CATHEYS VALLEY COMMUNITY PLAN
December 2012
## CATHEYS VALLEY COMMUNITY PLAN
### ADOPTION AND UPDATES

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THE COUNTY OF MARIPOSA
Catheys Valley Community Plan
December 2012

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1. Introduction and Setting

1.1 PHILOSOPHY

The overriding objective of the Catheys Valley Community Plan, hereafter referred to as the CV Plan, is to preserve the rural and ranching lifestyle and character of the area. The land within Catheys Valley is rural and not to be used for urban scale development or regional commercial development.

1.2 LOCATION

Catheys Valley, one of Mariposa County’s seventeen Planning Areas shown in Figure 1.1, is located in western Mariposa County along Highway 140, a gateway into Mariposa County and Yosemite National Park. Access to Catheys Valley is from Highway 140, Horntos Road, Old Highway, and Schoolhouse Road. The CV Plan encompasses approximately 26.2 square miles (16,752 acres), ensuring that the community’s issues and objectives are addressed in the appropriate context and detail.

1.3 POPULATION AND HOUSING

Catheys Valley had a population of approximately 900 persons in 2010. The population is approximate because census tracts do not align with the Catheys Valley Community Planning Area boundaries. The area is the fifth largest community in the County, with Mariposa, Yosemite Valley, Bootjack, Lake Don Pedro, and Midpines having larger populations.

In 2010, there were approximately 400 single-family dwelling units in Catheys Valley with approximately 70% owner occupied. Unlike other areas of the County, few of the dwellings in Catheys Valley are held for occasional or seasonal use. There are two small, older mobile home parks and no multi-family, attached, or high-density housing in the area.

The CV Plan accommodates a build-out projection of approximately 1,300 persons and 570 dwelling units. This number defines Catheys Valley’s “fair share” of the County’s regional housing needs allocation. The CV Plan accommodates a population holding capacity of approximately 2,900 persons and 1,290 dwelling units.
1.4 EVOLUTION OF THE CATHEYS VALLEY COMMUNITY PLAN

In the mid-1990s, a Planning Advisory Committee was appointed by the Board of Supervisors to prepare a specific plan for Catheys Valley. After detailed surveys and several years of effort, the Catheys Valley Zoning Plan was passed by the Committee, but never presented to the Planning Commission or Board of Supervisors due to its inconsistency with the then-effective Mariposa County General Plan. When the County initiated an update to the General Plan in 2000, the Catheys Valley plan was the first of the area plans to be assigned. The Catheys Valley Planning Advisory Committee (PAC) was reactivated to prepare the CV Plan.

From 2000 through 2004, the PAC prepared a Preliminary CV Plan. The 2004 Preliminary CV Plan process included over forty committee meetings, a Community Planning Fair, and a series of public meetings conducted to fully learn and understand the vision for the future as represented by the Catheys Valley community.

Initially, the Committee prepared the CV Plan boundary, which included more than 32 square miles. The PAC selected this boundary in October 2002 by connecting the gateway points to “Catheys Valley.” The boundary was drawn to surround potential residential development areas with unsubdivisible agricultural lands.

In 2003, the Preliminary CV Plan was presented to property owners and residents in three phases. The first was a public meeting discussing land use classifications and the relationship to zoning, the second was a meeting to address the policy issues contained within the CV Plan, and the third was a presentation to obtain public comment. The PAC recommended the Preliminary CV Plan to the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors in 2004. No action was taken on the Preliminary CV Plan at that time; discussion on the CV Plan was placed on hold temporarily in 2005 pending completion of the Mariposa County General Plan.

In 2007, after adoption of the General Plan, the PAC resumed discussions of the CV Plan. The PAC, Planning Commission, and Board of Supervisors held multiple meetings from 2007 through 2012 to discuss and revise the content of the CV Plan, including goals, policies, implementation measures and the CV Plan Boundary (see Figure 2-1).
1.5 RELATIONSHIP TO THE MARIPOSA COUNTY GENERAL PLAN

The State of California Planning and Zoning Law (Government Code Sections 65000-66033) sets requirements for land use planning at the local government level and specifies that a local general plan shall be prepared and maintained by local governmental agencies. "Community plan" is a term for a plan that focuses on a particular region or community within a general plan area. A community plan is adopted by resolution as an amendment to a general plan, in the manner set out in Section 65350, et seq., and refines general plan policies as they apply to a community and are implemented by ordinances and other discretionary actions, such as zoning. A community plan shall be internally consistent with a general plan. To facilitate consistency, a general plan provides a policy framework for the detailed treatment of issues in a community plan. To simplify implementation, a community plan and general plan should share a uniform format for land use categories, terminology, and diagrams. Each community plan does not need to address the issues required by Section 65302 when the general plan satisfies these requirements.

The CV Plan is based upon, and is consistent with, the Mariposa County General Plan. The CV Plan is tiered from the General Plan and both share a uniform format. The CV Plan is in Volume II, Section 3 of the General Plan.
2. Issues Important to Catheys Valley Citizens

This Chapter identifies specific Catheys Valley issues that tier from Mariposa County General Plan Chapter 2.

The Catheys Valley community recognizes its location “in the path” of future growth pressure. It is the first cluster of residential and commercial services one encounters when traveling east from San Joaquin Valley metropolitan areas. With the recording of a 32,000-acre conservation easement between the Town of Planada in unincorporated Merced County and the Mariposa County line, there is little, if any, private land in eastern Merced County available for future development along Highway 140.

Mariposa County’s 207,500 acres of Williamson Act lands are primarily located on the Merced-Mariposa County line in broad vistas of working ranches in the landscape running along Highway 140 to the western edge of Catheys Valley. Mariposa County Williamson Act contracts run for twenty years.1 To date, no Williamson Act lands in Mariposa have successfully completed cancellation with the exception of a 3.5-acre portion of a contract necessary for a public project. In recent years, selected properties (24,600 acres), including parcels southwest of Catheys Valley and in the southern part of Catheys Valley, have begun the 19-year process of non-renewal of their Williamson Act contracts and a gradual increase in their property tax assessments.

With Catheys Valley as the “first apparent site” for development potential in western Mariposa County, the community recognized a need to balance its rural character with the ability to accommodate a reasonable influx of new growth. Development patterns in other western foothill areas of the Sierra Nevada mountain range provide a graphic track record of rural area conversion into sprawling suburban tracts. The Catheys Valley community recognized the importance of avoiding this occurrence.

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1 Williamson Act contracts, also called “Agricultural Preserves or Land Conservation Act contracts”, provide property tax reductions for ranching and farming, and agriculture lands. The contract is a “rolling” twenty-year contract in Mariposa County. The State contract requirement is ten years. Unless the property owner files a notice of non-renewal non-renewing the contract, a new year is added to the contract each year. Williamson Act contracts are always twenty years long. Once a non-renewal is recorded, the property would exit the contract in nineteen years.
2.1 ISSUES OF IMPORTANCE

The issues of importance for Catheys Valley have not changed between the mid-1990s and the early 21st Century. The community defines its issues as:

- Preserving rural character;
- Ensuring designs for new commercial development are compatible with the existing character;
- Keeping commercial development at an appropriate local scale and not as a regional shopping attraction;
- Maintaining quality of life;
- Maintaining quality of education;
- Preventing suburban sprawl;
- Protecting agriculture as a way of life and a part of the economy;
- Maintenance of private roads;
- Protecting water quality; and
- Remaining an area of single family dwellings.

These issues are the foundation of the CV Plan goals, policies, and implementation measures.

2.2 CATHEYS VALLEY BOUNDARIES

The geographic area that represents “Catheys Valley” is larger than the boundary of the CV Plan. This greater area was defined by the community as the area where residents believe they are “within” or have “returned to” Catheys Valley.

The CV Plan boundary (see Figure 2-1) was identified to protect the interests of the crossroads’ residential and agricultural property owners. The Catheys Valley Community Planning Area is intended to maintain the rural character and strong agricultural economic base for the area, the minimum area most residents believe is necessary to protect the community from encroachment by densities and uses that are resource intensive, incompatible with, or unsuitable to, the rural nature of Catheys Valley.

The boundary of the Catheys Valley Community Planning Area defines a rural, viable, interdependent, agricultural, and residential community supported by small neighborhood commercial enterprises that are sustainable with the area’s limited natural resources and public services.
Figure 2-1 - Planning Area Boundary

CATHEYS VALLEY
COMMUNITY PLAN BOUNDARY

DATA SOURCE: GIS PARCEL MAP FROM THE MARIPOSA COUNTY
ASSessor'S OFFICE, UPDATED DECEMBER 2008
MAP UPDATED BY E. MUIRAN, GIS TECHNICIAN, FEBRUARY 27, 2012
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MARIPOSA COUNTY MAKES NO WARRANTY REGARDING THE ACCURACY OF THE DATA OR THE ANALYSES AND CONCLUSIONS RESULTING FROM USING OUR GIS DATA.

