



Gardnerville Town Board

AGENDA ACTION SHEET

1. **For Possible Action:** Presentation and discussion to accept the Valley Vision Plan and direction to staff to develop a joint resolution between the towns of Gardnerville, Minden and Douglas County to be approved at a later date, to confirm the principles within the plan and to commit to the identification of funds for the plans for future implementation, with public comment prior to board action.
2. **Recommended Motion:** Accept the Valley Vision Plan and direct staff to develop a joint resolution with the towns of Gardnerville, Minden and Douglas County for approval by the town board at a later date and commit to identify funding for future implementation.
3. **Funds Available:** Yes N/A

4. **Department:** Administration

Prepared by: Tom Dallaire

5. **Meeting Date:** October 1, 2013 **Time Requested:** 20 minutes

6. **Agenda:** Consent Administrative

Background Information: The Valley Vision plan is attached for your review. The draft copy was provided to the board a couple of month back for review and comment. The plan development involved the public input and direction identifying a couple of tasks or projects that can be performed within downtown Gardnerville. Many of the proposed projects identified in the plan will require a bypass of the truck traffic reducing the traffic through downtown Gardnerville

7. **Other Agency Review of Action:** Yes Douglas County & Town of Minden
 N/A

8. **Board Action:**

Approved

Denied

Approved with Modifications

Continued



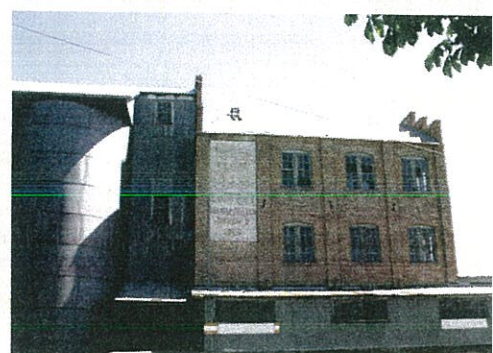
DOUGLAS COUNTY VALLEY VISION

A VISION FOR A COMMUNITY TO MATCH THE SCENERY

SEPTEMBER 2013

Prepared by:

DESIGNWORKSHOP



In the spring of 2013, business owners, community leaders and citizens of Douglas County came together through a process called the Valley Vision to collectively define how the communities within the Carson Valley should evolve over the next 20-30 years. Over the course of multiple meetings and a three-day work session participants convened to discuss critical issues facing the Valley. The results of the work session included a collection of principle ideas and illustrations to address questions such as: What will the future of agriculture in the Valley look like? Will the current transportation system support the creation of the downtown areas the community desires? How can the success of existing industries be leveraged to create new economic opportunities? Opinions about the Valley's future varied greatly among participants. However, not surprising for a region with a proud agricultural heritage, the focus for many gravitated towards answering one fundamental question: How can we preserve the character of the Valley while encouraging economic opportunities for generations to come?

The purpose of the Valley Vision is to establish a community dialogue focused on questions of prosperity, conservation, job generation, and quality of life that will serve as the foundation for the future. The plan respects previous planning studies and the community's desire for progress but the ideas contained herein are not restrained by today's realities. Over time demographic shifts, new technologies, partnerships opportunities and market conditions will evolve and the outcome of those changes will be shaped by the values and choices being made today. While some will be quick to identify the impediments to achieving the Vision, the real purpose of the plan is for the citizens of Douglas County to define a shared future for the Valley that enhances the quality of the downtowns, identifies economic development strategies that complement existing business clusters, and preserves the natural resources that are fundamental to the past and future character of the Valley.



The Valley Vision is an opportunity to imagine a future condition where traditional and contemporary ideas can be integrated to create authentic experiences for residents and visitors.

1

Plan Summary

Overview

Purpose of the Plan

Process



12-5

A Vision Plan is:

A focus on prosperity issues & the possibilities of seeing a newer future.

An opportunity to illustrates ideas, both new ideas and ideas that are part of existing plans, to visualize the possibilities that exist in a place.

A catalyst to help seek implementation resources.

Overview

In September 2010 the Douglas County Board of County Commissioners established a forward thinking goal “to be recognized by 2022 as one of the best communities to live, work, and play.” To achieve the goal separate focus areas were identified in the County’s Economic Vitality Plan to leverage the Valley’s distinctive downtown areas, capitalize on outdoor recreation and lifestyle, and improve education and workforce opportunities. These core areas are unified through a shared vision to create a community to match the surrounding scenery. Together with the County, business owners and citizens of the Valley, the Design Workshop consultant team led the Valley Vision planning process to define a collection of programmatic opportunities and physical transformations aimed at achieving the County’s vision. Thirteen principle ideas addressing environment, community, economics, and art form the foundation of the plan. The principle ideas are further supported by a series of place-based illustrations to represent the potential that exists for creating a future of economic vitality, community cohesion, and agricultural and open space preservation. The following core areas organize the key plan concepts:

- Trails, Open Space, and Visual Resource Protection. Parks, natural areas, and scenic landscapes have great economic value. They help protect the Valley’s agricultural heritage, attract tourism and recreation, and ensure the integrity of naturally functioning ecosystems. Preserving scenic vistas and establishing trails to the abundant outdoor amenities also strengthens the connection that people have with their neighbors and the surrounding environment.
- New Employment and Economic Opportunities. The economic drivers of the Valley Vision build upon the existing and successful technology, energy, and medical clusters to attract compatible new businesses. Secondary economic opportunities include tourism, health and wellness, continuous care adult communities, and enhancing local food markets.
- Tourism Destinations and Connections. The uniqueness of a community is found in its history and in activities that cannot be replicated elsewhere. Linking together the Valley’s historic resources with contemporary entertainment and activities provides awareness of the wide range of authentic experiences available. It’s not hard to imagine how an afternoon glider ride could be followed by a stroll through the historic Silos District and a traditional Basque meal.
- Transportation and Linkages. Pedestrian access is integral to creating distinctive destinations. Safe, convenient, and attractive streetscapes create opportunities for community interaction and stimulate main street economic development. Communities with well defined gateways and districts also create a lasting impression on visitors and contribute to a strong sense of place with which community residents can identify.

12-6

Purpose of the Plan

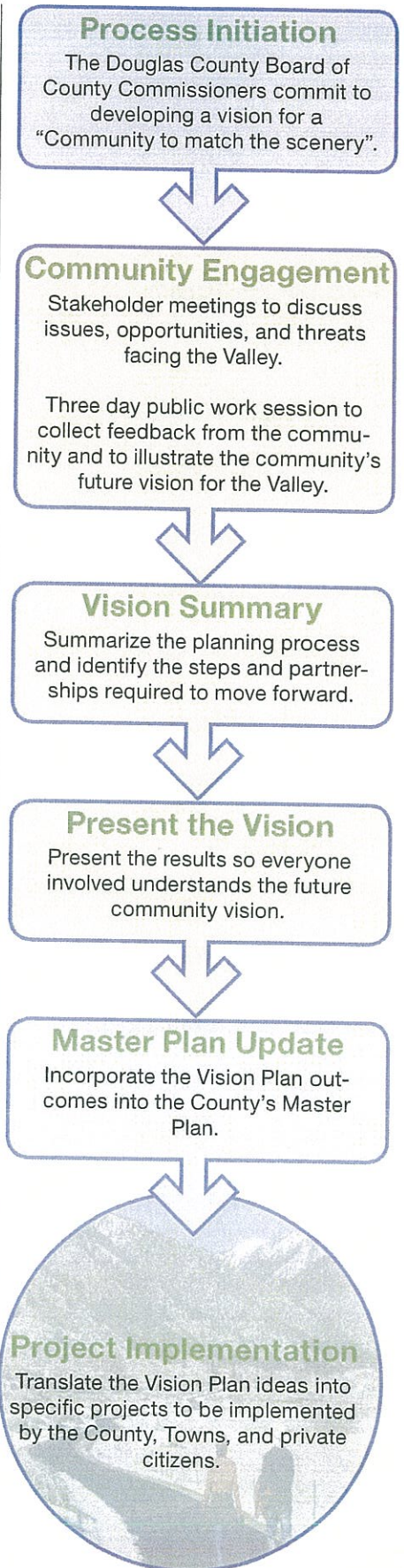
The purpose of the Valley Vision is to stimulate a conversation about how the Valley can become a premier place to live, work, and play. The plan is focused on big-picture ideas such as prosperity, conservation, job generation, and quality of life, that will serve as the foundation for the future. The plan also helps to identify the policies, code revisions, and regulatory standards that make the vision achievable. The fundamental question the Vision Plan seeks to address is how can we ensure that what is being planned and built today will be cherished by the community tomorrow?

Process

The Valley Vision was initiated when the Douglas County Board of County Commissioners committed to developing a vision for a “community to match the scenery”. Surrounded by snow capped mountains, green pastures, and meandering rivers, the Carson Valley epitomizes the picturesque scenic quality of Northern Nevada. To complement the striking landscape qualities, the Commissioners sought to enhance the quality of the built environment, strengthen connections to outdoor recreation and foster a wide range of economic opportunities to attract and retain businesses.

The first step in the process included meetings with community leaders, business owners, and public representatives to understand the current issues facing the community and the opportunities that exist for the future. This phase also included a review of the previous plans and studies that reflect the community’s desires, values, and hopes. These ideas were used to develop a collection of principle statements that serve as a framework for the Vision. The principles were vetted by the community over the course of a three-day work session and new ideas were collected which helped the design team understand the unique qualities that give the community its sense of place. One of the most compelling aspects of the planning process was the ability for stakeholders to describe their vision for specific areas of the community and then watch as those ideas were brought to life through graphic illustrations. The transformation of places intimately familiar to the stakeholders created a sense of hope and enthusiasm by demonstrating how vision ideas could look when they are actually implemented.

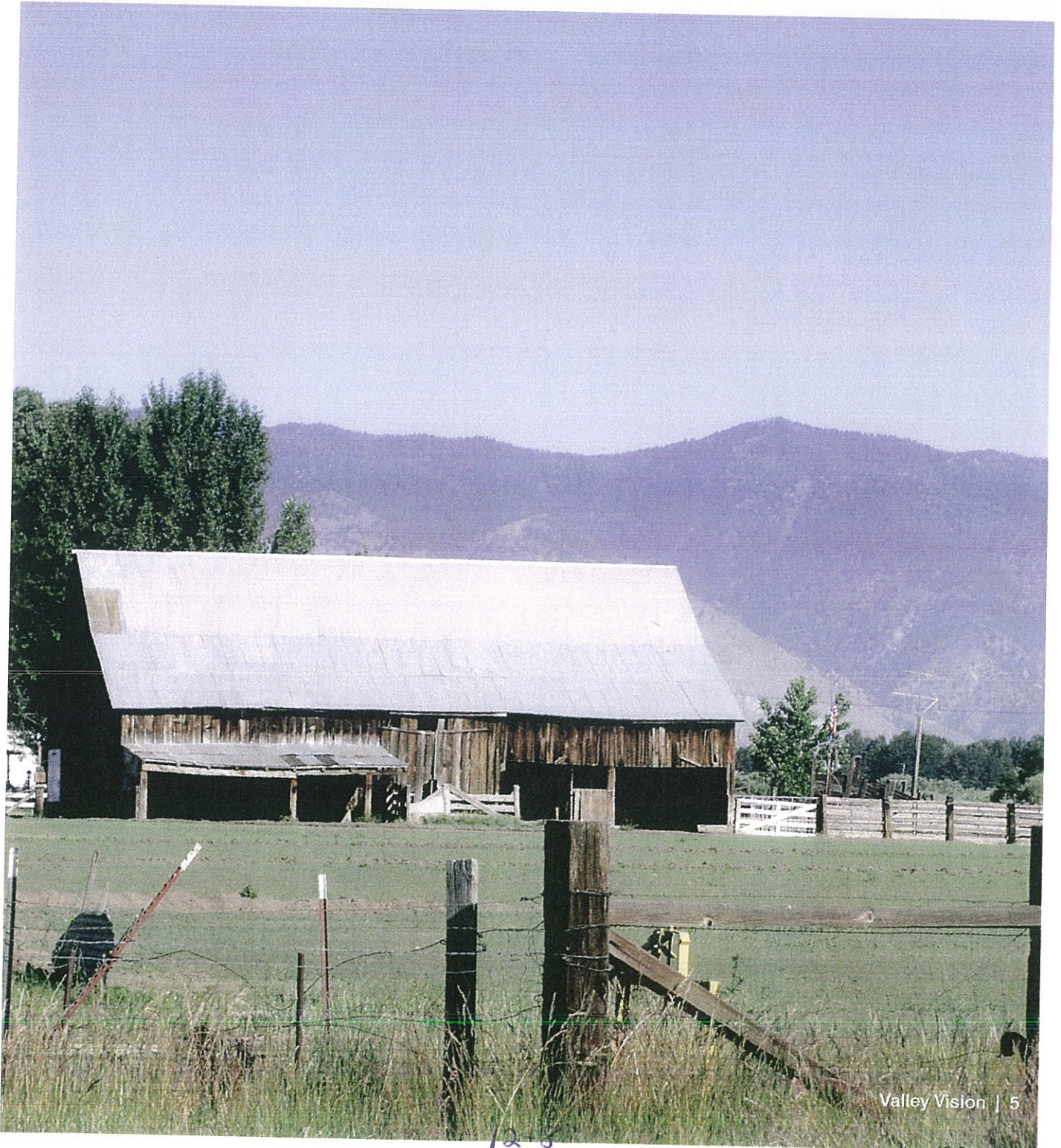
The final steps of the Vision Plan include this document which summarizes the findings and recommendations from the process. The Vision Plan document is not a regulatory plan, official County planning document, or a promise of specific elements. Rather, it is a collection of ideas that enables people to visualize a range of potential programmatic and physical transformations that reflect the community’s desires. The Vision Plan illustrates a high level road map for the Valley’s future which may be realized through updates to the County’s Master Plan and the implementation of specific projects by the County, Towns, and private citizens.



