



Lower Russian River Municipal Advisory Council

## AGENDA

### Regular Meeting

March 13, 2025 05:30 PM

West County Services Center, 16390 Main Street, Guerneville

<https://sonomacounty.ca.gov/lrrmac>

<https://sonomacounty.zoom.us/j/98027080165?pwd=pvNBjyPKkOoKI3tooqmZCeYgzOsjKG.1>

Chair & Rio Nido Representative: Pip Marquez de la Plata • Cazadero / Duncan Mills Representative: Tony Goodwin • Guerneville Representative: Joe Rogoff • Guerneville Representative: Spencer R. Scott • Guerneville South / Pocket Canyon Representative: Betsy Van Dyke • Monte Rio / Villa Grande Representative: Patty Thayer • Vice Chair & Hacienda Representative: Vicki Clewes • Forestville Representative: Lonnie Lazar • Forestville Representative: Thai Hilton • Non-Voting Student Representative: Faye Zamora

### REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS

The Lower Russian River Municipal Advisory Council will make reasonable accommodations for persons having special needs due to disabilities. Please contact the Fifth District Field Representative at 707-565-1219 during regular business hours at least 48 hours prior to the meeting to ensure necessary accommodations are made.

#### 1. Call to Order

A. Announcement from Spanish Interpreter: The Spanish language interpreter will provide information about how to access the interpretation channel via Zoom or obtain a headset if attending in-person.

B. Roll Call

#### 2. Approval of the Agenda

Discussion  Possible Action

This approval process ensures that the agenda accurately reflects the items to be discussed and decided upon. Members may request adjustments to the agenda, including reordering or deletion of items at this time. Any changes must comply with the Brown Act requirements for public notice and agenda setting. The agenda must be finalized before the Council proceeds with other meeting items.

#### 3. Statement of Conflict of Interest

Discussion

This is the time for the Chair, Vice Chair and Council Members to indicate any statements of conflict

of interest for any item listed on this agenda. The River MAC bylaws state that members will not involve themselves in official River MAC activities that could materially benefit them personally, their business interests, or the interests of organizations that they represent. In a conflict of interest, the member will abstain from voting, and the abstention will be recorded in the minutes.

#### **4. Councilmember Comment**

##### Discussion

This is an opportunity for Councilmembers to provide a brief comments, restricted to matters within the Board's jurisdiction. Due to Brown Act regulations, this is not a time for discussion of any item, however a brief dialogue about considering an item for a future agenda is permitted during this time.

#### **5. Public Comment on Matters not listed on the Agenda**

##### Discussion

Comments are restricted to matters within the Lower Russian River MAC's jurisdiction. Please be brief and limit spoken comments to two minutes. While Councilmembers may not respond to or discuss comments except to express interest in agendizing the topic for a future meeting, staff can briefly address or follow up after the meeting.

#### **6. County Update**

##### Discussion

Updates from Supervisor Hopkins and / or Staff

#### **7. Sonoma County Tourism: Diversity, Sustainability & Stewardship**

##### Discussion Possible Action

Kelly Bass Siebel, Sonoma County Tourism's Vice President of Community Engagement, will introduce Wine Country for All of Us, Sonoma County Tourism's new multi-year initiative aimed at fostering inclusivity, accessibility, and sustainability in the region's tourism industry. This initiative builds upon Sonoma County's long-standing commitment to diversity and stewardship by ensuring that all visitors and residents feel welcomed and valued.

Key features of the initiative include:

Development of a curriculum for front-line staff to enhance awareness and inclusivity in guest interactions.

Identification and promotion of ADA-accessible services, amenities, and experiences to improve accessibility throughout the region.

Partnerships with organizations such as Wheel the World, Global Sustainable Tourism Council, Kind Traveler, and Leave No Trace to support responsible tourism and environmental stewardship.

A marketing campaign, "This is Wine Country," designed to showcase the region's rich diversity, unexpected treasures, and authentic travel experiences.