CATHEYS VALLEY COMMUNITY PLANNING AREA
GOVERNED BY THE COUNTY WIDE GENERAL PLAN
STATE HIGHWAY 140
3. Guiding Principles

Guiding Principles are the over-riding concepts directing development of the CV Plan. They derive from and are consistent with the Guiding Principles found in Chapter 3 of the Mariposa County General Plan. The purpose of Guiding Principles is to define the significant and long-term objectives for the CV Plan and a vision for the Catheys Valley community.

3.1 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Through the planning process, the community was clear that the “rural character” of Catheys Valley be maintained. Therefore, the CV Plan is founded on the following guiding principles that implement this vision.

- Ensure managed growth.
- Remain a “crossroads” community.
- Maintain the rural character of Catheys Valley.
- Protect rural character by not allowing tract-type housing, which is inconsistent with the rural character of the area.
- Provide opportunities for locally-oriented commercial businesses meeting local needs.
- Protect agricultural operations and ensure new agriculture opportunities are possible.
- Provide opportunities for home businesses commensurate with the rural character of the area.
- Ensure that public health and safety is protected by development in scale with infrastructure.

3.1.01 ENSURE MANAGED GROWTH

The CV Plan manages growth through two mechanisms. One is to maintain residential land uses along the major road systems: Hornitos Road, Highway 140, and Schoolhouse Road. The residential land uses are surrounded by agriculture and ranch lands that may not be converted to non-agricultural uses without meeting General Plan policies for conversion of agriculture lands to non-agricultural uses.

The second tool is focusing commercial development off of and south of Highway 140 in a cluster on or off the Hornitos Road extension. The designated Community Commercial area is of adequate size to provide for a group of stores offering goods and services to meet the local Catheys Valley community’s needs. Locating the commercial off the highway reduces the attractiveness of the site to businesses needing to serve highway traffic or direct tourism-related business.
3.1.02 REMAIN A “CROSSROADS” COMMUNITY

Catheys Valley has never been a “town” at any point in its history. The objective is to maintain the character of being a “crossroads” community and not evolve into a town.

3.1.03 MAINTAIN THE RURAL CHARACTER OF CATHEYS VALLEY

Residents of Catheys Valley define its rural agricultural character as the most critical issue concerning its history, resources, attributes, and future. Dictionary definitions utilize “rural” and “country” interchangeably. While these may be terms that have different meanings to different persons, the CV Plan establishes a common ground for presenting its Guiding Principles.

The many individuals, property owners, and residents of Catheys Valley who have provided comments and stated positions about the CV Plan and its development over a long number of years have defined their expectations for “rural.” To the residents of Catheys Valley, rural means:

- Their current lifestyle, in which open space or countryside are important visual elements.
- A countryside residential/agricultural community that exhibits a strong agricultural economic base, alongside which home, 4-H or hobby-based agricultural activities co-exist.
- Their ability to enjoy seeing the stars at night.
- A recognition that centers of commerce already exist in urban areas such as the Town of Mariposa and the City of Merced, just minutes away, and local siting of national retail chain commercial development is unnecded in Catheys Valley.

Maintaining the historically rural character of Catheys Valley has another aspect to its purpose. This allows the Town of Mariposa to be the commercial center of Mariposa County. Increasing commercial usage and introducing urban densities would create market competition with the County seat. Urban-scale development would impact the area’s limited physical resources, impose demands on the County’s limited financial resources, and create a new town where none exists between Planada and the Town of Mariposa. At the time the CV Plan was prepared, infrastructure in Catheys Valley — particularly roads — is not capable of meeting current needs. No matter what had been proposed two decades prior to this CV Plan, to carry forward densities and broad scopes of development potential without supporting infrastructure is not what the people of Catheys Valley have asked for its future.

The goals, policies, and implementation measures contained within the CV Plan effectively define “rural character” as the ultimate result of meeting these expectations.
3.1.04 **Protect Rural Character by Not Allowing Tract-Type Housing**

Recognizing changes in foothill counties up and down the Sierra Nevada, the Catheys Valley area does not wish to lose rural identity and become a suburb of Merced. This Guiding Principle includes the concept that Catheys Valley is not the future suburban resource that absorbs residential overflow from nearby counties. Substantially higher density development activities, especially those associated with the past rapid growth in the greater Merced area, have the potential to disrupt and consume the fragile resources of this rural environment.

Policies incorporated in the CV Plan purposefully preclude conventional tract subdivision development. Lot sizes are intended to discourage large residential subdivisions in order to preserve the rural character. This Guiding Principle protects the existing agricultural economic base from encroachment by residential development, ensuring that only rural-style residential development, which provides a buffer between residential uses and farms and ranches, is the future of Catheys Valley.

Such policies encourage agricultural enterprises and opportunities to strengthen the area’s agricultural economic base in ways compatible with the limited physical resources of the area and the rural character desired by the community.

3.1.05 **Provide Opportunities for Locally-Oriented Commercial Businesses Meeting Local Needs**

The community’s desire is to see an increase in businesses serving the local residential and agricultural needs of the Catheys Valley area without dependence on “drive-by” or “capture” shopping. As rural counties have evolved in the Sierra Nevada, many of the lower elevation communities have become extensions of Valley-centered urban areas. With this expansion into the foothills comes the impacts of regional shopping and national chains. A result of the homogenized commercial and retail characteristics is a loss of local community character. The protection of rural character in Catheys Valley limits population growth, which reduces the attractiveness to chain businesses.

Providing opportunities for locally-oriented neighborhood, small scale commercial, and supporting agricultural businesses is part of the County’s needs and define Catheys Valley’s character. Large commercial activities are detrimental to the community’s character, not only from the impact of stores or businesses that may be out-of-scale to the community, but also because of the competition or draw regional businesses would impose on the Town of Mariposa. Catheys Valley is not seen as the “Mariposa” between Planada and Mariposa; it is seen as a rural crossroads.

3.1.06 **Protect Agricultural Operations and Ensure New Agriculture Opportunities Are Possible**

Catheys Valley is a quilt of ranchlands, specialty agriculture, and large lot residential development. It is recognized that explosive population growth in the Merced area will bring new population to Catheys Valley. Some new population is likely to be former ur-
banites seeking solace in the rolling hills and oak woodlands of the community. Experience in other foothill counties finds the inward migration of formerly urban populations sometimes settle with very different expectations of life adjoining agricultural lands. The Catheys Valley community finds it critical to ensure the right to farm and protection of existing agricultural operations.

3.1.07 PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES FOR HOME BUSINESSES COMMENSURATE WITH THE RURAL CHARACTER OF THE AREA

A business in the home is part of the rural character of Catheys Valley. Many families earn or supplement household income with businesses based at home. Mariposa County provides extraordinary opportunity for businesses and industries based at home.

These opportunities, however, provide potential conflicts between the goals of the CV Plan and the scope of uses allowed as home enterprises and rural home industries. Within the CV Plan, assurances are included for home enterprises and rural home industries to flourish consistent with community character.

The CV Plan provides for a Community Commercial area and a commercial expansion area into which growing home businesses may relocate. This “fair share” of business-based lands for the future ensures that there are locations where local home business and rural home industries can relocate in the local area when the success of the business requires expansion to an appropriately zoned location.

3.1.08 ENSURE THAT PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY IS PROTECTED BY DEVELOPMENT IN SCALE WITH INFRASTRUCTURE

Catheys Valley faces many of the same challenges as the rest of Mariposa County related to the delivery of infrastructure and community services. The County has limited abilities to provide public facilities and services. This is particularly true with delivery of domestic water and treatment of wastewater. Large distances between service connections and topographic variation contribute to very high costs associated with developing a public water or wastewater treatment system for the area.

As Catheys Valley grows, the need for fire protection, increased emergency service mutual aid, and other types of emergency services also increases. A rural population combined with the number of residents working away from Catheys Valley during the day results in a decreasing pool of volunteers willing, able, or trained to provide such services. Managing growth is one method of keeping the demand for such services in line with the population’s capacity to provide services.