2

Existing Conditions Analysis

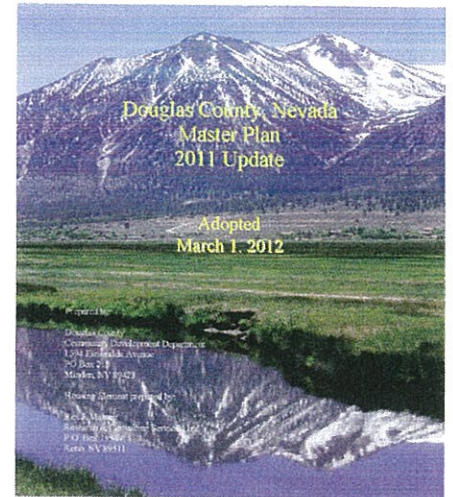
Current Planning Context
Project Area Context



Current Planning Context

In addition to the Douglas County Master Plan, a number of planning studies have been completed that help summarize the issues and opportunities for the Valley. Recommendations from these plans have been incorporated in the Vision Plan to build upon ideas that already have momentum. The following list of plans were reviewed to understand the current planning context:

- **Minden Plan for Prosperity (2002) and the Gardnerville Plan for Prosperity (2005)**
The Towns of Minden and Gardnerville developed a number of recommendations related to land use, transportation, and community design. The plans identify public investment priorities regarding community facilities, open space preservation, and economic development.
- **NDOT Landscape and Aesthetics Corridor Plan (2006)**
The Nevada Department of Transportation developed the US 395, West US 50, SR 28, SR 207 and SR 431 Landscape and Aesthetics Corridor Plan to assist state and local agencies with designing and constructing consistent highway facilities along these routes.
- **U.S. 395 Southern Sierra Corridor Study (2007)**
This study provides planning-level analysis for transportation improvements proposed within the study area between 2007 and 2030. Initiated by the Nevada Department of Transportation (NDOT), this study evaluates the current traffic level of service on the roadway network and the need for future investments based on the planned growth in population, employment, and visitor traffic.
- **Town of Genoa Strategic Plan (2008)**
This plan identifies a number of goals and strategies that will help the town fulfill its vision as a community of historic character and quaint charm in a setting of natural beauty, with businesses and residences that compliment its unique sense of place.
- **Carson River Watershed Regional Floodplain Management Plan (2008)**
The plan includes suggested actions that encourage communities within the Carson River Watershed to recognize the value and critical functions provided by floodplain lands for public safety and reduction of costly flood damages.
- **Douglas County Economic Vitality Plan (2010)**
The Economic Vitality Plan focuses on growing community wealth by becoming a place rich in talent and ideas, attracting educated people, creating additional physical and cultural amenities, and putting together bold partnerships among businesses, government, and the nonprofit sector to bring about change.



The Douglas County Master Plan presents information on existing conditions, highlights current and future issues, and recommends Goals, Policies, and Actions to address identified issues.



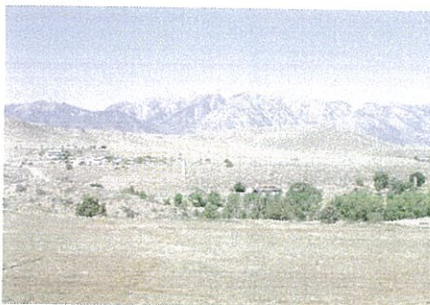
The Carson River meanders through the Valley weaving a pattern of riparian corridors and irrigation ditches.



The Valley floor is covered with ranch and agriculture lands that have been in operation for generations.



The Sierra Nevada Mountains create a dramatic backdrop along the western edge of the Valley.



The vast expanse of the Great Basin reinforces the rural, open quality of the Valley.

Project Area Context

The visioning process began by developing plans and information which create the foundation for understanding how physical, environmental, and social patterns have resulted in the land use arrangement we see today. The maps on the following pages describe the land uses, transportation connections, and environmental influences within the study area.

Regional Context

Douglas County consists of over 700 square miles of land situated at the base of the Sierra Nevada Mountains along the western edge of the Great Basin. A majority of the land in the County is remote, uninhabited, and owned by the Federal Government (U.S. Department of Agriculture and Bureau of Land Management). The Valley Vision process was focused on a much smaller portion of the County that included the towns of Genoa, Minden, Gardnerville, and Topaz Lake. The Vision Plan area constitutes the majority of the County's lands zoned for residential, industrial, agricultural, and commercial uses. To the north of the Valley are the major urbanized areas of Carson City and Reno. To the west and south are major tourist destinations: Lake Tahoe and Topaz Lake. To the east are the Pinenut Mountains and the large expanse of the Great Basin.



Project Area Context

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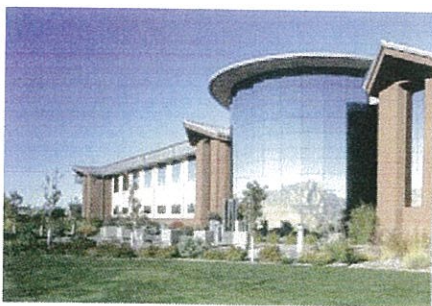
Preserved historic buildings within the old town centers are a distinguishing characteristic of the towns in the Valley.



Working ranch and agriculture lands account for 38,330 acres, or nearly 30% of the land in the Carson Valley.



New development is being concentrated within Urban Service Areas.



A significant amount of land has been zoned for business and technology parks.

Land Use

Land use patterns within the Valley have been heavily influenced by natural drainages and the alignment of US Highway 395. Existing development is primarily concentrated along the highway, and the sprawling pattern of development that might be expected based on the rapid growth in nearby cities has largely been averted through the County's growth management programs. At one time Minden and Gardnerville were separate communities focused around their respective commercial districts. Over time the communities expanded along the highway to the point where it is difficult to distinguish where one town ends and the other begins. Historic Minden and Old Town Gardnerville have retained many of the buildings and characteristic features of early western towns which serve to reinforce their traditional values and character. Genoa, the oldest settlement in Nevada, is designated an historic district and serves as a picture into Nevada's past. More recent development has occurred at the edges of Minden/Gardnerville which includes big-box retail, residential subdivisions and business parks. Surrounding the concentrated development of Minden and Gardnerville are areas zoned for agricultural and rural residential uses.

Future growth of higher density residential development and intense retail and office development is anticipated to occur only in Urban Service Areas and areas with densities of one unit per acre or greater. Outside of Urban Service Areas, such urban development is discouraged. Urban Service Areas help to maintain urban edges, foster compact urban form, and preserve rural character.

Issues and Opportunities

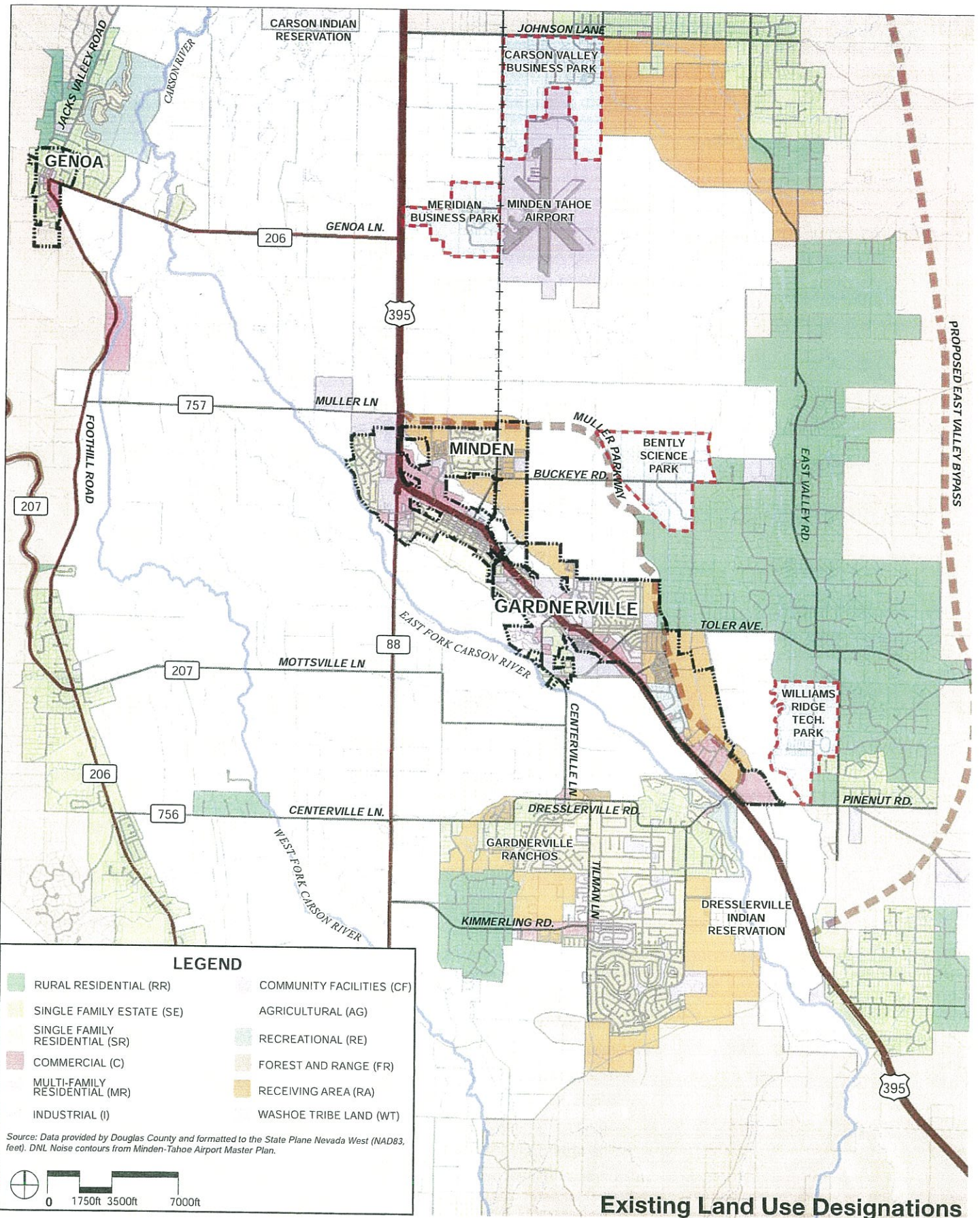
The following issues and opportunities have been identified in previous plans and by Valley Vision participants:

Issues:

- Land and housing prices are the highest in Northern Nevada making it difficult to retain and attract young families.
- Big box retail centers at both ends of the Valley are impacting the desirability of downtown retail.
- Physical site conditions, political boundaries, and the challenge of extending services act to limit the potential for future growth.