MAC members and community stakeholders are encouraged to provide input on how this initiative can further enhance Sonoma County's inclusivity and accessibility efforts.

#### **8. Ad Hoc Committees**

**Discussion**    **Possible Action**

This is an opportunity for updates from existing Ad Hoc Committee(s) or the formation / dissolution of an Ad Hoc Committee by the Chair.

**A. Land Use Ad Hoc: Discussion re: PLP25-0001: Cargo Container Storage Facility in Pocket Canyon**

The Ad hoc met on March 4 to review the Completeness Referral Packet and have several questions about the project. This is an opportunity for the full MAC to discuss the application and draft feedback to the Planner. The applicant has been invited to attend to answer questions.

Ad hoc members: Betsy Van Dyke, Thai Hilton, Cari Hernandez, and Patty Thayer

**B. Community Engagement & Outreach Plan Ad Hoc**

The MAC will review and consider adoption of the 2025 Community Engagement and Outreach Plan

Ad hoc members: Vicki Clewes, Patty Thayer, Cari Hernandez, Betsy Van Dyke, and Faye Zamora

**9. Consent Agenda**

**Discussion**    **Possible Action**

These items are expected to be routine and non-controversial. The Lower Russian River MAC will act upon them at one time without discussion. Any Representatives, staff member or interested party may request that an item be removed from the consent agenda for discussion.

A. February 13 Minutes

B. 2024 Lower Russian River Annual Report

**10. Adjournment**

An aerial photograph of a river winding through a lush, forested valley. The river is a vibrant blue, reflecting the sky. The surrounding hills are covered in dense green and yellow trees, suggesting a mix of evergreen and deciduous species. The sky is a mix of light blue and soft orange, indicating a sunset or sunrise. The overall scene is peaceful and scenic.

# Sonoma County Tourism Update

March 13, 2025



# Mission/Vision

**MISSION:** Inspire travel to Sonoma County that strengthens our economy, reflects our diversity and encourages stewardship of our community's resources.

**MISIÓN:** Inspirar viajes al Condado de Sonoma que fortalezcan nuestra economía, reflejen nuestra diversidad y fomenten la administración de los recursos de nuestra comunidad.

**VISION:** Sonoma County will be the leading destination for responsible travelers who enjoy, protect and preserve our community's bountiful natural and cultural resources.

**VISIÓN:** El Condado de Sonoma será el principal destino para los viajeros responsables que disfrutan, protegen y preservan los abundantes recursos naturales y culturales de nuestra comunidad.



# Research Insights

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# Sonoma County Economic Impact of Travel

## Sonoma County / Direct Travel Impacts Summary Table

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023p	Avg. Annual % Chg	
								2022-2023p	2017-2023p
<b>Spending (\$Millions)</b>									
Total	2,083.8	2,200.0	2,237.1	1,247.7	1,989.8	2,298.1	2,278.3	-0.9%	1.5%
<b>Earnings (\$Millions)</b>									
Earnings	766.6	814.5	863.0	652.5	469.8	934.7	1,028.9	10.1%	5.0%
<b>Employment (Jobs)</b>									
Employment	22,506	22,374	22,355	16,287	17,608	21,185	21,965	3.7%	-0.4%
<b>Tax Revenue (\$Millions)</b>									
Total	182.4	199.1	204.5	134.7	177.4	219.1	216.5	-1.2%	2.9%
Local	97.1	108.4	109.9	74.2	102.4	125.8	121.7	-3.2%	3.8%
State	85.3	90.7	94.6	60.5	75.0	93.3	94.8	1.6%	1.8%