Road improvement and maintenance is another significant issue. Most of the roads in Catheys Valley, with the exception of Highway 140 and Hornitos Road, are not constructed to contemporary standards of width, alignment, shoulders, and passing lanes. Many private roads and many County roads have evolved over the years as opposed to having been planned and designed. Growth in the Catheys Valley area will increase traffic volume and place demands on the road system. The CV Plan keeps the focus of maintaining and enhancing service levels as part of its vision.
4. Catheys Valley Community Plan Administration

This Chapter tiers from Mariposa County General Plan Chapter 4, General Plan Administration, and discusses the role of advisory bodies on Catheys Valley issues. General Plan Chapter 4 addresses the following issues:

- Interpretation of General Plan provisions;
- Review and update of the General Plan;
- Amending the General Plan;
- Interim administration of the General Plan; and
- General Plan implementation.

4.1 ROLE OF ADVISORY BODIES IN CATHEYS VALLEY COMMUNITY PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

The following committees appointed by the Board of Supervisors are established to provide advice and recommendations on policy, implementation, and review in compliance with Mariposa County Code Chapters 2.50.100, 2.90, and 2.110 and implementing resolutions:

- Agricultural Advisory Committee;
- Catheys Valley Community Planning Advisory Committee; and
- Historic Sites and Records Preservation Commission.
5. Goals and Policies of the Catheys Valley Community Plan

This Chapter provides background information on key issues and establishes specific Catheys Valley goals and policies that tier from the Mariposa County General Plan. The CV Plan goals, policies, and implementation measures focus on land use (Section 5.1) and infrastructure and services (Section 5.3).

The General Plan includes twelve elements as follows:

Chapter 5 – Land Use;
Chapter 6 – Economic Development;
Chapter 7 – Arts and Culture;
Chapter 8 – Housing;
Chapter 9 – Circulation, Infrastructure, and Services;
Chapter 10 – Agriculture;
Chapter 11 – Conservation and Open Space;
Chapter 12 – Local Recreation;
Chapter 13 – Regional Tourism;
Chapter 14 – Historic and Cultural Resources;
Chapter 15 – Noise; and
Chapter 16 – Safety.

The General Plan is the controlling document and its policies prevail countywide. The General Plan goals and policies are not repeated in the CV Plan and the user is referred to the General Plan for policy guidance.

The CV Plan provides supplemental goals, policies, and implementation measures that tier from and refine the General Plan, focusing on issues and opportunities specific to Catheys Valley. The goals and policies presented in the CV Plan are organized utilizing the General Plan’s numbering system and are numbered using the prefix “CV”.

The preservation, maintenance, and enhancement of agriculture is of heightened importance to Catheys Valley. To emphasize this importance, the CV Plan implements the General Plan Agriculture Element.

5.1 LAND USE

5.1.01 MAINTAINING RURAL CHARACTER

A. MINIMUM PARCEL SIZE

Requiring a minimum parcel size for residential development maintains a sense of open space while still allowing residential development. With use of septic systems and wells, larger areas are required for setbacks so that development can occur on parcels. This is particularly true in Catheys Valley due to soil characteristics and problems associated with the quality and quantity of groundwater for potable use.
The community supports larger minimum residential parcel sizes that result in a character recognized as being "rural." Parcels in the Residential land use classification have a minimum average density of five acres with the potential to have minimum two and one-half (2.5) acre parcels (average of five acres) for new subdivisions in compliance with General Plan provisions for clustering. Parcels in the Community Residential land use classification have a minimum parcel size of two and one-half (2.5) acres for new subdivisions. Parcels created within the Residential and Community Residential land use classifications when adjacent to lands in the Agriculture/Working Landscape classification have a minimum parcel size of five acres for new subdivisions. The State of California allows secondary residential units. These are not calculated in the minimum parcel sizes required for new subdivisions.

The minimum parcel sizes provide separation and buffer to allow rural activities such as farm animals, gardens, horses, or collectibles.

In terms of utility services, the minimum parcel sizes for new subdivisions enable individuals to use their own well for water supply and individual onsite sewage disposal, although certain infrastructure options are offered to the developer at the time of subdivision. Most importantly, the minimum parcel sizes purposely preclude urban or suburban scale development being imposed on the rural landscape within Catheys Valley. It is recognized that the minimum parcel sizes are not necessarily the most efficient means of maintaining open space, but the Catheys Valley area has long developed with significant spacing between homes as a result of its parcel size patterns. The CV Plan continues that pattern.

B. CATHEYS VALLEY DESIGN STYLE

Catheys Valley Community Design Guidelines, Appendix B, provide design guidelines that reflect a desired rustic "western" village style for commercial and institutional uses within Catheys Valley. The CV Plan includes policies to achieve the desired rural character for commercial and institutional development with the intent to avoid cliché California suburban styles. Implementation of the CV Plan requires adoption of Site Development and Supplementary Standards through an ordinance process. Design review requirements shall apply to commercial and institutional uses and not apply to permitted uses and associated development in the Agriculture/Working Landscape, Community Residential, and Residential land use classifications.

As development has increased in the foothills, land developers have stretched the suburban styles of Central Valley urban areas into the rural Sierra landscape. Throughout the California foothills, there is a trend to either emulate the "Mission" cliché architecture with its pale tan or cream color stucco walls as being "rural character." The Catheys Valley area has never sustained permanent settlements using this style. A similar style to Mission is the stucco, adobe brick, and heavy timber of the "Southwest" architecture. This design, too, has never been used in western Mariposa County. Neither Mission nor Southwest styles fit Catheys Valley's rural character.

As a working rural area, the historic character of Catheys Valley is best implemented using natural materials for siding and trim such as weathered wood and stone. Use of modern materials that closely resemble natural materials is appropriate. Consistent with the
styles of the historic ranch homes and the Gold Rush era, appropriate roof styles include gable roof lines with relatively steep pitch or a false façade. The Catheys Valley Design Guidelines requires covered walkways, and an emphasis on raised walkways constructed of surfaces with the appearance and texture of wood. The intent is to avoid the urban-style smooth sidewalk. Acceptable building and roof materials, designs, and styles are identified in Appendix B.

The Catheys Valley Design Guidelines emphasize the creation of a “rural crossroads community” appearance. Commercial and institutional development needs to have a pedestrian focus incorporating shared driveways whenever possible and site design centered on pedestrian safety, convenience, and proximity. Vehicle-oriented features, such as drive-through windows, are not consistent with pedestrian character, and the implementing programs will prohibit their inclusion in project designs or site plans.

C. SITE DEVELOPMENT AND SUPPLEMENTARY STANDARDS

Siting new commercial or institutional development to fit existing terrain and maintain existing vegetation is important to achieve the rustic western village theme and enhance Catheys Valley community design. Some characteristics are extremely important to incorporate at policy level; however, most detail will be contained within the Catheys Valley Design Guidelines (Appendix B), or the Mariposa County Zoning Ordinance. Site development and supplementary standards shall not apply to uses or associated development described in the Agriculture/Working Landscape, Community Residential, and Residential land use designations.

Primary objectives include saving native vegetation and significant rock outcroppings as priorities. Commercial and institutional development can be constructed to fit into the terrain as opposed to changing terrain to fit the project. Site preparation and design are a part of the overall development process, and any grading, land clearing, or tree removal for commercial or institutional development necessitates a Design Review application prior to initiation of activities. Structures and site development are to be integrated into existing terrain, topography, and landforms. These concepts mean some grading may be terraced, site preparation costs may increase, and greater care in design is necessary.

Other objectives include using natural materials or materials that appear natural for the facing of retaining walls and retaining and preserving natural drainages, such as Owens Creek and other “blue-line” streams, because these drainages are part of the rural character.

How a site is used, whether within or outside a structure, is a part of the rural character. Siting of new development off Highway 140 creates an internal rural village and avoids a highway-orientation. The siting of structures must reflect appropriate setbacks from property lines and the rural vista. Buildings will need to complement and not block views. Establishing height standards is important to the rustic western village theme. The rear elevations of the buildings are integral to the design guidelines because commercial and institutional development can be visible from adjoining properties and roads.

Siting structures appropriately applies both to buildings and other types of physical development or structures. Vistas in Catheys Valley are an integral part of the rural charac-
ter and the landscape. Rolling hills with oak woodlands and shallow valleys dominate the landscape. There are very few obstructions to views.

In 2000, a water tank was installed on property in the central area of Catheys Valley. This hilltop structure of significant height becomes the dominant visual feature when one enters the center of Catheys Valley from either Hornitos Road or Highway 140. The scale, mass, and siting of this water tank is inappropriate. Design and zoning regulations will ensure that future structures have a scale, mass, and siting that is appropriate to the character of Catheys Valley.