Opportunities:

- Revitalize the downtown areas (Minden, Gardnerville) to support vibrant mixed-uses and to become a destination for new businesses, entertainment, and boutique shopping.
- The geographic concentration of business and technology parks can be leveraged to retain and attract new compatible business.
- Demographic trends indicate growth in the retiree market and associated services.
- History of early settlement is evident in the places like Genoa and Minden's Silos District. The historic places could be collectively marketed as part of Valley-wide tourism program.



12-14

The volume of traffic on US 395 is expected to be 80% greater in 2030 than it was in 2005; growing from 4,600 to 8,200 vehicles per day. Regional truck traffic constitutes eight percent of the 2005 total, as measured at the Nevada/California state line. Using this same ratio, the number of trucks is projected to increase from 368 to 656 trucks per day in 2030.

US 395 Southern Sierra Corridor Study

Transportation

US 395 is a critical transportation and economic link between the Valley and the Truckee Meadows to the north. It also acts as a major trucking route connecting eastern Sierra communities in California and Nevada. As the highway descends into the Valley from the south it becomes the main street for Gardnerville and Minden. Since it is the only major highway linking communities along the Eastern Sierra high volumes of traffic and slower traffic speeds often result in congestion and delays. Additionally, the average speed and volume of traffic pose real threats to pedestrian safety. The traffic and safety concerns are expected to compound as additional growth in the Valley and surrounding areas place increased demand on the existing roadways.

A number of suggestions have been proposed to help alleviate the traffic and safety issues including the Muller Parkway extension and an east valley bypass. Muller Parkway is partially constructed and will eventually provide an alternative north-south connection around the towns of Minden and Gardnerville. However, truck traffic will be restricted to the existing US 395, as the design for Muller Parkway is not intended for commercial sized vehicles. The proposed east valley bypass alignment would primarily utilize the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) land along the foothills east of Carson Valley and tie into US 395 at a point south of Gardnerville. Based on the interstate-only traffic projections, including truck traffic, it is not anticipated that the east valley bypass facility around Minden and Gardnerville would be justified from a traffic volume only standpoint within the next 20 years.

Issues and Opportunities

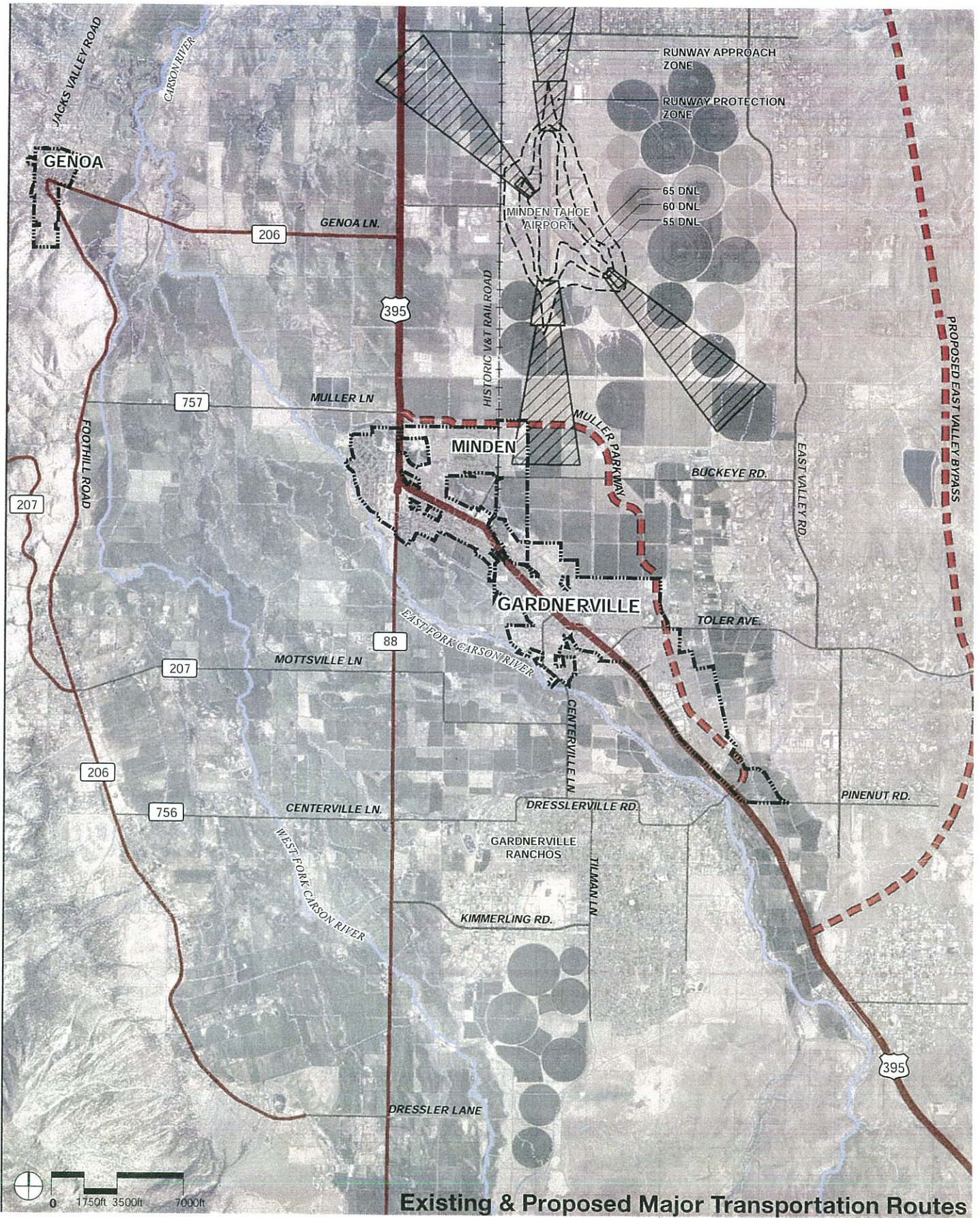
The following issues and opportunities have been identified in previous plans and by Valley Vision participants:

Issues:

- Proposed bypasses have the potential to divert traffic away from main street businesses.
- Traffic through Minden/Gardnerville is creating a significant impediment to the success of local businesses in the downtown area.
- Funding for road maintenance is limited and much of the existing infrastructure is in need of repair.

Opportunities:

- Muller Parkway extension will create a north-south alternative to US 395, however it will not support through truck traffic.
- The Minden-Tahoe Airport is an asset that could be better utilized as a premier sport aviation destination.
- The downtown areas along main street could become more attractive with desirable retail and entertainment amenities if traffic volumes along US 395 could be reduced.
- The abandoned V&T railroad right-of-way provides an opportunity for a unique type of transportation connection.
- Proximity to California and tax advantages makes it a good place for business.



Existing & Proposed Major Transportation Routes

12-16

Agricultural and ranch lands are consistent with a living river approach and most appropriate for critical floodplain lands. Providing ways to protect and sustain these lands is a top priority.

*Carson River Watershed
Floodplain Management Plan*

Flood Zones

The East and West Forks of the Carson River that traverse the Valley are part of a watershed that captures, stores, and carries water from the Sierra Nevada Mountains to the Carson Sink. Rain and snowmelt cause the waters of the rivers to rise as flows are concentrated and carried downstream through the Carson Valley. The increased flows of the Carson serve to rejuvenate the rangeland and riparian corridors of the Valley. However, since the upper watershed is not regulated to provide flood control and there is extremely limited reservoir storage capability, large flows can occur downstream which cause the rivers to overflow their banks and flood the low-lying areas of the valley floor. The physical setting of the watershed has strongly shaped the pattern of development within the Valley by restricting growth in the floodplain and thereby preserving the rural quality of the landscape.

In addition to preserving open space, the floodplain also helps protect the working ranch lands and natural resources such as drinking water and wildlife habitat. Property acquisitions such as the River Fork Ranch by the Nature Conservancy are indicative of the floodplain's value for enhancing flood protection, improving water quality, recharging aquifers, sustaining agriculture, and enriching wildlife habitat. To help ensure the continued protection of the floodplain it will be important to educate and connect people to the region's valuable resources through parks, greenways, and conservation easements. Such opportunities strengthen the relationship people have with the natural world by making the resources more accessible to Valley residents.

Issues and Opportunities

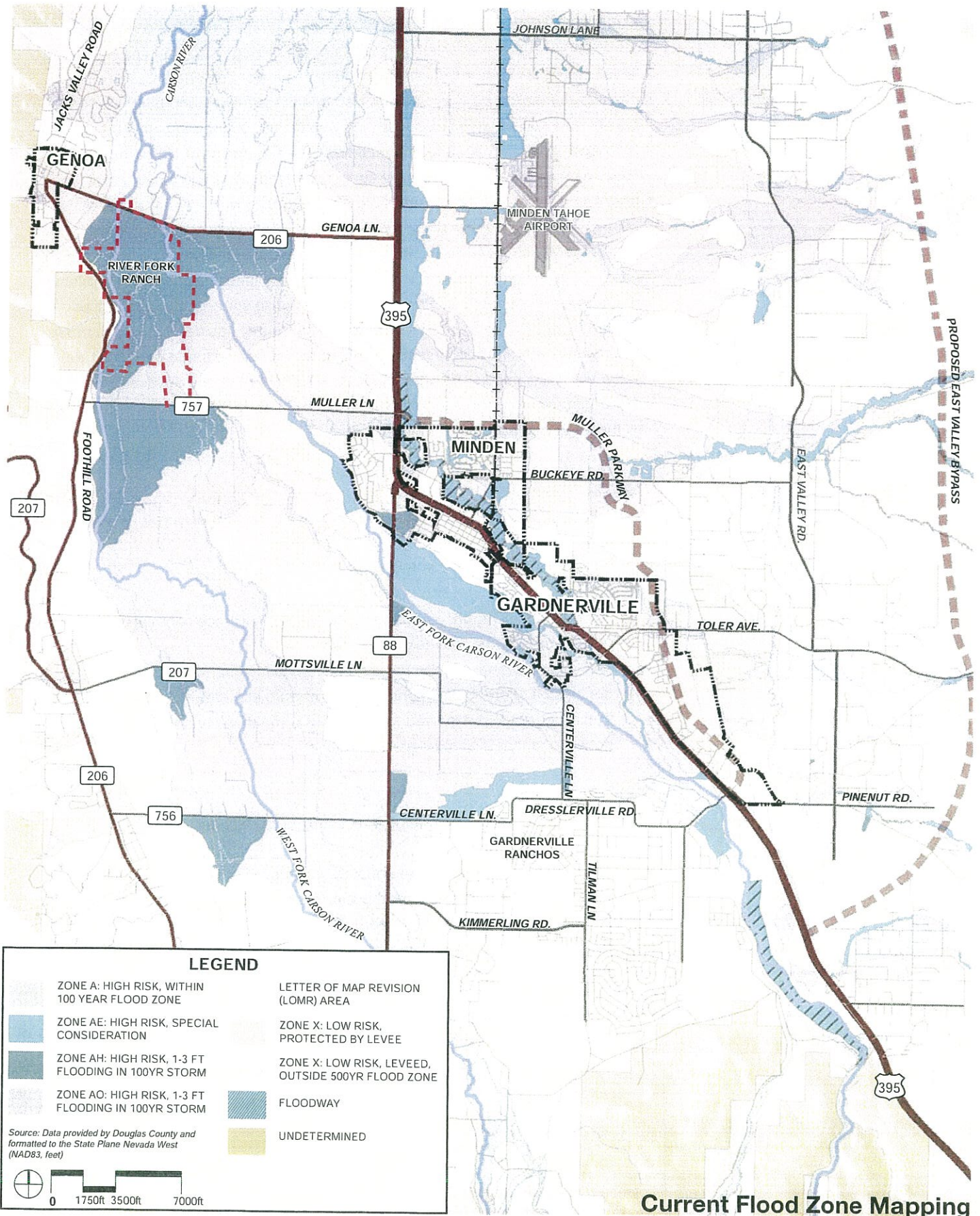
The following issues and opportunities have been identified in previous plans and by Valley Vision participants:

Issues:

- Floodplain conditions limit the potential for growth.
- Connections between developed areas have been restricted by the pattern of rivers and drainages.
- Revisions to the FEMA flood plain boundary have required property owners to obtain flood insurance.