Source: Dean Runyan Associates

# Sonoma County Cities Economic Impact of Travel

## Sonoma County / Direct Travel Impacts City-Level Summary Table, 2023p

	Cloverdale	Healdsburg	Petaluma	Rohnert Park	Santa Rosa	Sebastopol	Sonoma	Windsor	Unincorporated/ Other	Sonoma County
<b>Spending (\$Millions)</b>										
Total	10.1	234.6	147.1	144.1	358.1	18.7	165.7	83.5	1,116.5	2,278.3
<b>Earnings (\$Millions)</b>										
Earnings	4.5	106.0	66.4	65.1	161.7	8.4	74.8	37.7	504.2	1,028.9
<b>Employment (Jobs)</b>										
Employment	97	2,262	1,418	1,389	3,452	180	1,597	805	10,764	21,965
<b>Tax Revenue (\$Millions)</b>										
Total (Current \$)	1.0	22.3	14.0	13.7	34.0	1.8	15.7	7.9	106.1	216.5
Local	0.5	12.5	7.9	7.7	19.1	1.0	8.9	4.5	59.6	121.7
State	0.4	9.8	6.1	6.0	14.9	0.8	6.9	3.5	46.5	94.8

Source: Dean Runyan Associates





Wine Country For All of Us  
Tierra de Vinos para Todos

# Wine Country For All of Us

**Objective:** To intentionally position Sonoma County as an inclusive, welcoming destination where all travelers can truly feel like they belong through a welcoming and inclusive experience.

**Objetivo:** Posicionar intencionadamente el condado de Sonoma como un destino inclusivo y acogedor en el que todos los viajeros puedan sentir realmente que pertenecen a él a través de una experiencia acogedora e integradora.

**Ethos:** Through Wine Country for All of Us, Sonoma County is opening its arms as a place that embraces belonging and celebrates communities and people representing the totality of the shared human experience.

**Ethos:** A través de Wine Country for All of Us, el condado de Sonoma abre sus brazos como un lugar que abraza la pertenencia y celebra comunidades y personas que representan la totalidad de la experiencia humana compartida.



A person wearing a yellow helmet and a green jacket is ziplining over a dense, green forest. The person is suspended in the air, holding onto a rope. The background is a vast expanse of trees, suggesting a mountainous or hilly region. The text "THIS IS WINE COUNTRY." is overlaid on the left side of the image in large, white, bold letters.

**THIS  
IS WINE  
COUNTRY.**

Future Marketing Committee Dates

**THIS  
IS WINE  
COUNTRY.**





**THIS  
IS WINE  
COUNTRY.**



**THIS  
IS WINE  
COUNTRY.**

# Evolving Sustainability Programming



Thank You!  
Gracias







2550 Ventura Avenue  
Santa Rosa, CA 95403

**p:** (707) 565-1900  
**f:** (707) 565-1017

Tennis Wick  
Director

Scott Orr  
Assistant Director

Michelle Arellano  
Administration

Nathan Quarles  
Engineering and Construction

Tyra Harrington  
Code Enforcement

Genevieve Bertone  
Communications

Steve Mosiurchak  
Fire Marshal

John Mack  
Natural Resources

Brian Keefer  
Ombudsperson

February 13, 2025

To: Interested Agencies

The following application has been filed with the Sonoma County Permit and Resource Management Department.

**File Number:** PLP25-0001  
**Applicant Name:** Gordon Evans  
**Owner Name:** same  
**Site Address:** 9360 & 9366 Hwy 116, Forestville  
**APN:** 083-220-015  
**Zoning:** LC, RRD B6 160, F1 F2 LG/116 OAK RC50/50 SR

**Project Description: Planning Project which includes a Use Permit and Administrative Design Review for a Cargo Container Storage Facility, considered 'Personal Storage', consisting of 8 cargo containers, outdoors, operating 8:00am - 5:00pm, on a 42.40-acre, split-zone parcel.**

We are submitting the above application for your review and recommendation. Additional information is on file in this office.

Responses to referrals should include a combination of any or all of the following details:

- (1) Statement of any environmental concerns or uncertainties your agency may have with the project.
- (2) Comments you wish to make regarding the merits of the project.
- (3) Identification of any missing information or application submittals that will preclude you from providing conditions and mitigations for this project in the future.
- (4) Your proposed conditions of approval and/or mitigations for this project.