Other design characteristics to be addressed in guidelines and zoning regulations include signage, lighting, grading, and landscaping. Mariposa County overall, and Catheys Valley in particular, are among the few areas in California where it is still possible to clearly see stars in the night sky. Recognized “dark sky” standards are to be integrated into the Design Guidelines.

D. SEPARATION OF COMMUNITY COMMERCIAL AND AGRICULTURE/WORKING LANDSCAPE

Community planning areas represent commercial and service centers away from the County’s more densely populated areas, such as Mariposa or Lake Don Pedro. Catheys Valley includes a significant amount of land included in the Agriculture/Working Landscape land use classification. This inclusion is intentional. Catheys Valley’s rural character is dependent on ensuring a continued balance of rural density residential and working ranches, farms, and agriculture-related businesses.

As rural counties grow, much of the incoming population comes from urban and urbanizing areas. New residents locate in Mariposa County for many reasons, but key among those reasons is the County’s rural character. Catheys Valley epitomizes rural character. New residents sometimes do not recognize that the vast expanses of ranch land surrounding their homes provide not only scenic qualities, but represent another’s business and a significant portion of the County’s economic base.

The intermixing of rural residences with working ranches and farm lands is part of the rural charm, but it also creates potential conflicts between the person seeing their residence as a home with certain “rural character” expectations being inconvenienced by the economic activity at an adjoining ranch or farm.

Residential development adjacent to Agriculture/Working Landscape lands should reflect the balance between the rural home and the working ranch and farm. The minimum residential parcel size is five acres when adjacent to Agriculture/Working Landscape lands. A new subdivision adjoining Agriculture/Working Landscape lands provides an opportunity to disclose the County’s “Right to Farm” regulations and policies.

5.1.02 LAND USE CLASSIFICATIONS

California Government Code §65302 et seq. requires a general plan to include maps designating the general distribution and location of land uses. With no incorporated cities, the Mariposa County General Plan serves both the regional needs of the County and the
more precise planning needs of Catheys Valley. Land use classifications are used to identify future land uses in Catheys Valley. The CV Plan, a part of the General Plan, serves as the general plan for the Catheys Valley area.

The CV Plan includes five land use classifications, as shown in Figure 5-1:

- Residential;
- Community Residential;
- Community Commercial;
- Agriculture/Working Landscape; and
- Public Facilities and Services.

The CV Plan land use classifications are different from zoning districts established in the County Zoning Ordinance. The purpose of a land use classification is to paint a picture of the future land use patterns of Catheys Valley. The land use classifications generally follow the traditional zoning in Catheys Valley, with some additions. The CV Plan ensures that parcels with existing zoning that allows the subdivision of land into 2.5-acre parcels be retained through the Community Residential land use classification.

California General Plan law requires land use classifications to describe an extent of uses, population density, and building intensity. These requirements form the basis for the later application of zoning.

Zoning districts (zones) are implementation tools of the General Plan and CV Plan. Zoning districts, identified within each land use category, implement the CV Plan’s purposes. The zones specify entitlements by prescribing permitted uses. The zones prescribe administrative uses, permitted uses, conditional uses, accessory uses, temporary uses, and site development and supplementary standards.

The CV Plan land use classifications include several components:

- Purpose;
- Extent of uses;
- Consistent zoning classifications;
- Population density standards;
- Building intensity standards; and
- Criteria for inclusion in the land use classification.

Development standards, prescription of uses, and other requirements are implemented through the Zoning Ordinance, Title 17 of the Mariposa County Code, which shall be amended to accommodate the special zoning standards in the CV Plan.

- The purpose defines the need for the classification and the reasons for its inclusion in the CV Plan.
- The extent of uses defines the general characteristics of the use of land within the classification. The extent of uses is not intended to serve as a supplement or override of the prescribed administrative uses, permitted uses, and conditional uses implemented through zoning.
• Zoning consistency defines which of the County’s zoning districts are permitted within a land use classification.

• Population density is the maximum number of projected persons per acre of gross land area based on the number of dwelling units and the Year 2000 Census number of persons per dwelling unit. Population density is a numeric calculation and does not create an actual regulation or limit on occupancy.

• Building intensity represents different characteristics for different types of uses. For residential development, building intensity is the number of dwelling units per either 5 acres or 2.5 acres of gross land area. For non-residential development, building intensity is the employee/user capacity of a facility. This may be determined in square footage, lot coverage, traffic generation, or other defined factor in the explanation under a land use classification.

• Criteria for inclusion are policy specifics applicable to the review of any application that proposes to change the land use classification of land from one classification to another.

A. RESIDENTIAL

A(1) Purpose

The Residential land use classification identifies lands for household living in a rural setting.

A(2) Extent of Uses

In keeping with the County’s rural lifestyle, Residential land includes dwellings and agricultural activities compatible with residences. Typical accessory uses are related to personal recreation, home-based entrepreneurial activities, and other uses consistent with rural character. Religious facilities are allowed subject to a conditional use permit, when found to be consistent with rural character.

A(3) Zoning Consistency

The following zoning districts are consistent with the purpose of the Residential land use classification:

- Agriculture Exclusive
- Mountain Home

A(4) Population Density and Building Intensity

*Maximum number of dwelling units*: One (1) dwelling unit per legally existing parcel.\(^1\)

*Maximum density for new subdivisions*: One (1) dwelling unit per five (5) acres of gross land area.

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\(^1\) Accessory dwelling units consistent with policies in the Housing Element are not included in this calculation.
Minimum parcel size for new subdivisions: Two and one-half (2.5) acres of gross land area provided the average density does not exceed one (1) dwelling per five (5) acres for the proposed subdivision. Parcels created within the Residential land use classification when adjacent to Agriculture/Working Landscape land have a minimum parcel size of five (5) acres of gross land area.

Maximum building intensity: 10% lot coverage per five (5) acres of gross land area and 10% lot coverage per two and one-half (2.5) acres of gross land area.

Average population density: 0.491 persons per acre of gross land area.¹

¹ The 2000 Census defines 2.45 persons per dwelling unit as the County average. This is a mathematical calculation required by California law. The population density is a calculation of multiplying the number of units per acre by 2.45.
Figure 5-1 - Catheys Valley Community Plan Land Use
Figure 5-2 - Catheys Valley Commercial Reserve
A(5) Site Development and Supplementary Standards

Site development and supplementary standards are implementation requirements of the CV Plan. Some standards include broader policies defined to aid implementation. The standards included in this section are required for new development, unless specified in the CV Plan or the General Plan.

♦ Functional service classification and current template of the road

Roads in Catheys Valley serve a variety of functions requiring different development standards. These standards are intended to provide adequate capacity for anticipated development and safe and efficient traffic management.

♦ Average slope of subject property

The County Planning Staff will review residential building permits on existing and future parcels with slopes in excess of 15%, and the Planning Commission will review subdivisions with slopes on parcels with slopes in excess of 15%, in compliance with Section 5.3.02.E(2) of the General Plan.

♦ Suitability of soils for individual onsite sewage disposal system meeting Health Department requirements

New parcels shall have approved areas for onsite sewage disposal systems and shall obtain an approval from the Health Department.

♦ Potable water supply related to the residential land use classification

Standards for potable water supply in the Residential land use classification are provided in General Plan Section 5.3.02.E(4).

♦ Fire protection and fire management

New construction shall conform to the regulations of the County Building Department, County Fire Department, and California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (Cal Fire) for purposes of fire management and fire safety.

A(6) Intensity of Use Standards

Intensity of use shall be consistent with rural character:

Visual – Development that is accessory to the primary use of lands within the Residential land use classification shall be of an appropriate use, height, scale, mass, and bulk to be permitted. The Zoning Ordinance shall include appropriate standards to define the Catheys Valley standards.

Storage – Storage standards in the Residential land use classification are provided in General Plan Section 5.3.02.F(3). Self-storage units shall not be classified as a home enterprise or rural home industry in Catheys Valley.
Parcel size compatibility and relationship to surrounding uses - The minimum parcel size within the Residential land use classification is five (5) acres when it adjoins a parcel in the Agriculture/Working Landscape land use classification.

Animal husbandry – Animal husbandry standards in the Residential land use classification are provided in General Plan Section 5.3.02.F(6).

A(7) Criteria for New Lands to be Included

Criteria for inclusion of new lands into the Residential land use classification are provided in General Plan Section 5.3.02.G Items 1a, 1b, 2, and 4.

B. COMMUNITY RESIDENTIAL

B(1) Purpose

The Community Residential land use classification identifies lands for household living in a rural community setting.