Opportunities:

- The riparian corridors provide a foundation of green infrastructure that protects critical ecological sites.
- Protecting riparian corridors and floodplains reinforces the rural quality of the place.
- Potential to grow local tourism industry, especially in adventure and outdoor recreation (rafting, hiking, biking, etc.) by creating stronger connections between the Valley's natural resources.



Current Flood Zone Mapping

12-18

Agriculture is an important and valued way of life in Douglas County and a major contributor to the character of the community.

Douglas County Master Plan

Agriculture

The communities in the Valley were built upon a heritage of farming and ranching which continues to be a valued way of life and a major contributor to the visual character of the Valley. Agriculture is also one of the major contributors to the local economy by providing jobs, creating wealth, and offering tourism and agritourism opportunities. The future of agriculture is one of the major concerns for the Valley as the desire to live in a rural agricultural landscape and the financial incentive of land sales creates considerable pressure to convert agricultural lands for alternative uses. Counties throughout the west with scenic public lands, abundant outdoor recreation, and sound infrastructure are experiencing some of the highest rates of growth in the country. Within the Valley, the lands identified as Farmland of Statewide Importance or Prime Farmland are also some of the most attractive areas for locating future development. The County has developed a number of strategies that will help preserve working lands, but the future of agriculture in the Valley depends upon adapting to new technologies and applications and responding to emerging agriculture markets such as agritourism to make evident all the beneficial aspects of working lands.

Issues and Opportunities

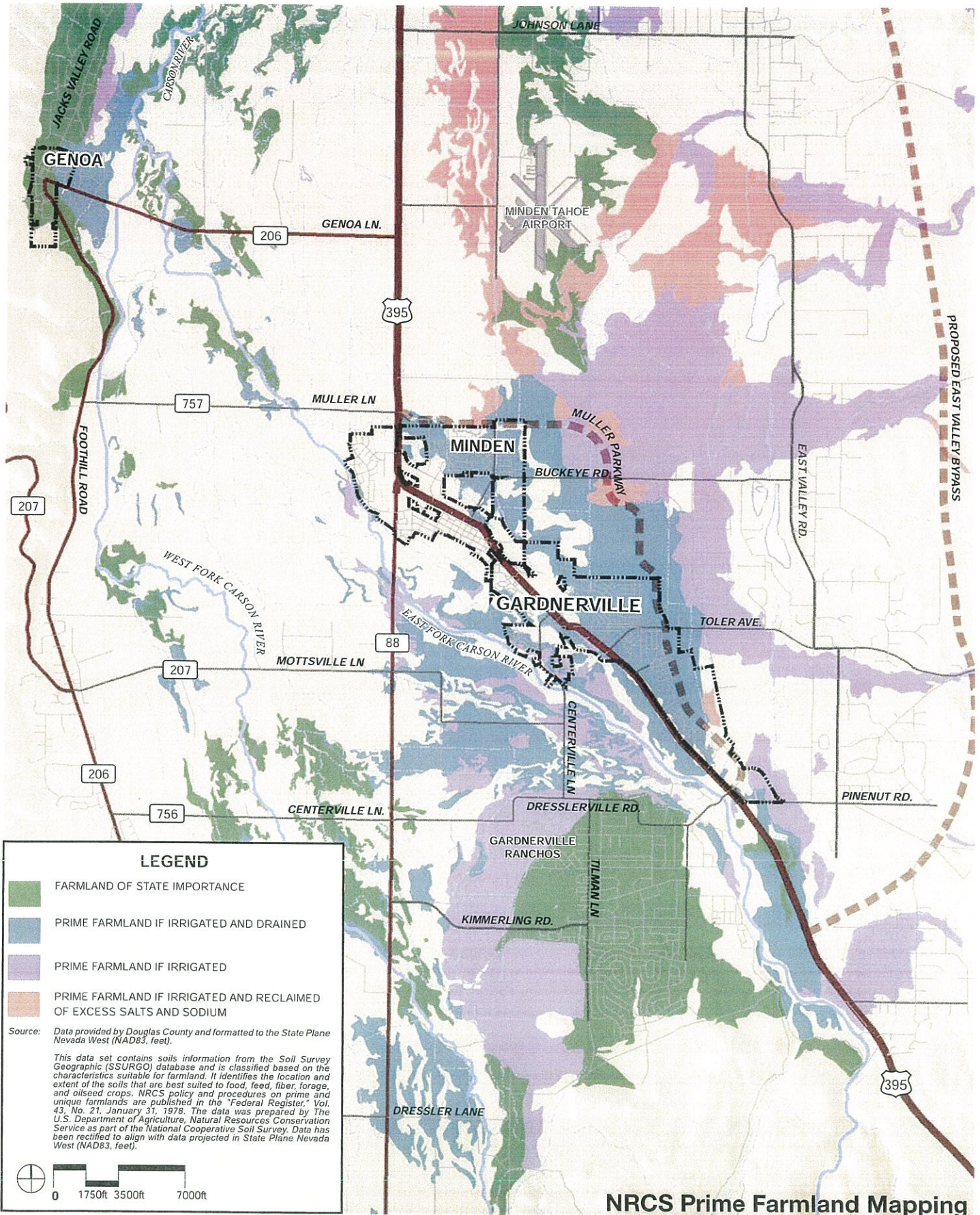
The following issues and opportunities have been identified in previous plans and by Valley Vision participants:

Issues:

- Agricultural operations are often the subject of nuisance complaints, especially when adjacent to residential uses.
- The often marginal economic return on agricultural lands can result in the conversion of productive agricultural lands into alternative uses.
- Public access to rivers used for agricultural irrigation can result in conflicts between ranchers and the general public.

Opportunities:

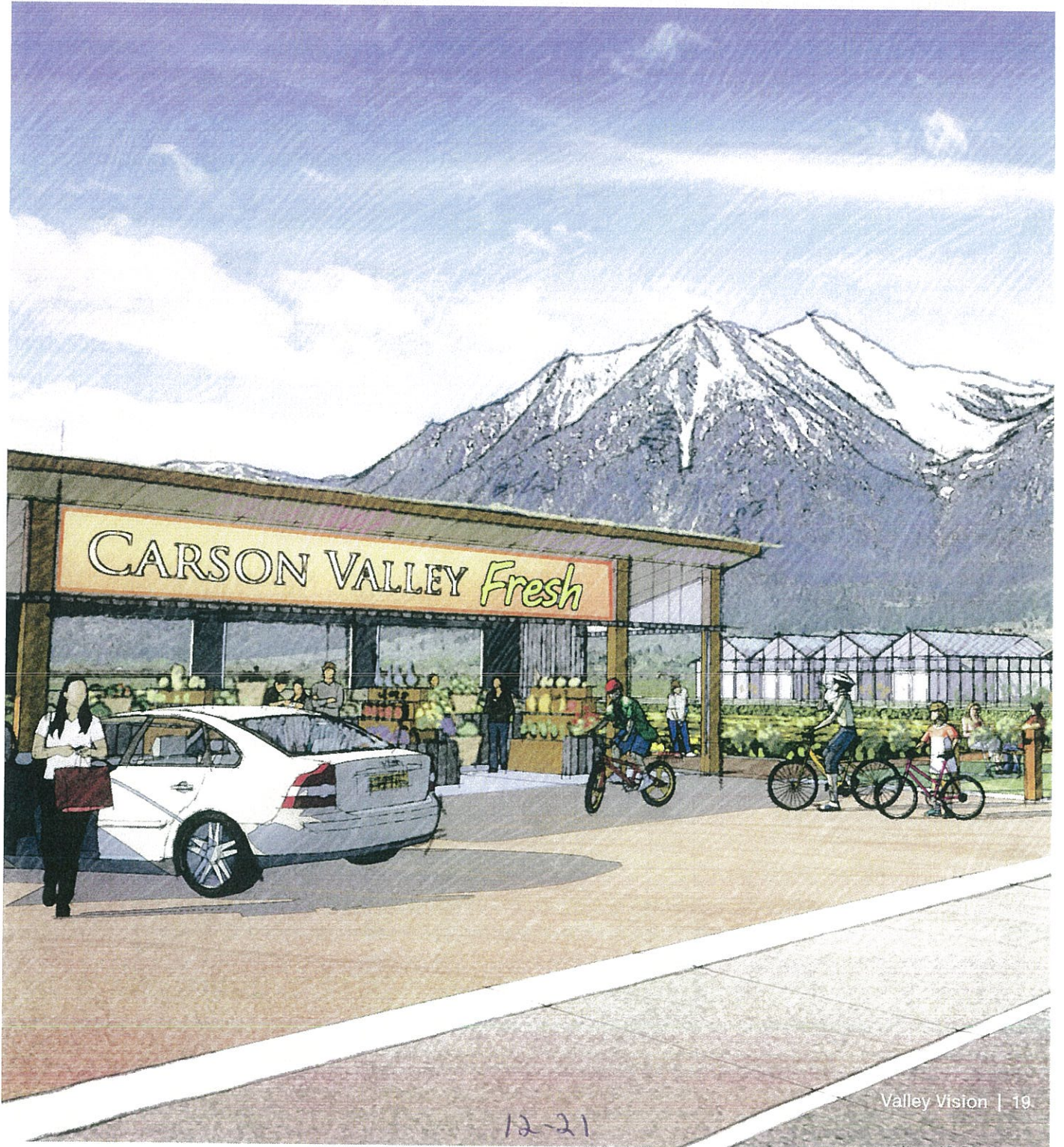
- The area's agricultural heritage offers unique tourism and agritourism potential.
- There is potential to preserve agriculture lands while expanding the clean energy industry, especially geothermal, biofuels and wind energy.
- Branding agriculture products from the Valley.
- Take advantage of the growing market for high-quality, locally grown food and organic products.



12-20

3

Guiding Principles and Plan Elements



12-21

Guiding Principles

Principles describe the fundamental values that represent the desired future for the Valley. These principles provide the foundation for a plan that seeks to improve the area in a way that is economically sustainable and responsive to community desires and environmental conditions. The planning principles bring together key components from previous planning studies and supplements those ideas with additional concepts discussed with stakeholders and community members. The principle ideas are organized into four categories – environment, economics, community, and art.

Imagery showing the current land use arrangements, physical form, and streetscape environment are used to visually communicate or locate areas where the principles can be realized. Descriptions include goals and policies from existing planning documents and a summary of the methods and strategies that may be employed to achieve the principle.

Environment Principles

Principle One

Enhance and protect environmental resources, scenic vistas, rural character, and the highly valued quality of life dependent on these resources. Protect important land and water resources.

Related strategies

- Maintain and enhance the quality of open space and rural character that typifies the Valley. Keep the majority of agriculture as agriculture.
- Manage hillside development to minimize impacts on natural resources and scenic character.
- Encourage the use of low impact development and use of on-site natural features to manage storm water and protect water quality.

Principle Two

Enhance availability of outdoor recreation opportunities. Create an interconnected regional trail system that couples a Valley-wide open space and trail program with linkages to Lake Tahoe and new investments at Topaz Lake.

Related strategies

- Identify opportunities to link trail corridors with open space systems.
- Create trail connections to wider regional destinations such as Lake Tahoe and new investments at Topaz Lake.
- Minimize conflicts between vehicles and bicyclists/pedestrians.

Principle Three

Enlarge local food production capabilities and diversify agricultural products by intermixing supporting uses and creating a branding strategy.