**After reviewing this application, please respond to the planner with your *marked* response below:**

- Conditions will be provided and no further information is necessary.
- Conditions will be provided and additional information is necessary.
- Comments and/or concerns.
- No comments or conditions.

Responsible agencies under CEQA are requested to indicate whether permits will be required for this project.

Your comments will be appreciated by February 27, 2025, and should be sent to the attention of:

PLP25-0001, Brendan Norton ([Brendan.Norton@sonoma-county.org](mailto:Brendan.Norton@sonoma-county.org)). The Project Planner can also be reached at (707) 565-1623. **If no response is received by February 27, 2025, it will be assumed that no comments or conditions will be provided.**

Please send a copy of your comments to the applicant(s) or their representatives as indicated on the attached Planning Application.

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building Inspection                | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Lower Russian River MAC                    |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fire Prevention                    | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NW Information Center, S.S.U.              |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grading and Storm Water            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Local Fire District – Sonoma County FPD    |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Management Group                   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> State Dept of Fish and Wildlife            |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Natural Resources                  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Regional Water QCB: North Coast            |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SUSMP                              | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tribal Notification                        |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Well & Septic                      | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Scenic Hwy 116 Committee                   |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dist. 5 Director and Commissioners | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Western SoCo Rural Alliance                |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SPI (DTPW), Land Development       | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> West Sonoma County Union High School Dist. |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Forestville Planning Association   |  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Forestville Union School Dist.     |  |

# Planning Application

PJR-001

**Application Type(s):**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Admin Cert. Compliance          | <input type="checkbox"/> Design Review Admin.   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ag. or Timber Preserve/Contract | <input type="checkbox"/> Design Review Full     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conditional Cert. of Compliance | <input type="checkbox"/> General Plan Amendment |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cert. of Modification           | <input type="checkbox"/> Lot Line Adjustment    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Coastal Permit                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Major Subdivision      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Zoning Permit for: _____        |   |

File # \_\_\_\_\_

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Minor Subdivision            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Use Permit |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Voluntary Merger             | <input type="checkbox"/> Variance              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ordinance Interpretation     | <input type="checkbox"/> Zone Change           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Second Unit Permit           | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Specific/Area Plan Amendment |  |

*By placing my contact information (name, address, phone number, email address, etc.) on this application form and submitting it to Sonoma County PRMD, I understand and authorize PRMD to post this application to the internet for public information purposes, including my contact information.*

PRINT CLEARLY					
<b>APPLICANT</b>			<b>OWNER (IF OTHER THAN APPLICANT)</b>		
Name <u>MICHAEL Boehm</u>			Name <u>GORDON EVANS</u>		
Mailing Address <u>9360 Hwy 116</u>			Mailing Address <u>9360 Hwy 116</u>		
City <u>Forestville</u>	State <u>CA</u>	Zip <u>95436</u>	City <u>Forestville/CA</u>	State <u>CA</u>	Zip <u>95436</u>
Day Ph (707) <u>861 0406</u>	Email <u>mykildfence@GMAIL.com</u>		Day Ph (707) <u>887-9800</u>	Email _____	
Signature <u>[Signature]</u>		Date <u>1-13-25</u>	Signature <u>[Signature]</u>		Date <u>1/17/25</u>
<b>Billing Responsible Party (At-Cost Only)</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Applicant <input type="checkbox"/> Owner <input type="checkbox"/> Other:					
OTHER PERSONS TO RECEIVE CORRESPONDENCE					
Name/Title _____			Name/Title _____		
Mailing Address _____			Mailing Address _____		
City _____	State _____	Zip _____	City _____	State _____	Zip _____
Day Ph ( ) _____	Email _____		Day Ph ( ) _____	Email _____	
PROJECT INFORMATION					
Address(es) <u>9360 Hwy 116</u>			City <u>Forestville, CA 95436</u>		
Assessor's Parcel Number(s) <u>083-220-015</u>					
Project Description <u>Cargo Container Storage</u>					
Acreage <u>40</u>			Number of new lots proposed <u>25-40</u>		
Site Served by Public Water? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No			Site Served by Public Sewer? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No		
TO BE COMPLETED BY PRMD STAFF					
Planning Area _____	Supervisory District _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Critical Habitat	<input type="checkbox"/> Urban Service	Groundwater	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 / 2
Current Zoning _____		<input type="checkbox"/> NPDES	<input type="checkbox"/> Williamson Act	Availability	<input type="checkbox"/> 3 / 4
		Specific/Area Plan _____		Subject to	<input type="checkbox"/> EX
General Plan Land Use _____		Parcel Specific Policy _____		CEQA	<input type="checkbox"/> YES
Application resolve planning violation? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		Violation? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		File No. _____	
Previous Files _____		Penalty application? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No			
Application accepted by _____		Date _____			
Approved by _____		Date _____			

