire valley. Maximize the potential of the Gomer School site to draw people from the North Connector into the valley, and build up other ATCs at approximately equal distances around the loop to provide several focuses within the valley. Smaller centers are minimized where they are too close to main centers (Rockville Road) or they aren't on the main loop (Cordelia Road).

Opportunities

1. Gomer School becomes a main focus
 - a. Location within 1.5 miles of the freeway
 - b. Central to the valley
 - c. Includes a recognizable landmark with reuse potential
 - d. Surrounded by a variety of crop types – offering diverse educational potential
 - e. Surrounded by multiple wineries/vineyards – optimal location for tasting rooms, lodging
 - f. Central enough to support a gathering place, close enough to Fairfield and I-80 to be accessible
 - g. Level area able to be built/serviced
2. Builds on the “loop” road concept, distributing moderate-size centers along both Suisun Valley Road and Abernathy / Mankas Corner Road
3. Extends the entrance at Abernathy Road by extending the North Connector site along the road.
4. Establishes two key entrances to the valley: North Connector and Rockville Corner.

Challenges

1. Higher infrastructure costs to build entire loop and serve all major centers.

Table 2: Desired Uses in the Suisun Valley Special Study Area

Allowed Uses	Agriculture–Suisun Valley Region	Neighborhood Agricultural/Tourism Center
Agricultural Land Uses		
Crop production, including orchards and vineyards	▲	▲
Agricultural accessory structures	▲	▲
Agricultural processing facilities	▲	▲
Animal facilities and operations		
Grazing	▲	▲
Stable, private	▲	▲
Wind turbine generators, noncommercial (over 100 feet)	▲	
Storage/maintenance of agricultural equipment/supplies	▲	▲
Tourism Uses		
Roadside stands	▲	▲
Restaurant/café	#	▲
Bakery	#	▲
Winery and tasting facilities	#	▲
Local products store*		▲
Bed and breakfast (≤10 rooms)	#	▲
Hotel (≤30 rooms)		▲
Resort	•	
Gallery	#	▲
Commercial and Service Uses		
Agricultural trucking services and facilities		**
Service station		**
Nursery	▲	
Farm/ranch supply store		▲
Storage/sale of agricultural service products (fertilizer, fuel)	▲	▲
Custom farm services (e.g., hay baling)	▲	
Farm equipment fabrication and repair	▲	**
Farm equipment sales		**
Residential Uses		
Single-family dwelling (and accessory unit)	▲	▲
Agricultural employee housing	▲	▲
Farm labor housing (seasonal labor camp)	▲	
Home-based businesses	▲	▲
Recreation, Education, and Public Assembly Uses		
Agricultural education/demonstration farms	▲	
Special events facilities (e.g., weddings)	▲	▲
Public service facility	▲	▲
Other Uses		
Cemetery	▲	
Signs—commercial and real estate	▲	▲

- ▲ Indicates use is allowed within land use designation
- * Local products stores are defined as stores that sell food, beverages, textiles, and crafts that are grown, collected, or produced in the local area.
- ** Only allowed in the Neighborhood Agricultural Center located at the North Connector/Abernathy Road near Interstate 80.
- # Allowed as ancillary use to agriculture on same property.
- Subject to discretionary review.