Related strategies

- Distinguish the Valley and its agricultural products from products from other areas (e.g. certified agricultural lands).
- Establish an expectation of quality for Valley products.
- Promote the use of locally grown products as part of other industries (restaurants using locally grown crops).
- Evaluate the feasible types and varieties of products to identify any opportunities for a niche market.



Agriculture and open space dominate views.



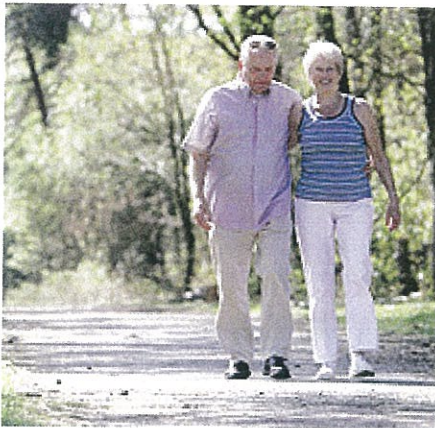
Trail systems link open space to community centers.



Local agriculture can be enlarged.



GE Bently Nevada anchors Douglas County's technology cluster.



Active seniors are a growing demographic in the Valley.

Economic Principles

Principle One

Create sustainable economic opportunities through new job creation, recruiting viable Valley businesses, and promoting a successful education system and workforce development.

Related strategies

- Develop programs to align workforce and education with identified industry clusters.
- Support programs aimed at strengthening the education system and workforce development, including higher/continued education opportunities and training programs.
- Promote academic, industry and government collaboration.

Principle Two

Encourage growth and prosperity. Build off existing industries while welcoming new opportunities to foster authentic industries, such as agricultural, tourism services, and recreation and develop new economic clusters such as medical research and wellness, recreational second homes, active senior living, and other compatible growth sectors.

Related strategies

- Recruit, retain, and expand employment opportunities that are compatible with the Valley's resources (e.g. outdoor recreation; energy, science and engineering; environmental innovation; tourism; health and wellness).
- Identify opportunities to attract active senior living and recreational second home developments that align with the Valley's rural lifestyle and recreation opportunities.

Principle Three

Enhance each town centers' existing, inviting atmosphere with infill development and public amenities to continue their evolution as desirable places to be for a variety of users.

Related strategies

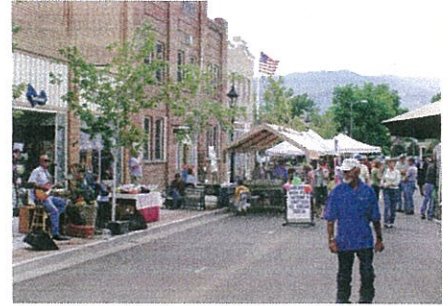
- Promote the revitalization of the Towns of Minden, Gardnerville, and Genoa and the community of Topaz Lake. Utilize infill to provide economic development.
- Define districts and areas of place-making to focus revitalization and redevelopment efforts within the town centers.
- Provide a mix of uses, densities, and amenities to attract and activate the downtown spaces.
- Enhance the streetscape environment to increase the dwell time of patrons within the downtown.
- Support and expand the Main Street Gardnerville Program. Investigate and support the development of a Main Street Minden Program.
- Support the continued improvements occurring through the Genoa Main Street Landscape Enhancement Plan.
- Support environmental redevelopment to improve the built environment.
- Seek infrastructure improvements that support economic development efforts.

Principle Four

Create a business friendly, growing community within the bounds of Carson Valley's plentiful resources.

Related strategies

- Encourage reinvestment and new business growth while maintaining the Valley's spectacular natural environment.
- Maintain the quality of life and attract unique and marketable businesses.
- Retain and strengthen the existing business base.



The historic downtown can offer a vibrant destination.



The Valley's resources can support a growing community.



Dangberg Ranch is a centrally located historic resource.



US 395 serves both local and truck traffic.



Skilled training grows community knowledge and resources.



Healthy communities include diversity in age and income levels.

Community Principles

Principle One

Bring a Valley-wide tourism development strategy forward to preserve and restore historic resources, create historic trails, define new points of interest and attraction, and capitalize on the rich history of settlement and Native American culture.

Related strategies

- Rebrand the visitor experience to focus on environmental quality, health and wellness, and recreation activities.
- Create a comprehensive tourism strategy that aligns the varied Valley resources and amenities and creates the sense of “one destination” for residents and visitors alike.

Principle Two

Address the dilemma between US Highway 395 and Main Street by articulating needs and providing solutions for the future. Solutions should include options for highway re-alignment, travel speed reductions, and the conversion to pedestrian friendly street uses.

Related strategies

- Evaluate the opportunity for a truck bypass to divert the large volume of truck traffic away from Main Street.
- Identify key districts to focus pedestrian improvements. Create shorter blocks and reduce travel speeds to highlight the importance of the pedestrian.
- Reconfigure the S-curve and intersection at US 395 and Toler Avenue. Explore place-making opportunities.
- Evaluate opportunities to create a road diet along Main Street or in key districts based upon the ability to relocate truck traffic.

Principle Three

Support a culture of intentional and constant school improvements to create a ‘quality gain’ at all levels of education.

Related strategies

- Link education and community improvements to grow, diversify, and promote educational opportunities.
- Identify public/private partnerships aimed at attracting and developing quality learning and training programs.
- Build upon and celebrate current successes and strengths while identifying continual opportunities for improvement at all levels.
- Foster pride, ownership, and participation in a nationally distinguished Valley-wide education program.

Principle Four

Provide appropriate vital neighborhoods which include some affordable housing.

Related strategies

- Diversify the housing inventory by including multifamily units and other housing types that provide affordable housing.
- Remove potential barriers from land use and zoning codes to allow affordable housing opportunities.
- Allow for mixed use development to support housing near businesses and employment centers.

Art Principles

Principle One

Encourage the expression of all forms of art in the community through active engagement.

Related strategies

- Contribute to place-making and livability by incorporating all forms of art into the community.
- Support and provide venues for incorporating both visual and performing arts into the community fabric.

Principle Two

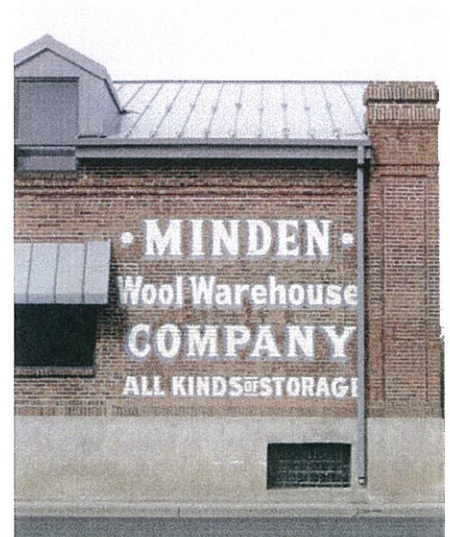
Address the quality of design to create an artful expression of space and community place-making.

Related strategies

- Ensure design expresses an excellence of craftsmanship, quality, truthfulness, and originality.
- Create regionally appropriate and meaningful architecture and spaces.
- Incorporate art and meaning as part of the design and planning process. Do not use art as an afterthought or decoration. Engage artists early.



Streetscape elements can help reinforce an aesthetic, rural character.



Historic buildings can be used to help establish a quality of design.



The Copeland Building is planned for a future regional arts center.

Key Concepts

The vision principles generate a range of key concepts illustrated by the Vision Plan Diagram.

The vision diagram compiles the concepts and shows how the ideas coalesce into one unified vision. The diagram organizes the Valley in response to potential opportunities related to the following four core areas:

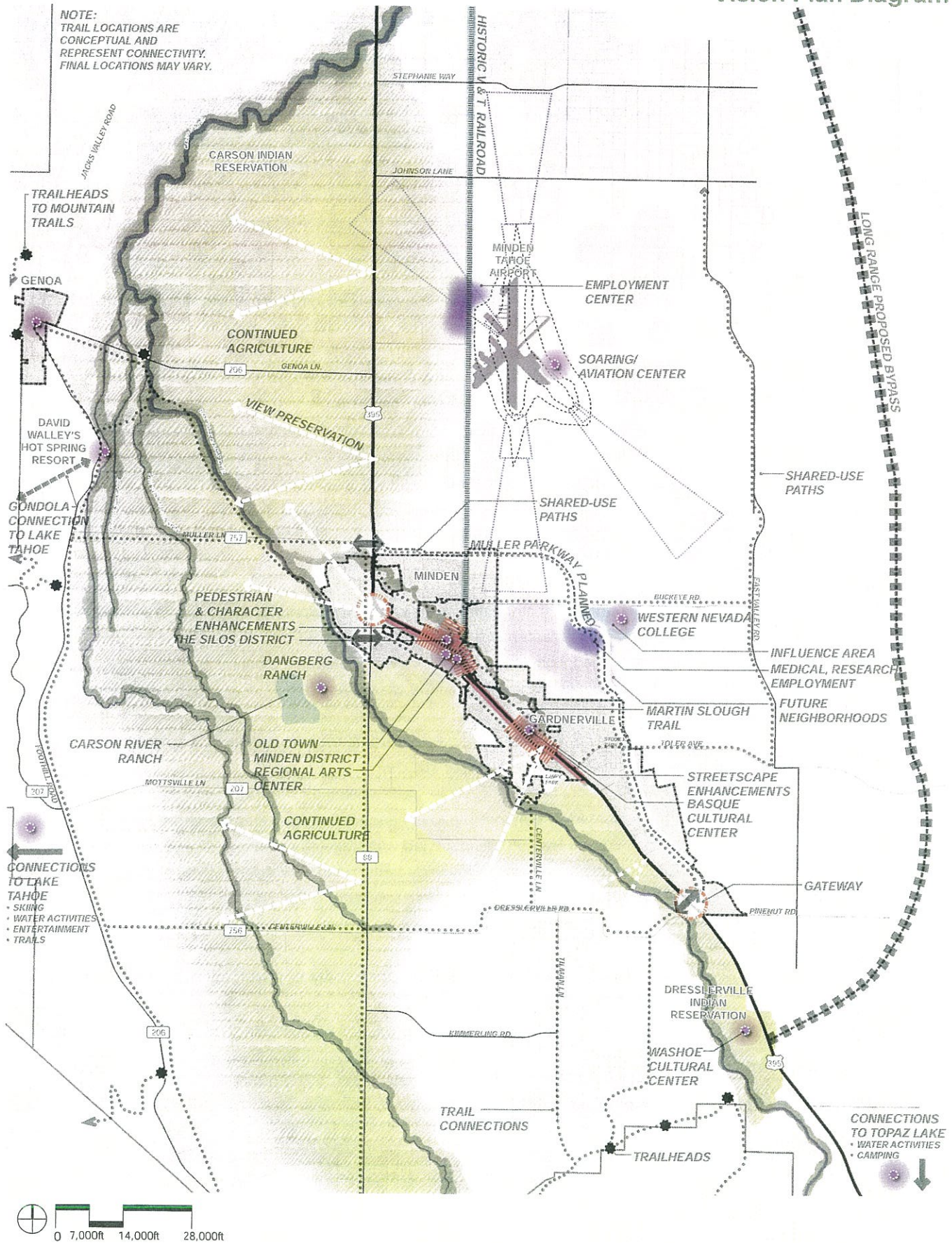
- Trails, Open Space, and Visual Resource Protection;
- New Employment and Economic Opportunities;
- Tourism Destinations and Connections; and
- Transportation and Linkages.

While much work remains before some of the improvements can be realized, the diagrams and illustrations establish a view of how the future of the Valley may look.

Illustrations are provided to give a sense of what could be, visually conveying the possibilities for the Valley. The final form and detail of projects and development may differ from the illustrations, but the ideas are set forth to inform those planning and design decision that have the opportunity to shape the Valley's future. As stakeholders, community members and the County carry ideas forward, the precise locations and actual designs will evolve to best meet the community needs and site requirements.