Proposal statement for Cargo Shipping Container Storage Facility from

Michael Boehm

At: 9360 hwy. 116  
Forestville, CA. 95436  
707 8610406

This property has been a retail spot since the late 1800's. This was the site of the Evans Lumber Mill, Evans Concrete Roofing Tile, Fisher Wood Stove Manufacture, the site of 2 (iuyys with a Big Truck/ Forestville Firewood. Along with Rental Homes. We rent out several buildings to cabinetmakers and small retail businesses. AS Well, for historiacal reference, this was the original grounds ofThe Russian River Rodeo in the late 1800's.

There will be no real changes to the property. The site we wish to rent out cargo containers already holds eight containers mostly rounded up for the previous owners of Forestville Firewood Products. When they abandon their business, they left a huge mess we are cleaning up on a daily basis.. We would like to expand when there becomes a basic need. The land we propose is already more than half cement, it is the site of the previous lumber mill and is flat and stable. The grounds have been blue rocked for 80 years. There is another three acres available as we move forward with our cleanup which is underway each and every day.

The feelers we have put out in the community are all positive, since this is still 2.5 miles west of Forestville, and the Guerneville area has ZERO Storage facilities. People would really like this here. It solved a basic Community Service and Need, at a reasonable price, plus resolves our basic issue of making the property prosperous once again.

The Cargo Containers are 8' wide, 20' long and 7' high. The Colors well vary depending on what is available. WE are trying to keep lighter colors. Each has a 2' separation between them to get to the black berries and weeds.

WE will not be renting space to Trailers, Motorhomes, Boats or any kind of Vehicles every again. People seem to really like to take advantage of anyone that will let them! Nor will anyone be living in Cargo Containers here!

Operation hours are basic Dusk to Dawn. No one in after dark.

Cargo Containers are outdoor units.

Storage business do not have a lot of traffic. We are estimating one car a week per ten units. Once they get settles in they rarely have a need to show up except when they need something in the unit. Our Traffic has decreased by tenfold once we got rid of the firewood company.

We will have no employees.

WE have ground hoses installed and an ample supply of water as needed. A Firetruck. 12 fire extinguishers marked on one of the maps I have uploaded. A 5000 gallon reserve water tank as well. One of the reasons we are sticking with Cargo Containers is they are all steel, and fireproof units.


The property drains ideally the way it is, we have no issues with drain off. There is a natural slope 3 to 5 degree slope.


As for construction methods. WE have been looking everywhere of ideas of how to manage this. We like Cargo Containers for many reasons. They are fireproof. If you hit them with a truck, the truck will take more damage. They are built to withstand pretty much anything you throw at them. It does not flood here, ever. If they need to be anchored, we will. We would like to not need to do this process due to the fact we may need to move them around. This is totally up to the county of course.

From all over online, the internet and contractors we have talked with, the best scenario seems to be pouring a 16 x 16" by 8" deep slab on each corner and using a Heavy Duty Twist Lock anchor on each corner, bolting each corner to the corner slabs. Making sure there is enough space under each cargo container to allow for a Fox and/or a Cat to have access to the underside. (Yes, this is a widely adhered to concept) not allowing rodents to take hold, as well allowing for ventilation underneath. Both of these are the most important issues brought up by all.