B(2) Extent of Uses

In keeping with the County’s rural lifestyle, Community Residential land includes dwellings and agricultural activities compatible with residences. Typical accessory uses are related to personal recreation, home-based entrepreneurial activities, and other uses consistent with rural character. Religious facilities are allowed subject to a conditional use permit, when found to be consistent with rural character.

B(3) Zoning Consistency

The following zoning districts are consistent with the purpose of the Community Residential land use classification:

- Agriculture Exclusive
- Mountain Home
- Neighborhood Residential
- Rural Residential

B(4) Population Density and Building Intensity

Maximum number of dwelling units: One (1) dwelling unit per legally existing parcel.¹

Maximum density for new subdivisions: One (1) dwelling unit per two and one-half (2.5) acres of gross land area. Parcels created within the Community Residential land use classification when adjacent to Agriculture/Working Landscape land have a maximum density of one (1) dwelling unit per five (5) acres of gross land area.

Minimum parcel size for new subdivisions: Two and one-half (2.5) acres of gross land area. Parcels created within the Community Residential land use classification when ad-

¹ Accessory dwelling units consistent with policies in the Housing Element are not included in this calculation.
jacent to Agriculture/Working Landscape land have a minimum parcel size of five acres (5) of gross land area.

**Maximum building intensity:** 10% lot coverage per two and one-half (2.5) acres of gross land area. Parcels created within the Community Residential land use classification when adjacent to Agriculture/Working Landscape land have a maximum building intensity of 10% lot coverage per five (5) acres of gross land area.

**Average population density:** 0.98 persons per acre of gross land area. Parcels created within the Community Residential land use classification when adjacent to Agriculture/Working Landscape land have an average population density of 0.491 persons per acre of gross land area.1

**B(5) Site Development and Supplementary Standards**

Site development and supplementary standards for the Community Residential land use classification are provided in Section 5.1.02.A(5).

**B(6) Intensity of Use Standards**

Intensity of use standards for the Community Residential land use classification are provided in Section 5.1.02.A(6).

**B(6) Criteria for New Land to be Included**

Criteria for inclusion of new lands into the Community Residential land use classification are provided in General Plan Section 5.3.02.G, with the exception that Finding No. 3 shall be:

3. The subject property will be contiguous on at least two sides to lands within the Residential, Community Residential, or Community Commercial land use classifications.

**C. COMMUNITY COMMERCIAL**

**C(1) Purpose**

The Community Commercial land use classification identifies land for local business, service, and commerce for business with the primary purpose of serving residents of Catheys Valley. Community Commercial lands identify a community center for Catheys Valley and encourage the clustering of commercial and economic activity that can function without the direct need to attract pass-through traffic from Highway 140. The primary purpose of the community commercial area is to serve the local needs of Catheys Valley and vicinity. The Community Commercial land use classification uses serve the needs of the local population. Businesses requiring drive-by, capture, or tourist customers in order to be financially successful are not appropriate in Catheys Valley.

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1 The 2000 Census defines 2.45 persons per dwelling unit as the County average. This is a mathematical calculation required by California law. The population density is a calculation of multiplying the number of units per acre by 2.45.
Community Commercial land use classification is not intended for the construction of a regional shopping or tourist service center.

C(2) Extent of Uses

Primary uses are retail and commercial businesses supporting the needs of a small community comprised of home businesses, agricultural uses, working families, retired individuals, and commuters. Businesses with a primary market derived from a regional population or tourists are not compatible with the Community Commercial classification. Religious facilities, including those with retail sales consistent with this section and/or including sports and entertainment facilities for organization members and/or the members of the community are allowed subject to a conditional use permit.

Accessory uses may be developed after the primary use is in place if the uses enhance the primary use. Residential uses on lands within the Community Commercial land use classification shall be accessory to the primary use.

C(3) Zoning Consistency

The following zoning districts are consistent with the purpose of the Community Commercial land use classification:

- Neighborhood Commercial Zone Three
- Public Sites

C(4) Population Density and Building Intensity

Minimum parcel size for new subdivisions: Two and one-half (2.5) acres of gross land area.

Maximum dwelling units: A maximum of four (4) attached residential units per parcel when an integral part of a commercial development.

Maximum building intensity: Thirty-three (33) percent lot coverage. The maximum gross square footage of a single building shall be five thousand (5,000) square feet.

Maximum population density: One hundred percent of the number of employees of the primary use.

C(5) Development Standards

♦ Frontage on maintained road

Development within the Community Commercial land use classification shall be required to front on a paved, maintained road. Frontage standards in the Community Commercial land use classification are provided in General Plan Section 5.3.03.E(2).
♦ Parking and access

Access to a County arterial or major collector shall be shared between commercial lots and the County shall be empowered to require access design to serve multiple parcels.

Buildings shall be sited so that parking areas may be shared between Community Commercial uses. Buildings shall be sited to facilitate pedestrian access between structures using accepted design principles for safety and attractiveness.

Site designs in which structures are designed with large parking areas between buildings and the access roads shall be avoided.

♦ Design

Design Review required: Proposed commercial and institutional development, including modifications to existing development, shall be consistent with the Catheys Valley Design Guidelines (Appendix B).

Viewshed: The height, mass, and bulk of a structure shall be in conformance with the Catheys Valley Design Guidelines (Appendix B).

Structure design, landscaping and scenic environment: The colors, materials, texture, and style of a structure shall be consistent with the Catheys Valley Design Guidelines (Appendix B).

Site development: Site development shall be consistent with the Catheys Valley Design Guidelines (Appendix B).

♦ Slope

Development sites with slopes over ten percent (10%) shall be engineered for stability and designed to match the natural contours and topography in order to blend with the natural environment. The use of cuts and fills shall be minimized.

The County Planning Staff will review building permits on existing and future parcels with slopes in excess of 15%, and the Planning Commission will review subdivisions on parcels with slopes in excess of 15%, in compliance with Section 5.3.02 E(2) of the General Plan.

♦ Landscaping

Existing mature native landscaping shall be retained to the greatest extent possible. Native species suitable to site characteristics shall be required. Landscaping shall conform to the requirements of the Catheys Valley Design Guidelines.
Water supply and wastewater disposal

Prior to submittal of an application for design review, the applicant shall obtain the approval of the Health Department for an onsite or shared wastewater disposal system and an appropriate supply of potable water from an on-site or shared source adequate to serve the intended structure and its range of uses.

Fire protection and fire management

Rural commercial and institutional development will meet fire protection regulations.

C(6) Criteria for New Lands to be Included

Community commercial area

The CV Plan identifies the community commercial area. The Community Commercial area is adequate to meet the long-term needs of Catheys Valley projected population.

Future community commercial area expansion

In order to apply for a change of land use classification into the Community Commercial land use classification, the County shall substantiate all of the following:

1. The subject property has frontage on a paved, maintained road built to the standards of a minor arterial, major collector, or minor collector.
2. The subject property adjoins existing commercial lands.
3. The properties included in the Community Commercial land use classification are more than 75% developed. If a specific development application is based on a rural home industry expanding the number of jobs so that relocation from home to a business location is required, this finding is not required.
4. A specific development proposal accompanies the application.
5. The subject property is within the area shown as Community Commercial Reserve in Figure 5-2.

D. AGRICULTURE/WORKING LANDSCAPE

The CV Plan applies the General Plan Agriculture/Working Landscape land use classification, General Plan Section 5.3.04.

E. PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES

E(1) Purpose

The Public Facilities and Services land use classification defines lands identified for the location of or expansion to public and private uses serving the general public’s health, safety, and welfare.
E(2) Extent of Uses

Schools; parks; religious facilities, including those with sports and entertainment facilities for organization members and/or the members of the community; public facilities.

E(3) Zoning Consistency

The following zoning districts are consistent with the purpose of the Public Facilities and Services land use classification:

Public Sites

E(4) Population Density and Building Intensity

Maximum dwelling units: Per approved project, generally one dwelling unit per project site for purposes of providing onsite security.¹

Minimum parcel size for new subdivisions:

Two and one-half (2.5) acres of gross land area.

Maximum building intensity: Per approved project.

Maximum population density: 2.45 persons per onsite security dwelling

E(5) Development Standards

Site development and supplementary standards for the Public Facilities and Services land use classification are provided in Section 5.1.02.C(5).

E(6) Criteria for New Lands to be Included

Land shall be owned or used by a public agency, a recognized public utility, a quasi-public utility, or homeowner association.