As the County and Towns move forward, the ideas illustrated here can be incorporated into General Plan and Strategic Plan updates. These documents may provide additional detail on implementation and funding opportunities to achieve specific elements of the Valley Vision.

Vision Plan Diagram



NOTE:
TRAIL LOCATIONS ARE
CONCEPTUAL AND
REPRESENT CONNECTIVITY.
FINAL LOCATIONS MAY VARY.

12-29

Core Area: Trails, Open Space, and Visual Resource Protection

Parks, natural areas, and scenic landscapes have great economic value. They help protect the Valley's agricultural heritage, attract tourism and recreation, and ensure the integrity of naturally functioning ecosystems. Preserving scenic vistas and establishing trails to the abundant outdoor amenities also strengthens the connection that people have with their neighbors and the surrounding environment.

The Trails, Open Space, and Visual Resource Protection diagram illustrates the following goals:

Goal 1: Establish a diversified network of trails to link downtown areas to local and regional destinations.

Trail connections link the Valley in a variety of methods. River corridors can serve as Valley-wide connections to link downtown areas to local and regional destinations. Coordination with the agricultural community is needed to develop workable solutions which allow for some type of trail connection while protecting agricultural access and use of the river and avoiding potential vandalism to irrigation facilities.

Completion of the planned bike path network includes the Martin Slough Trail through Minden and connecting to Lampe Park. Separated bike paths can be aligned along designated roadways to enhance connectivity. These routes are shown as dotted lines on the Vision Diagram.

Goal 2: Enhance pedestrian and bicycle safety at key crossing locations along major roads.

Conflicts between cyclists, pedestrians, and vehicles should be minimized and avoided where possible to enhance safety. Key areas to improve crossings of US 395 and Hwy 88 are identified with large black arrows. These areas represent connections from valley-wide trails to the downtown. Safety and improved access should be evaluated for these and other areas where pedestrians and cyclists may interface with large traffic volumes.

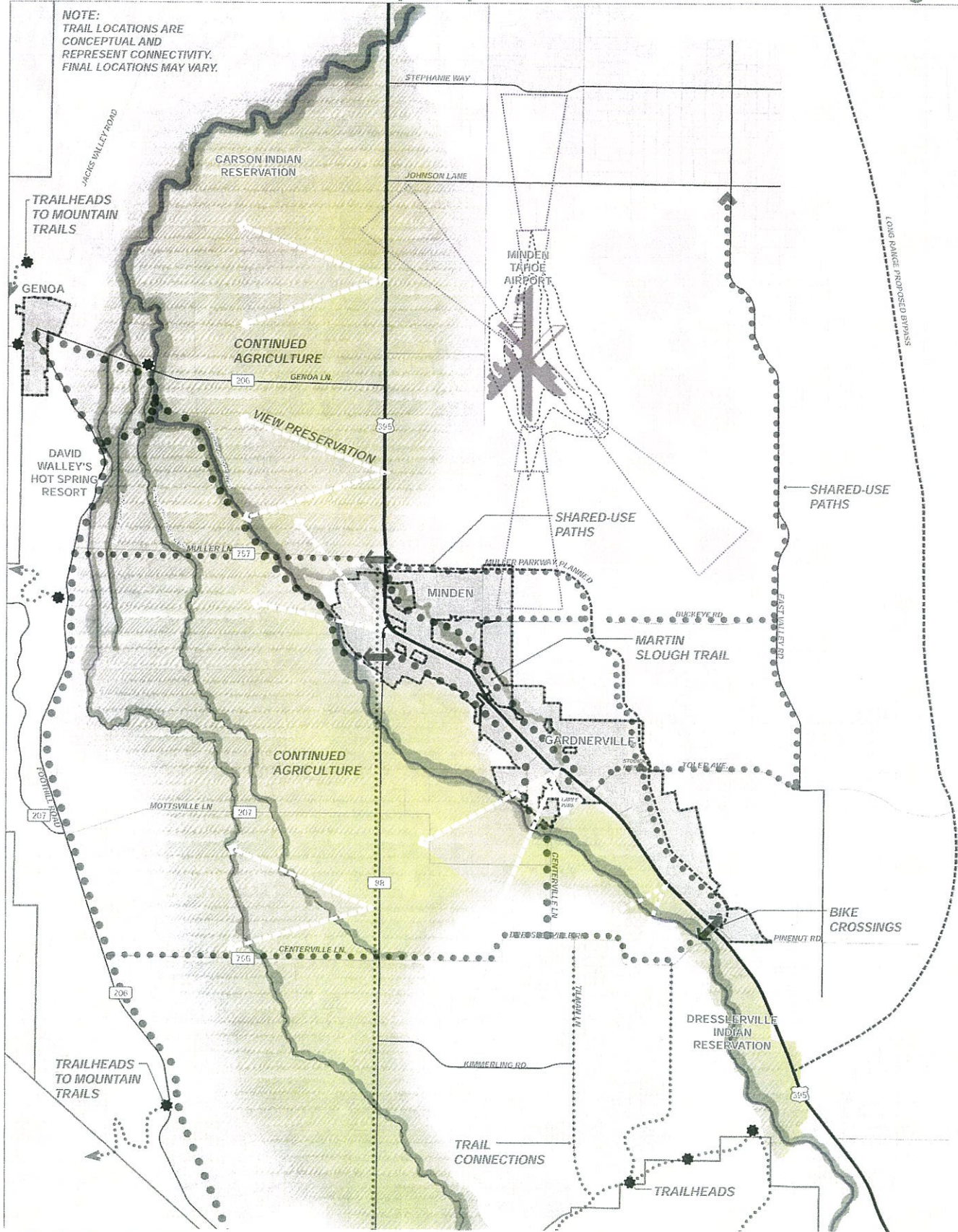
Goal 3: Expand recreation access by connecting residents and visitors to the regional trail system.

Valley-wide trails link with regional trail systems allowing residents and visitors alternative access and recreation opportunities. Linkages to mountain trails around Genoa support town revitalization and promote a regional connection to the greater Lake Tahoe area.

12-30

Trails/Open Space/Visual Resource Protection Diagram

NOTE:
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12-31



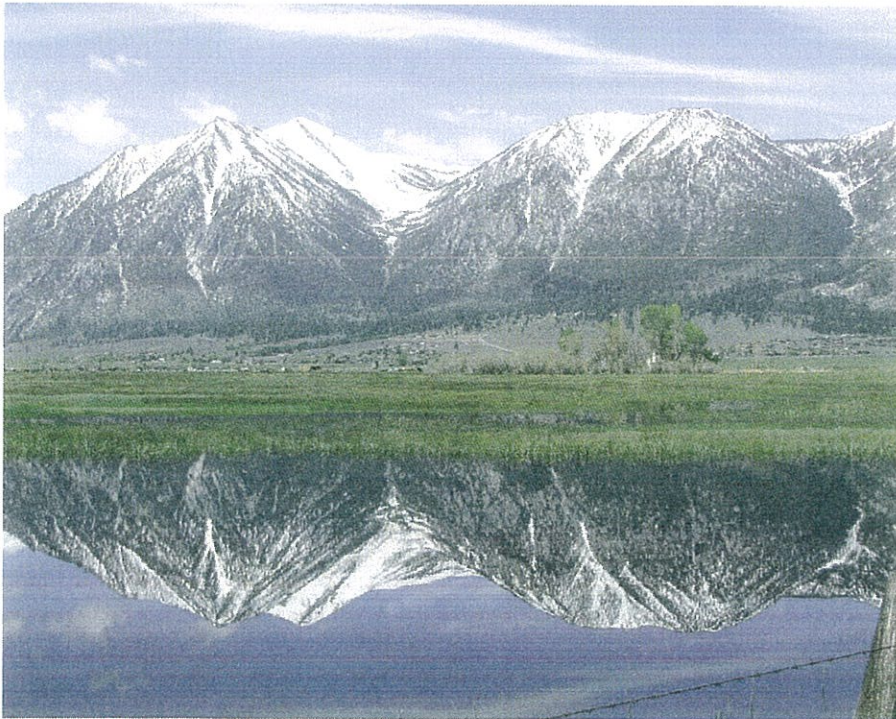
Greenways along river corridors help link Valley destinations to the downtown.



Trail connections at Genoa provide mountain access and regional linkages to Lake Tahoe.



The new trail connecting Genoa to Walley's Hot Springs should be continued as part of a larger trail network connecting the Valley.



Views of the Sierra Nevada and the agricultural fields in the foreground should be preserved.

Goal 4: Protect critical lands that retain the rural quality of the community, support working land and preserve natural resources and systems.

Views of the Sierra Nevada and Jobs Peak, agricultural fields, and the Pine Nuts dominate the visual experience. Maintaining working agriculture and managing hillside development can help retain the Valley's high scenic quality and sense of place. Viewsheds along US 395 and Hwy 88 are noted for view preservation. The intersection of US 395 and Hwy 88 is noted as an area for improvement and focus. It provides key views of the Sierra Nevada and also serves as a gateway into Minden and Gardnerville.

Core Area: New Employment and Economic Opportunities

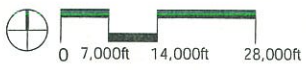
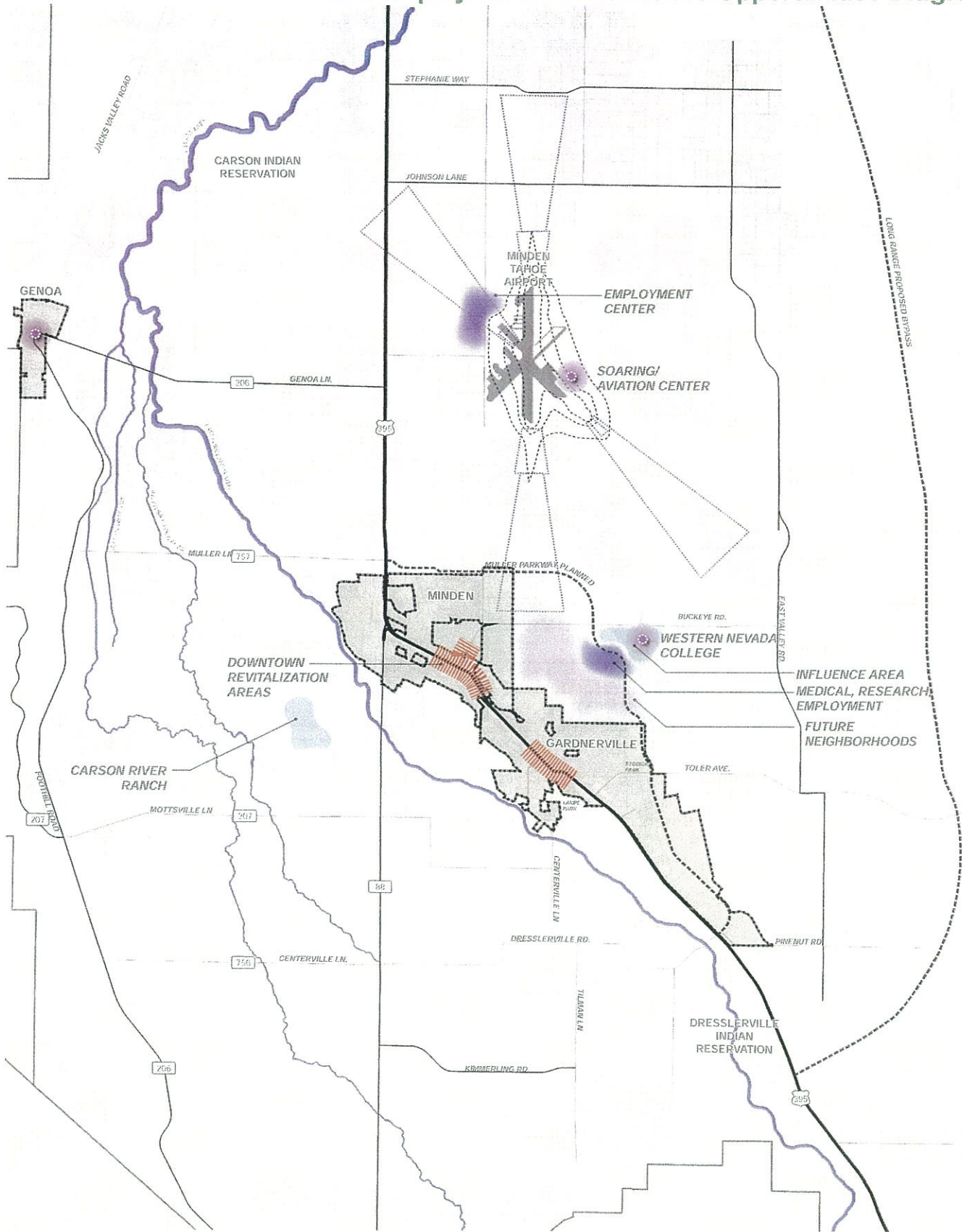
Continued growth and prosperity in the Valley builds off the successful base of existing industries while creating new opportunities that leverage the Valley's competitive advantages. Factors such as the available lifestyle, business friendly climate and proximity to major markets in combination with recommended infrastructure upgrades are critical to attracting and retaining businesses that create sustainable economic opportunities.