All containers shall be over 120 feet from the creek. 200 feet from hwy. 11.6, with 75 feet of full foliage, which you cannot see though even in the dead of winter. The creek is about 8' deep, so this is more than double the needed space.

Thank you for your patients; sorry I am so new at this.

Michael Boehm.  1-13-29

Gordon Evans.  1/13/29





This is a 75' thicket between  
the road and the creek

This Area is mostly  
Cement. it is being  
cleaned up, and  
already has  
8 units lines up.

## **Community Engagement and Outreach Plan Lower Russian River Municipal Advisory Council (River MAC)**

### **Introduction**

The Lower Russian River Municipal Advisory Council (River MAC) serves as a vital link between the community and Sonoma County government. Established to foster inclusive civic engagement, the River MAC provides a structured forum where residents, businesses, and stakeholders can participate in shaping local policies, land use decisions, and community priorities.

As an advisory body, the River MAC makes recommendations to the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors and other county agencies on issues impacting the Lower Russian River region. These include land use applications, zoning changes, transportation infrastructure, health and safety services, and other community concerns.

Beyond its advisory role, the River MAC is committed to proactive community engagement—amplifying resident voices, ensuring transparent communication about government decisions, and encouraging public participation in shaping the region’s future. Through outreach, public meetings, and partnerships with community organizations, the MAC strives to create an informed, engaged, and represented community.

This Community Engagement and Outreach Plan (CEOP) outlines how River MAC Members, both Representatives and Alternates, will connect with residents, solicit public input, and foster meaningful discussions on key issues. By prioritizing accessibility, inclusivity, and responsiveness, the River MAC strengthens the democratic process and supports a thriving Lower Russian River community.

### **A. Purpose Statement**

The Community Engagement and Outreach Plan (CEOP) establishes how the River MAC will serve as an inclusive and accessible conduit of information between the community and County government.

### **B. Council Member Responsibilities**

1. The River MAC will provide recommendations to the Board of Supervisors and other County decision-makers on the following topics:



- Use permit applications
- Rezoning applications
- General Plan amendments
- Transportation and transit improvements
- Health and human safety-net services
- Additional topics requested by the District Supervisor or the community

## 2. Duties of the River MAC Representatives and Alternates

- Hold regular open and public meetings
- Encourage and promote public input, as outlined in Section C
- Study and analyze advisory topics
- Keep the District Supervisor informed about community concerns, as outlined in Section D
- Provide advisory recommendations and annual reports to the Board of Supervisors
- Comply with Sonoma County MAC policies and procedures
- Conduct broad community outreach to inform the public about the MAC's role and County issues
- Attend community events to meet residents where they are

### **C. Soliciting Public Input**

Outside of meetings, River MAC Representatives and Alternates actively seek input from their communities to ensure a broad range of voices are heard. They request feedback on specific MAC agenda items, gather suggestions for future agenda topics that reflect community concerns, and identify issues affecting individual neighborhoods and districts. This ongoing engagement helps shape MAC discussions and ensures that local priorities are effectively communicated to the Board of Supervisors and other decision-makers.

### **Steps After Receiving Public Input**

- Roadway issues, code enforcement, or signs/signals/lights → Direct community member to report on [SoCo Connect](#)
- All other concerns → Forward to the District 5 Field Representative. District 5 Field Representative will research the concern within the County and respond to the community member and keep the MAC representative informed.
- If the input is a suggested agenda item, send it to the District 5 Field Representative and the MAC Chair. You can also bring it up during Councilmember Comment for items not on the agenda at regular MAC meetings.

This would be an opportunity to recommend a future agenda item, but due to Brown Act rules, it would not be a time to discuss the topic.

