

## Sonoma County General Plan 2020

***If you have clients that own or are considering buying property that is in an unincorporated area of Sonoma County (ie, outside the limits of an incorporated Sonoma County city), this affects you!***

On September 9, 2008, the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors approved the updated Sonoma County General Plan 2020. Once the General Plan 2020 has been approved, which is expected to take place on Tuesday, September 23, **it will become effective IMMEDIATELY.**

Here are two (of many) General Plan 2020 matters that REALTORS® may need to know:

### **1. Which General Plan, the existing one or the new General Plan 2020, will apply to a project or permit application?**

- **Discretionary Projects** (such as applications for use permits, design review, subdivisions, etc.). All Discretionary Projects with an application that was submitted and “deemed complete” by the County Permit and Resource Management Department (“PRMD”) **on or before September 28, 2007** will have the option of choosing which general plan their project will be evaluated under. Applicants should confirm with PRMD whether their project is “Discretionary” or “Ministerial.”
- **Ministerial Projects** (such as building permits, certain well and septic permits, etc.) All Ministerial Project applications that have been submitted and “deemed complete” by the County Permit and Resource Management Department by **Tuesday, September 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2008**, will be evaluated under the existing General Plan. Again, applicants should confirm with PRMD whether their project is “Discretionary” or “Ministerial.”

### **2. Outdated Maps and Zoning Ordinances – General Plan 2020 Revisions.**

Revisions to County zoning maps, zoning ordinances, overlays and other documents that correspond to the new General Plan 2020 will not be completed for some time. However, after General Plan 2020 is enacted on September 23, 2008, the current versions of these maps, ordinances, overlays and other documents will not be applicable to properties or projects in unincorporated Sonoma County except as described in item #1 above. Since the current versions do not include information from General Plan 2020, **the ONLY way owners and prospective buyers can be certain of which General Plan requirements apply to any particular parcel is to make a specific inquiry with PRMD.** This is especially true with stream setbacks and biotic resource issues.

### **Be sure to use the current Sonoma County Disclosures and Disclaimers Advisory**

Paragraph 8 of this Advisory tells the parties that laws affecting land use and development (like General Plan 2020) continue to be revised and enacted, and advises Buyers “to obtain the latest information regarding all such applicable Laws... that currently affect or that might in the future affect the property or the cost to make any changes or improvements to the property”, and it directs them to PRMD for information.