The economic drivers of the Valley Vision identify methods for agricultural innovation to enhance local food markets and build upon existing technology, energy, and medical clusters to attract compatible new businesses. Secondary economic opportunities include tourism, health and wellness, and continuous care adult communities.

Additional employment and economic generators are identified as part of infill and reinvestment in the districts noted as downtown revitalization areas. Historic districts such as The Silos, Old Town Gardnerville and Historic Minden create authentic downtown experiences. The regional performing arts venues reinforce a vibrant downtown by offering a mix of arts and cultural attractions.

The New Employment and Economic Opportunities Diagram illustrates the following goals:

New Employment and Economic Opportunities Diagram



12-35



Certifying Valley agricultural areas as organic may help make the products distinctive.



Similar to the Cheese Guild in Oregon helping various creameries work together for greater recognition, Valley agriculture can cooperatively promote a niche market.

Goal 1: Innovate local food and agriculture production as a means to preserve the region's agricultural heritage.

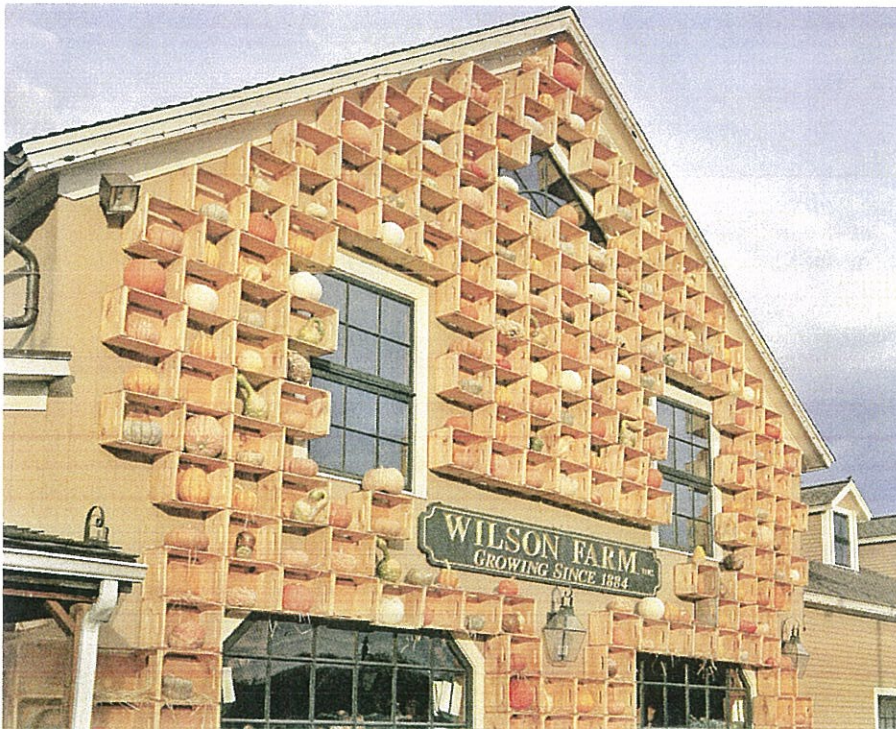
Preservation of agricultural lands requires finding methods to enlarge local food and agricultural production. This can be accomplished by intermixing supporting uses and creating a branding strategy to distinguish Valley products from other areas. As farms work together to establish an expected level of quality, they can evaluate opportunities for improvement and advancement. Considering organic certification of fields may be one option. Locally grown crops can also be promoted at local restaurants, sold at local and regional farmers markets, marketed and distributed through community shared agriculture (CSAs), and sold at retail outlets.



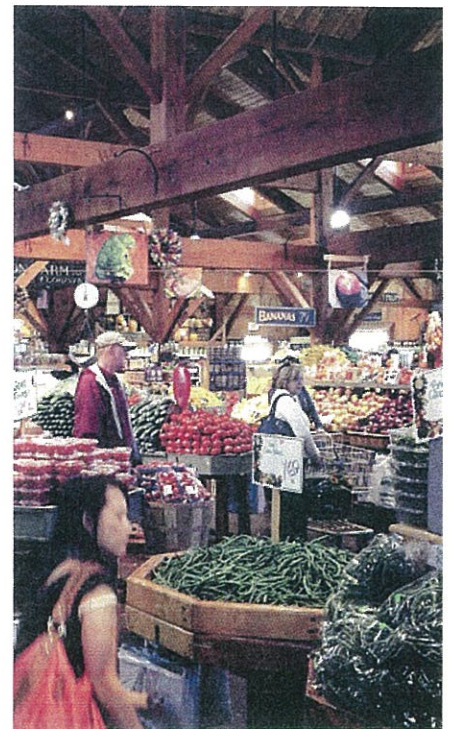
Agricultural products can be coordinated with economic opportunities as field to table options, promoting the use of local produce in restaurants.



Agricultural products from Carson Valley can be branded and distinguished for their excellence.



Wilson Farm in Massachusetts provides an example for an innovative approach to agriculture in the Valley.



Retail opportunities for local produce can be developed.

12-37

Goal 2. Recruit, retain and expand employment opportunities through the advancement and expansion of existing technology clusters.

The Valley's business and technology parks offer a vital economic resource in the fields of science, research, and energy. Continued growth of these parks should occur to position the Valley to be on the forefront of new technologies.

Additionally, the parks can be further enhanced by adding health and wellness elements. The growth and need for advancing health care technologies can be a sister piece to the existing research parks and provide additional economic opportunities.

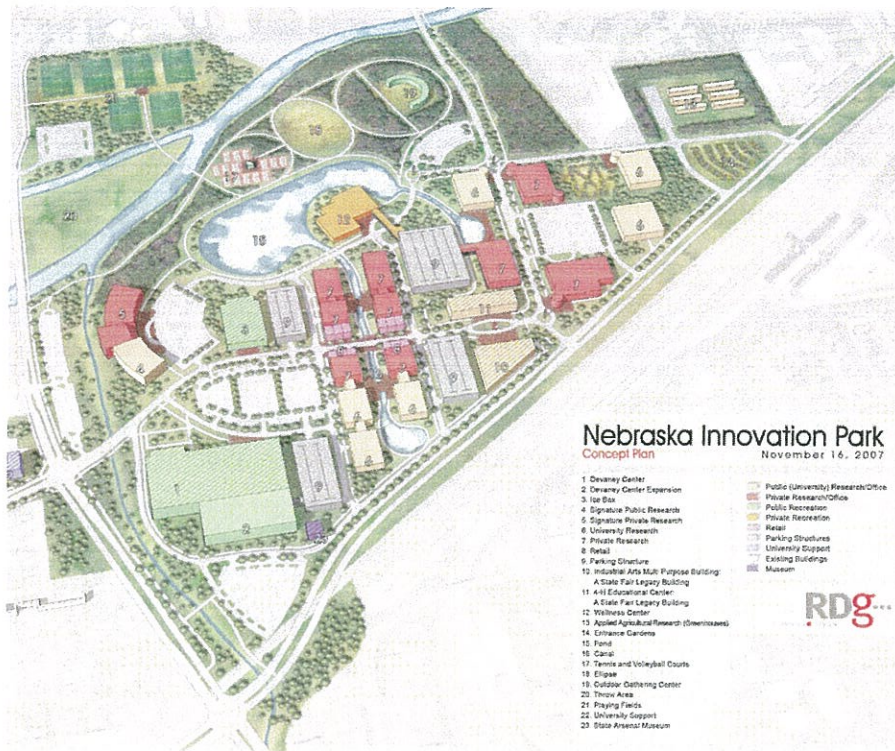
Innovations in outdoor recreation can also be pursued as part of the research facilities to complement existing Valley resources and economic drivers.



The Valley's science, technology, and energy research parks can not only provide economic employment but also training and staff development. In addition, as new ideas emerge the parks can position the Valley to be on the forefront of sustainable technologies to be incorporated into building design.



Existing research and innovation parks can serve as an incubator for ideas. Maker fairs and science centers can coordinate with the existing businesses to grow with emerging markets and adapt new technologies.



The Nebraska Innovation Park is modeled on successful existing national research university/public-private partnerships. One such example is Centennial Campus at North Carolina State University, where more than 70 businesses now operate, providing new jobs and revenue for the state and its citizens.



Cummings Research Park in Huntsville, Alabama is the second largest research park in the United States. Major industries are aerospace, defense, engineering, biotechnology, advanced manufacturing, software development, and information technology.



A health and wellness facility could fit within the Valley's resources and environment and create an additional economic generator for the area.

Goal 3. Develop a health and wellness industry with a compatible active adult community.

As demographics change, the demand for quality active adult retirement areas are growing. The Valley offers abundant resources desired by many of retirement age. The outdoor lifestyle and rural character are a draw for many and set the stage for an economic development opportunity. A small, active adult community could be developed within the Valley. Coordinating the development with a health and wellness facility would enhance the community and expand the type of research facilities now present in the Valley.



Active adult communities can be combined with recreation opportunities and health and wellness facilities to provide a comprehensive package.



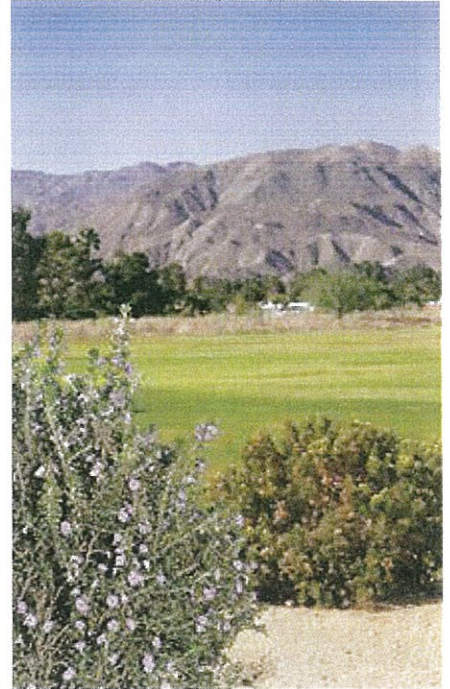
Walnut Village active senior living village in Anaheim, California.



Villa Portofina active adult community in Palm Desert, California.



The Valley offers all the elements desired by active adult communities including outdoor recreation access.