F. LEGAL EXISTING USES OF LAND

Regulations for legally existing uses of land in Catheys Valley are provided in General Plan Section 5.1.12 and Goal 5-11, Policies 5-11a and 5-11b, and Implementation Measures 5-11a(1) and 5-11b(1).

G. HOME BUSINESSES

Traffic generation standards for home businesses in the Residential and Community Residential land use classifications are provided in General Plan Section 5.3.02.F(2).

¹ For example, a mobile home in which a caretaker and family reside on the grounds of a public park.
H. PLACES OF WORSHIP

The small neighborhood religious facility walked to by families has also become part of historic Americana. Religious facilities today meet multiple spiritual and community needs. Traditionally, the small congregations in the rural neighborhood religious facility were busily used on Sundays and possibly a mid-week Bible Study or youth group meeting. Today’s religious facility complexes may serve distantly living regional congregations and offer a wide variety of educational, spiritual, service, and even recreational activities.

Catheys Valley and the County of Mariposa welcome opportunities for residents to build and fully use religious facilities. Recognizing this freedom to worship, the CV Plan seeks a balance between the ability to worship and the importance of addressing land use compatibility issues throughout the community. Depending on the extent of additional non-traditional facilities and activities offered by the complex, religious facilities are identified conditional uses in the CV Plan, depending on their consistency and compatibility with other uses in the classification.

Primary and traditional religious facility operational characteristics are similar to assembly uses. As such, the facility needs to be situated with access from a maintained road with adequate capacity to serve the full functions of the religious facility or place of worship. In order to maintain rural character, a place of worship is subject to design review as an institutional use in compliance with the Catheys Valley Design Guidelines (Appendix B) that balance the characteristics unique to worship with size, mass, bulk, and scale of rural character. Religious facilities and religious centers shall comply with appropriate lot coverage and onsite parking, access, and landscaping standards as applicable to similar uses.

5.1.03 LAND USE GOALS AND POLICIES

The following are the CV Plan land use goals, policies, and implementations measures. These policies are unique to the CV Plan and are not repeated in the General Plan. In several cases, policies are “tiered” from or are otherwise related to broader General Plan policies and are noted in the text.

Goal CV5.1-1: Parcel sizes for residential uses shall be sized for rural character.

Policy CV5.1-1a: Two and one-half (2.5) acres is the minimum parcel size for new subdivisions in the Community Residential land use classification.

Implementation Measure

CV5.1-1a(1): The County shall amend the Zoning Ordinance to establish a Neighborhood Residential zone, which maintains a minimum parcel size of two and one-half (2.5) acres of gross land area, and shall modify the
County Zoning Map to designate parcels in the Community Residential land use classification as the Neighborhood Residential zone.

Timing: Short-Term Planning Period

Responsibility: Mariposa County Planning Department

Fiscal Impact: One-Time Impact – Requires approximately 350 to 450 hours of staff time to update the Zoning Ordinance and the County Zoning Map and process a negative declaration of environmental impact over a period of approximately 24 months.

Ongoing Impact – Small increase in property tax revenues to General Fund by increasing the number of potential parcels (after subdivision and sale). Inconsequential dollar amount.

Consequences: The General Plan proposes flexibility in its residential land development patterns when there are suitable site development characteristics. The Community Residential land uses are located near Community Commercial land uses and transit. Revisions to the County Zoning Ordinance provide consistency with the CV Plan.

Policy CV5.1-1b: Five (5) acres is the minimum parcel size in the Residential and Community Residential land use classifications when the parcels are adjacent to Agriculture/Working Landscape land.

Implementation Measure

CV5.1-1b(1): The County shall update the County Zoning Ordinance to require a minimum parcel size of five (5) acres of gross land area in the Residential and Community Residential land use classifications when the parcel is adjacent to Agriculture/Working Landscape lands.

Timing: Short-Term Planning Period

Responsibility: Mariposa County Planning Department

Fiscal Impact: One-Time Impact – Staff time is included in Implementation Measure CV5.1-1a(1).

Ongoing Impact – Small decrease in property tax revenues to General Fund by decreasing the number of potential parcels. Inconsequential dollar amount.

Consequences: Revisions to the County Zoning Ordinance will provide a buffer between residential and agriculture/working landscape lands.
Goal CV5.1-2: Maintain rural densities for residential development in the Resi-
dential land use classification.

(Goal CV5.1-2, Policy CV5.1-2a, and Implementation Measures
CV5.1-2a(1) are tiered from General Plan Goal 5-9. General Plan
text will be reviewed in conjunction with CV Plan policies and im-
plementation measures.)

Policy CV5.1-2a: One house per five acres is Catheys Valley’s rural average density.

Implementation Measure
CV5.1-2a(1): In the Residential land use classification, the maximum allowable
density for residential development shall be one dwelling unit per
five acres.

Timing: Ongoing review standard

Responsibility: Mariposa County Planning Department

Fiscal Impact: None.

Consequences: This fixes the standard of the “five acre parcel”
as the rural standard in Catheys Valley. It does not, however, require that this density be based
on a minimum parcel size, just an average den-
sity of one house per five acres. A second resi-
dential unit that conforms to the requirements of
California Government Code Section 65852 will
not be considered in the calculation of allowable
density for a residential parcel in Catheys Val-
ley.

Goal CV5.1-3: Parcel sizes for commercial and institutional uses shall be based
on maintaining rural character.

Policy CV5.1-3a: Commercial and institutional development shall be sited on parcels
designed and sized to maintain rural character.

Implementation
Measure CV5.1-3a(1): The County shall modify the County Zoning Ordinance to estab-
lish the Neighborhood Commercial Zone Three, which incorporates
a minimum parcel size of two and one-half (2.5) acres of gross land
area and standards for commercial and institutional development to
maintain rural character.

Timing: Short-Term Planning Period

Responsibility: Mariposa County Planning Department

Fiscal impact: One-Time Impact – Cost is included in Imple-
mentation Measure CV5.1-1a(1).
Ongoing Impact -- Staff project review costs will vary depending on the project and are paid by an applicant through project review reimbursement.

Consequences: Revisions to County Zoning Ordinance will provide consistency with CV Plan.

Goal CV5.1-4: New development emphasizes rural character qualities.

Policy CV5.1-4a: Design review shall be required for commercial and institutional development.

Implementation Measure

CV5.1-4a(1): The County Zoning Ordinance shall be amended to establish site development and supplementary standards for Catheys Valley commercial and institutional zones. A proposed project shall be reviewed to ensure architectural design, site layout and grading, landscaping, and development style maintain rural character in scale with the area. The standards should address, at a minimum, the following issues:

- Mechanical equipment (such as water storage tanks);
- Setbacks tailored to the community for residential, commercial, and institutional development;
- Lighting plans reflecting the guidelines of the International Dark Sky Association; and
- Building and structure heights reflective of the topography, building site, and surrounding properties.

Timing: Short-Term Planning Period

Responsibility: Mariposa County Planning Department

Fiscal Impact: One-Time Impact – Cost is included in Implementation Measure CV5.1-3a(1).

Consequences: New commercial and institutional projects will be evaluated based on Catheys Valley site development and supplementary standards.

Goal CV5.1-5: Achieve balance with rural residences and working ranches and farms.

(3) Goal CV5.1-5, Policies CV5.1-5a and CV5.1-1b, and Implementation Measures CV5.1-5a(1) and CV5.1-5b(1) are tiered from General Plan Policy 5-5a. General Plan text will be reviewed in conjunction with CV Plan policies and implementation measures.)

Policy CV5.1-5a: Subdivision activity is only permitted on maintained roads with adequate capacity to serve the potential new lots.
Implementation Measure

CV5.1-5a(1): To qualify for subdivision, access to the subject property shall be from a road that is:

(1) maintained; and

(2) has adequate capacity for the potential traffic volume generated by the total number of existing lots and those which can be created within the road system.

Timing: Ongoing review standard

Responsibility: Mariposa County Planning Department

Fiscal impact: Ongoing Impact - Staff project review costs will vary depending on the project and are paid by an applicant through project review reimbursement.

Consequences: This establishes a minimum standard linking circulation with land use. A public or private road must have adequate capacity to accommodate the traffic generated by the proposed and potential subdivisions within the same road system to be approved.

Implementation Measure

CV5.1-5a(2): Prior to the submittal of a final subdivision map, roads serving the proposed subdivision shall be improved, or appropriate surety submitted to the County of Mariposa to cover the cost of improving such roads, to the standards required for subdivision capacity as identified in the General Plan Circulation, Infrastructure, and Services element.

Timing: Ongoing review standard

Responsibility: Mariposa County Planning Department

Fiscal impact: Ongoing Impact - Staff project review costs will vary depending on the project and are paid by an applicant through project review reimbursement.

Consequences: Road improvements must be completed, or surety for completion posted, prior to the submittal of the final subdivision maps.

Goal CV5.1-6: Development minimizes impacts on and/or improves air quality.

(Goal CV5.1-6, Policy CV5.1-6a, and Implementation Measures CV5.1-6a(1) and CV5.1-6a(2) are tiered from General Plan Policy 11-

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1 "Maintained road" means a road that receives scheduled maintenance from the State Department of Transportation, County of Mariposa, special district, or mandatory private road maintenance association created as part of the project approval.
Policy CV5.1-6a: Implement standards that minimize impacts on and/or improve air quality.

Implementation Measure

CV5.1-6a(1): For new commercial and institutional building permits and all subdivision applications, including new residential subdivision applications in Catheys Valley, the County shall require energy conservation and the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions in conformance with California Code of Regulation Title 24, Parts 6 and 11. Additional measures shall include one or more of the following:

- Limited hours of operation of outdoor lighting.
- The use of solar heating, automatic covers, and efficient pumps and motors for pools and spas.
- The installation of solar, wind, and geothermal power systems, and solar hot water heaters.
- Features that discourage excessive use of water for cleaning outdoor surfaces and vehicles.
- Low-impact development practices that maintain the existing hydrologic character of the site to manage stormwater in accordance with General Plan Implementation Measure 16-5a(2) and protect the environment. (Retaining increased stormwater runoff on-site resulting from project implementation can drastically reduce the need for energy-intensive imported water at the site.)
- Mixed-use included in commercial development projects to support the reduction of vehicle trips, promote alternatives to individual vehicle travel such as the Yosemite Area Regional Transportation System (YARTS), and promote efficient delivery of services and goods.

Timing: Short-Term Planning Period

Responsibility: Mariposa County Planning Department.

Fiscal impact: Ongoing Impact - Staff project review costs will vary depending on the project and are paid by an applicant through project review reimbursement.

Consequences: Reduces emissions of air pollutants and greenhouse gases.

Implementation Measure

CV5.1-6a(2): The County supports the availability of the following educational programs for Catheys Valley residents as time and resources permit:

- Energy efficiency and water conservation, including available programs and incentives;
• Waste reduction and available recycling services; and
• Options for individuals and businesses to reduce transportation-related emissions, including YARTS, bicycle, and horse trails.

Timing: Short-Term Planning Period

Responsibility: Mariposa County Public Works Department.

Fiscal impact: Ongoing Impact – Staff time during the work day to answer questions and provide available information.

Consequences: Reduces emissions of air pollutants and greenhouse gases.

5.2 AGRICULTURE

5.2.01 UNIQUE CATHEYS VALLEY AGRICULTURAL ISSUES

Agriculture is a crucial policy issue in Catheys Valley because it contributes to the community and Mariposa County’s overall economic and social sustainability and is a major aspect of the community and County’s rural character. Agriculture provides open space, habitat for plants and wildlife, recreation for residents and tourists, a diverse range of specialty products, and local jobs. Agriculture serves as a model and anchor for Catheys Valley’s rural way of life. The CV Plan maintains rural character and creates an important, long-term, and fundamental economic base, requiring that agriculture be nurtured, sustained, and preserved.

Agriculture utilizes primary resources of soil, water, sun, and air. The viability of agriculture is dependent on conserving and managing these resources for the future. The partnership between the County and private interests create collaboration opportunities to ensure Catheys Valley’s resources are used in beneficial ways that enhance the value of agriculture in the local economy. Therefore, the water demands of future projects, including residential/commercial, and water intensive agriculture projects, should be evaluated for impacts on existing agriculture and the agricultural economy, and residential uses within the vicinity of the proposed project.

The General Plan Agriculture Element implements programs resolving issues related to agriculture in Catheys Valley. Some programs cross element boundaries and are implemented elsewhere in the CV Plan. The key issues addressed in the Agriculture Element are:

• General Plan Section 10.1.01 – Preserving agricultural lands,

• General Plan Section 10.1.02 – Working landscape stewardship (From the General Plan, Section 10.1.02: “Stewardship is the act of land use conservation and land resource protection. The General Plan is based on the precept that those who live on and manage the land are the best stewards. This is particularly true with agriculture and forestry.”)
• General Plan Section 10.1.03 – Nurturing the agricultural economy throughout the County, and
• General Plan Section 10.1.04 – Maintaining the rural character of the County.

The inclusion of this introductory text in the CV Plan is recognition of the essential contributions agriculture makes to Catheys Valley’s economy and character.

5.2.02 AGRICULTURE GOALS AND POLICIES

The CV Plan implements the General Plan Agriculture Element Goals and Policies in General Plan Section 10.2.

5.3 INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES

5.3.01 DISTINCTIVE ASPECTS OF CATHEYS VALLEY INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES

The General Plan addresses circulation issues and road maintenance consistent with the needs of Catheys Valley. There is no need for special circulation related goals in the CV Plan. Likewise, utilities are addressed in the General Plan, and Catheys Valley-specific utilities policies are unnecessary.

As a rural crossroads community that has never been a “town,” Catheys Valley has a density and development potential that avoids the need for public systems to deliver potable water or manage wastewater disposal. Onsite or privately maintained shared systems are adequate to meet long-term community needs including those for existing parcels, new subdivision parcels and commercial development.

Narrow rural roads and an increasing family population create a recipe for dangerous intermixing of pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicle traffic. The Catheys Valley area needs to develop a pedestrian system to separate children and adults from vehicle traffic. Key pedestrian links from residential areas to the Catheys Valley Park and the commercial center are needed.

Two telecommunications providers serve the Catheys Valley: Sierra Telephone Company, based in Oakhurst, and TDS, which is part of a group of small phone companies. Sierra Telephone provides the 966 and 742 prefix services and offers fiber optic connections to a portion of its service area. Sierra Telephone and TDS have been offering DSL high-speed internet connectivity in outlying areas of the County in an increasing range of locations.

High-speed internet connections and contemporary features are necessary for the County to accomplish its long-range economic development strategies. The General Plan includes a Guiding Principle advocating connectivity.
5.3.02 INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES GOALS AND POLICIES

Goal CV5-3.1: Maintain rural character by providing exclusively for individual onsite sewage disposal systems on parcels within the Residential and/or Community Residential land use classifications.

Policy CV5.3-1a: Parcels in new residential subdivisions shall be self-sufficient in terms of individual on-site wastewater disposal. New residential subdivisions shall not be approved if public, mutual, or privately maintained shared wastewater disposal systems are required for development. This policy does not prohibit the creation of a community or shared wastewater system on existing parcels in the Residential and/or Community Residential land use classifications that abates a public health problem.

Implementation Measure
CV5.3-1a(1): The Local Agency Formation Commission is encouraged to not approve the formation of a district empowered to provide wastewater disposal to parcels in the Residential or Community Residential land use classifications.

Timing: Short-Term Planning Period
Responsibility: Local Agency Formation Commission
Fiscal Impact: Avoids the cost of forming and operating a special district for wastewater.
Consequences: This measure supports the General Plan assessment of a land use issue which concludes that higher density developments which need public wastewater disposal systems must occur in existing Town Planning Areas which already provide some level of infrastructure and services.

Implementation Measure
CV5.3-1a(2): The County shall not approve new residential subdivisions requiring formation of a private or mutual company for purposes of wastewater disposal.

Timing: Short-Term Planning Period
Responsibility: Mariposa County Planning Department
Fiscal Impact: None.
Consequences: Implements the policy for non-public entities.

Goal CV5.3-2: Maintain rural character ensuring that future commercial, residential, and institutional development-related infrastructure requirements allow for protection of agricultural uses.
Policy CV5.3-2a: Water demands of future projects, including commercial, residential, and institutional projects, shall be evaluated for impacts on existing agricultural operations/economy.

Implementation Measure CV5.3-2a(1): The County shall require the submittal of an analysis of the impacts of water demand of future commercial, residential, and institutional projects on current agricultural operations.

Timing: Short-Term Planning Period

Responsibility: Mariposa County Planning Department

Fiscal Impact: Ongoing Impact - Staff project review costs will vary depending on the project and are paid by an applicant through project review reimbursement.

Consequences: This measure requires that the impacts of future development on the water supplies for current agricultural operations be disclosed.
Appendix A – Catheys Valley Community Plan Glossary

The CV Plan Glossary is tiered from Mariposa County General Plan Appendix A, Glossary of Terms. The following words and phrases are specific to the CV Plan. Please refer to the General Plan for other definitions.