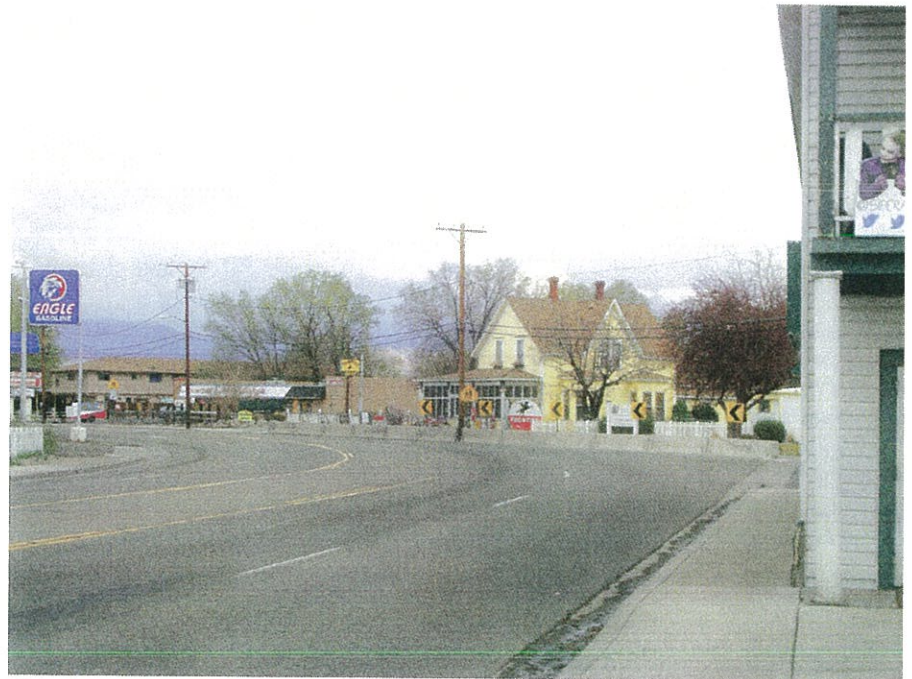


The Valley has already developed a range of outdoor activities similar to that found in Villa Portofina.

12-41



Infill and mixed uses should be focused in identified districts. The pedestrian area is increased to create a more welcoming environment where people want to stay and visit.



Existing conditions at the S-curve on US 395.



Downtown pedestrian environments which provide seating, shade, and substantial sidewalk area draw more patrons and can be more economically viable.



Infill development in Ogden, Utah used the framework of historic buildings to reinvigorate the downtown.

Goal 4. Revitalize downtowns with infill development and a mix of uses and amenities.

Reinvestment in downtown areas should include infill and mixed uses. Enhancing the streetscape environment and focusing reinvestment in key districts can help create defined areas of activity while allowing the remainder of the downtown area to maintain its current viability.

Buildings of significance can be kept and transformed into economic generators with a streetscape presence. Potential revitalization projects include the Creamery, the Mill, the Whiskey Distillery and Farmers Bank. Additional areas may build off improvements to the streetscape and adjacent buildings.

High speed internet connections present opportunities for both businesses and the streetscape environment. Downtown wifi “hotspots” can encourage people to stay longer and activate the area.

A number of historic buildings along US 395 and in the heart of the downtown area present opportunities for restoration and reuse. Structures should be designed to have a presence along the street and invite pedestrians within their doors. Focus should be on infill and renovation of existing structures in the downtown area. Much of the Valley’s charm lies in these buildings and they can be enhanced to function as part of a lively streetscape.



Economic development and streetscape and community benefit can be achieved through renovation and re-purposing of historic buildings.



Existing view of US 395 by the Minden Flour Mill.

12-44



Transforming the Copeland building into a Regional Arts Center reactivates the area and creates the opportunity for an arts district along US 395.



Farmers Bank can be reused as office or commercial space.

12-45

Core Area: Tourism Destinations and Connections

The uniqueness of a community is found in its history, and in activities that cannot be replicated elsewhere. Linking together the Valley's historic resources with contemporary entertainment and activities provides awareness of the wide range of authentic experiences available. It's not hard to imagine how an afternoon glider ride could be followed by a stroll through The Silos District and a traditional Basque meal.

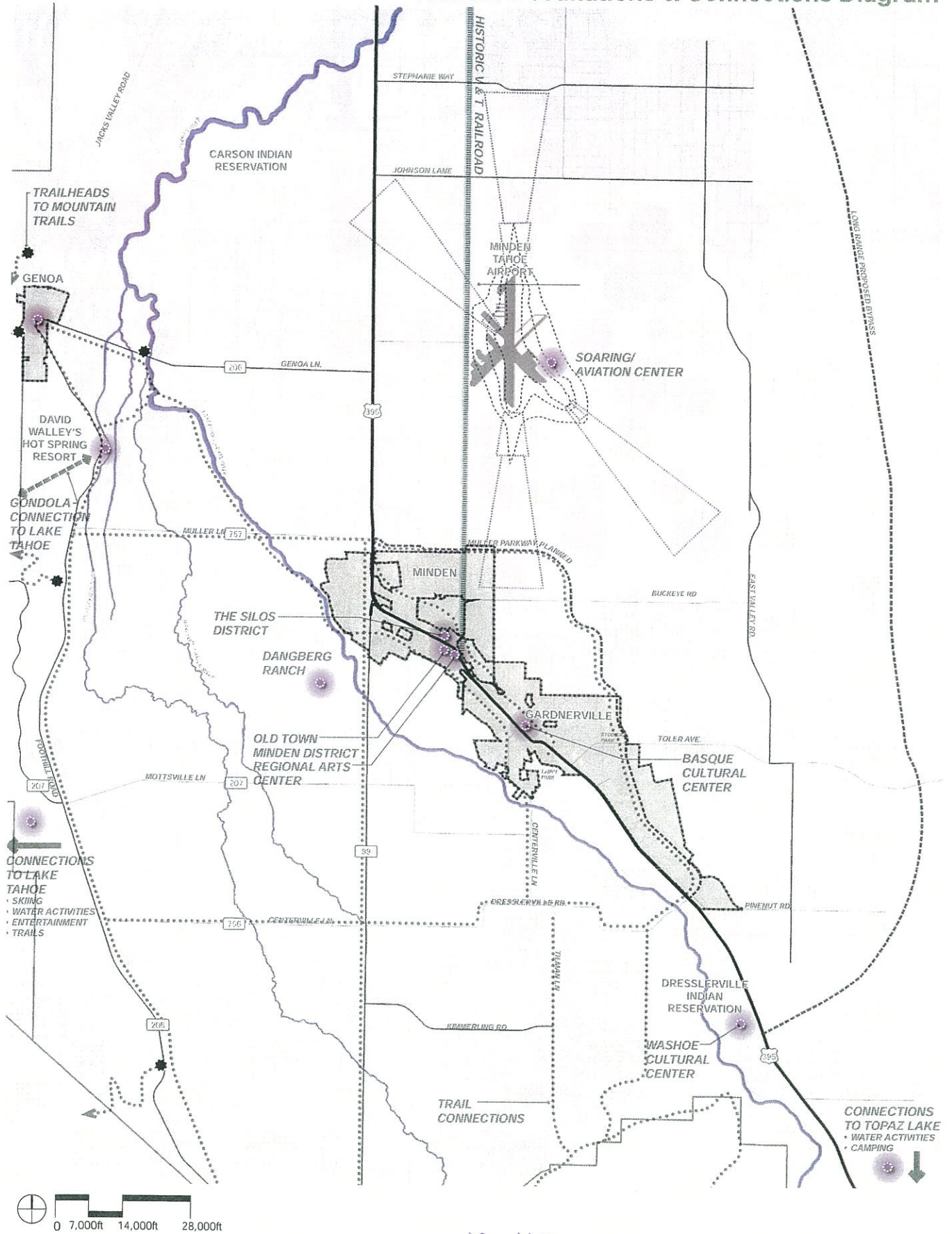
The Tourism Destinations & Connections Diagram highlights a number of important tourism destinations, community districts, the historic V&T Railroad, soaring center and other cultural centers. A gondola connection from Walley's Hot Spring Resort to Lake Tahoe provides not only a mode of alternative transportation, but it can be a destination experience in and of itself. On their own, these improvements might not create a significant draw. But as a whole, they offer a rich, attractive experience.

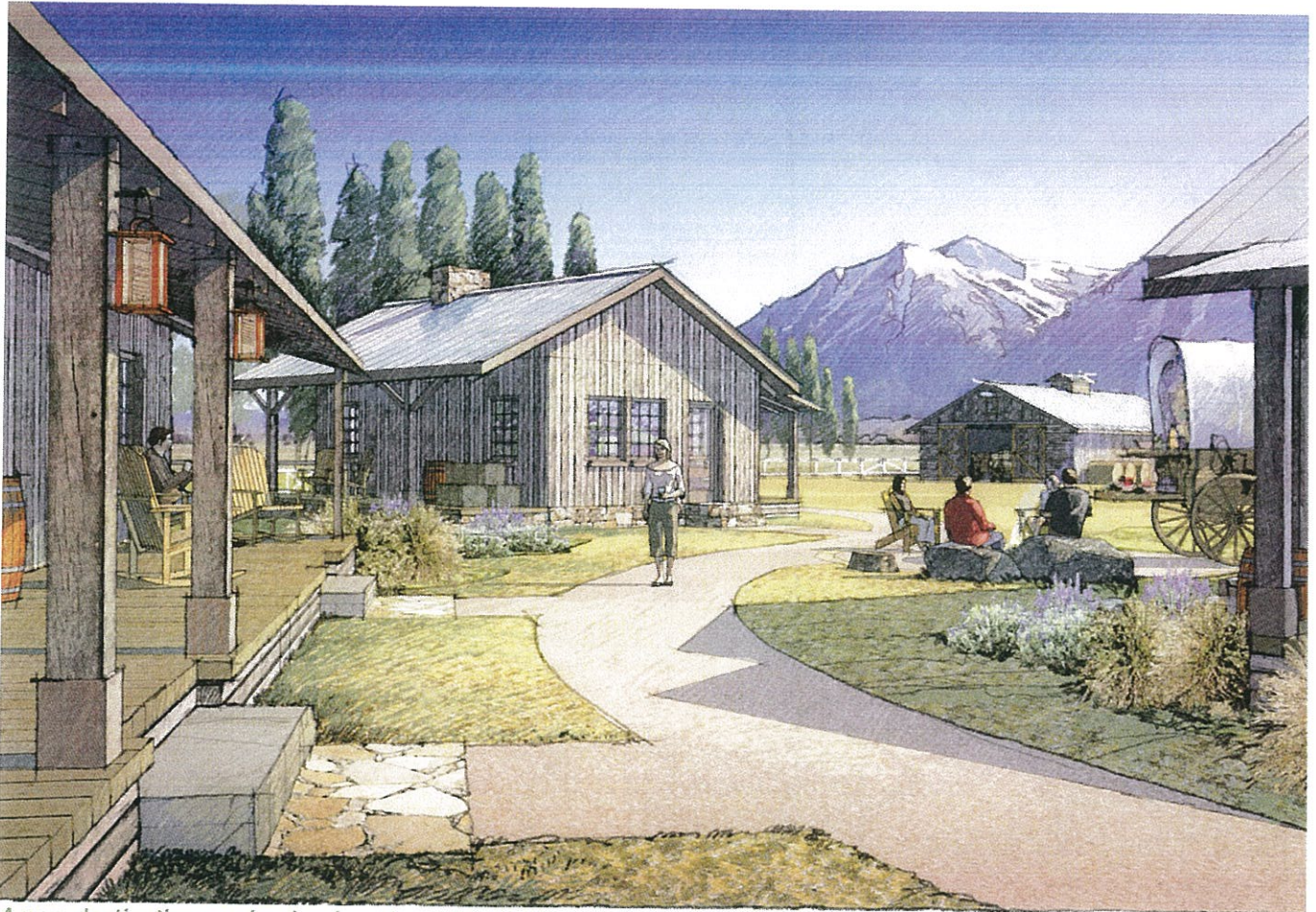
The improvements shown on the following pages describe the opportunities and methods associated with the following elements:

- Carson River Ranch
- Valley-wide Branding & Coordinated Signage Program
- V&T Railroad Connection
- Soaring Center
- Recreation Connections to Lake Tahoe and Topaz Lake
- Cultural Centers
 - » Regional Arts Center
 - » Basque Cultural Center
 - » Native American Cultural Center

12-46

Tourism Destinations & Connections Diagram





A new destination can be developed as a Carson River Ranch. Cabins and a main lodge can create an authentic and comfortable experience in the Valley.



Vista Verde Ranch in Steamboat Springs, Colorado is a luxury cabin resort similar to that imagined for the Carson River Valley Ranch.

12-48