1. Build-out projection. “Build-out projection” means the population forecast method described in General Plan Section 1.8.02 that considers topographical, infrastructure, soil, and transportation constraints on development.

2. Individual domestic well. “Individual domestic well” means a water well used to supply water for the domestic needs of an individual residence or systems of four or less service connections (California Well Standards Chapter 2, Part 1, Section 1).

3. Mutual water company. “Mutual water company” means any private corporation or association organized for the purposes of delivering water to its stockholders and members at cost, including use of works for conserving, treating and reclaiming water (California Public Utilities Code Section 2725).

4. Population holding capacity. “Population holding capacity” means the total potential population of Catheys Valley based on the likely number of parcels to be created by subdivision and maximum feasible build-out of developable parcels.

5. Public water system. “Public water system” means a system for the provision of water for human consumption through pipes or other constructed conveyances that has 15 or more service connections or regularly serves at least 25 individuals daily at least 60 days out of the year. A public water system includes the following:

(1) Any collection, treatment, storage, and distribution facilities under control of the operator of the system which are used primarily in connection with the system.

(2) Any collection or pretreatment storage facilities not under the control of the operator that are used primarily in connection with the system.

(3) Any water system that treats water on behalf of one or more public water systems for the purpose of rendering it safe for human consumption

(California Health and Safety Code, Section 116275(h)).

6. Right to farm. “Right to farm” means the County’s recognition and support of the right to conduct agricultural activity through enforcement of County Code Chapter 18.04, Right to Agricultural Activity.

Tract-type housing. “Tract-type housing” means a style of housing development in which multiple homes that utilize identical or similar architectural designs are constructed on a tract of land.
Appendix B – Catheys Valley Design Guidelines

This Appendix defines the guidelines for design review of new institutional and commercial construction and modifications to existing institutional and commercial structures in Catheys Valley.

The Catheys Valley community is concerned that once a site has been graded and disturbed and long-lived perennial vegetation removed, the damage cannot be undone. For example, planting oak seedlings does not mitigate removing a two hundred year old oak tree. With the Catheys Valley area's signature terrain feature being rolling hills, grading a hilltop for a flat building site would permanently alter the area's rural character.

1 BASIC DESIGN REVIEW CRITERIA FOR COMMERCIAL AND INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The CV Plan and Design Guidelines can be effectively implemented with the adoption of site development supplementary standards applied to new development. The site development supplementary standards shall be prepared as an implementation measure of the CV Plan, and are subject to public review and comment, Planning Commission recommendation, and adoption by the Board of Supervisors. Site development supplementary standards are expected to include site design, grading, performance standards, and parking standards. The standards are not incorporated as requirements of the CV Plan. The specific standards shall be prepared after the CV Plan is adopted as amendments to the County Zoning Ordinance.

A. SITE DESIGN AND GRADING

The following measures apply to the review of grading permits for commercial and institutional development within Catheys Valley:

1. If an aggregate total of more than one acre of a site is to be disturbed by grading, or if more than 15% of the mature oak trees on a parcel are to be removed, the Mariposa County Planning Department shall review the grading permit prior to its approval for conformance with the provisions in this section of the CV Plan.

2. New or modified structures should be designed to conform to existing landforms. This means that foundations should be designed and built in general conformance with the topography of the site. Cut and fill should be minimized, or at least sculpted to fit the landform when the building site is on rolling or hillside terrain. Use existing natural vegetation and landscaping with native plant species to hide cuts and fills when major grading occurs for a building pad.

3. While property owners enjoy view sites, the rolling terrain in Catheys Valley is a part of the area’s character. When construction occurs on hilltops, it is desirable to avoid flattening the natural terrain into building pads; rather the structures’ foundations should be shaped to fit on the hill.

4. In cases where retaining walls of 36” or taller may be required, the retaining walls shall be faced with a texture such as keystone block, stamped stone, or brick veneer to visually break up smooth concrete surfaces.
5. If significant mature native vegetation must be removed for a project, then those trees shall be replaced ("replacement landscaping") with at least a 4 to 1 (replacement vegetation to mature native vegetation) ratio because the planted trees will not achieve the shade and character of the removed mature tree for a significant period of time.

6. The bed and bank of natural drainage courses shall be maintained if shown as a "blue line" drainage on USGS topographic maps or the County’s Geographic Information System. Setbacks from flood prone areas shall be maintained.

7. Drainage structures shall be screened from public view through the use of materials with a natural appearance, the use of natural materials, or vegetation overgrowth.

8. The "Chinese" walls prevalent in the Catheys Valley area shall be retained and no breaches permitted unless absolutely necessary for project design and when no alternatives exist. Such demolition is subject to review by the Mariposa County Planning Department.

B. DESIGN CRITERIA

Allow businesses with outdoor sales and storage areas on a case-by-case basis because the outdoor uses could detract from the rustic western village theme.

New commercial development should not be designed to "face" Highway 140 but to "face" interior roads because a highway strip-commercial development would not be consistent with the rustic western village theme.

New development (commercial and institutional) is to be set back from Highway 140 so that the drive through the community maintains the current rural character. It will be important to preserve or enhance vegetation between the roadway and development. This will also minimize the negative visual impacts of the highway on residential development.

Planting new landscaping is encouraged between Highway 140 and the development so that the drive through the community maintains the current rural character.

It is appropriate to have landscaping planted between commercial/institutional development and residential development to minimize the impacts for the new commercial/institutional development on the residential development.

New development should not be more than two habitable stories (exposed) plus a roof not to exceed 35 feet height.

A basement completely below ground level is not counted toward the two habitable stories maximum.

Exceptions to height guidelines should be considered on a case-by-case basis for chimneys, water tanks, ornamental towers and spires, and commercial communications towers because these uses could detract from the rustic western village theme.

Signs should not detract from the building architecture and site development but rather should be designed to be a part of the overall designed development, and require
that signs be reviewed when the building and site development plan are reviewed so that this can be achieved.

Require low-lying monument signs (6 feet maximum height) and/or signs on the face of the building.

Do not allow internally lit plastic signs.

Allow temporary signs for short-term sales and events, which are not regulated; and define temporary signs as those that are displayed for no more than 10 days.

Allow directional signs within a development if there is no advertising.

Establish a maximum sign area based upon the size of the building so that smaller buildings would have smaller signs and larger buildings could have larger signs; still need to have maximum sign area with this criteria.

Off-site advertising signs (billboards) are prohibited.

The color requirements for buildings should apply to signs, but shall allow one logo sign. The allowed logo sign shall be limited in size.

New light should be maintained entirely on-site.

Establish standards to minimize nighttime glare or the commercial area “glow”, visible from a distance, which is already present with just the one new commercial development in the community.

Establish lighting standards consistent with International Dark Sky guidelines.

Lighting standards should allow the minimal amount of nighttime lighting necessary to light the development for health and safety. The extent of nighttime lighting at the new commercial development in Catheys Valley is considered to be inconsistent with this guideline in terms of the brightness, number, and height of fixtures.

Consider lighting standards that require commercial developments to shut off their lights or reduce the lighting at nighttime when the business is closed.

Require landscaping with native and other plant species with low water demand.

Require parking lot landscaping to break up paving and provide shaded parking spaces for the hot summer season.

Require landscaping on new graded slopes to bring the graded slopes back to a natural look as soon as possible. This “slope” landscaping should consist of native trees and shrubs for the most natural look and should be designed with a naturalistic pattern design.

New development should be sited to be compatible with existing agricultural uses (maintain agricultural buffer).

C. ACCESS AND PARKING

Parking lots shall be designed to be a part of a project and not a “sea of asphalt” overwhelming the quality of the structure architecture. Parking lots shall be designed to accomplish the following goals:
The number of parking spaces and the design of ingress and egress for new development shall be adequate so that the additional traffic does not lower level of service or create unsafe conditions along roads or within parking areas.

Parking lot access shall be of adequate width and stacking distance in recognition that the majority of vehicles in Catheys Valley are pickup trucks and sports utility vehicles. No compact car spaces shall be counted towards meeting parking requirements. Lane width and turning radii shall be adequate to accommodate full size sports utility vehicles, such as the Chevrolet Suburban.

Parking areas and access lanes shall be paved to reduce or eliminate particulate emissions from dust. The County may approve alternate surface materials for parking areas if the material provides both a pervious land area and prevents particulate dust generation.

Parking lots shall be designed with lanes for safe pedestrian access.