- For broader issues affecting multiple areas within the River MAC region, the MAC Chair and District 5 Field Representative will determine the next steps, which may include:
  - Forming an ad hoc committee
  - Agendizing a staff report on the topic
  - Hosting a community meeting or town hall

## **D. Strategies and Actions**

The River MAC is committed to fostering inclusive, transparent, and effective community engagement. This section outlines the goals, strategies, and actions needed to ensure residents are informed, heard, and actively involved in local governance. The District 5 Field Representative will serve as the primary coordinator for public outreach efforts, ensuring consistency in messaging and accessibility. MAC members will use their personal and professional networks to increase awareness of the MAC and conduct targeted outreach to community members with relevant interests.

### **Increase Public Awareness of the MAC & Its Purpose**

- Publicize MAC meeting dates and agendas through multiple channels:
  - Post on community bulletin boards in each district
  - Share via local media and social media platforms
  - Announce at community events and in the District 5 newsletter
- Ensure accessibility of MAC information:
  - Maintain an ADA-compliant online presence
  - Provide Spanish translations for meeting materials and outreach
  - Utilize bilingual radio and media to reach the Latinx community
- Engage with local institutions (libraries, senior centers, schools) to distribute MAC information

### **Create Multiple Avenues for Public Participation**

- Offer diverse opportunities for engagement:
  - Host public forums and meetings tailored to community concerns
  - Attend existing neighborhood meetings to connect with residents
  - Table at local events to answer questions and gather input
- Develop two-way communication channels:

- Encourage community groups to bring issues to their MAC representative(s)
- Promote the District 5 email list and River MAC Facebook Group
- Ensure compliance with the Brown Act to avoid serial meetings on social media
- Solicit input on community priorities:
  - Request feedback on specific agenda items
  - Gather suggestions for future agenda topics
  - Identify issues specific to individual neighborhoods

### **Enhance Engagement with Underrepresented Communities**

- Prioritize outreach to underserved groups:
  - Work with bilingual Field Representative to ensure accurate Spanish translations
  - Provide Spanish interpretation at all MAC meetings
  - Encourage bilingual and bicultural candidates to serve on the MAC
  - Print bilingual posters for MAC meetings and post them in high-visibility areas
  - Expand youth engagement: District 5 Field representative will work with the Ex-Officio Student Representative to develop outreach and engagement strategies

### **Foster Stronger Connections Between MAC Members & the Community**

- Encourage direct interaction between Council Members and residents:
  - Representatives should identify and connect with key community leaders
  - MAC members will staff booths at community events
  - Maintain an updated list of local events for MAC participation
- Leverage partnerships to extend MAC outreach:
  - Collaborate with local nonprofits, schools, and businesses



Lower Russian River Municipal Advisory Council

Minutes

Regular Meeting

February 13, 2025 05:30 PM

Guerneville School Community Room, 14630 Armstrong Woods Road

<https://sonomacounty.ca.gov/lrmac>

**1. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 pm by Chair & Rio Nido Representative: Pip Marquez de la Plata.

A. Announcement from Spanish Interpreter

B. Roll Call

Present: Chair & Rio Nido Representative: Pip Marquez de la Plata, Vice Chair & Hacienda Representative: Vicki Clewes, Guerneville Representative: Spencer R. Scott, Guerneville South / Pocket Canyon Representative: Betsy Van Dyke, Forestville Representative: Lonnie Lazar, Forestville Representative: Thai Hilton, Forestville Alternate: Cari Hernandez

Absent: Cazadero / Duncan Mills Representative: Tony Goodwin

Staff Present: Debbie Ramirez, Field Representative & River MAC Clerk Tracy Lyons, Chief of Staff - attended remotely Due to inclement weather conditions, Patty Thayer and Faye Zamora attended remotely as members of the public.

- 2. Approval of the Agenda** Vice Chair & Hacienda Representative: Vicki Clewes motioned to approve. Forestville Representative: Thai Hilton seconded the motion.

The motion passed with the following vote:

7 In Favor    0 Opposed  
    Abstained        Absent        Recused

**3. Statement of Conflict of Interest**

Thai Hilton recused himself from any discussion on Agenda item 7 (Social Safety Net Services) due to his day job, where he works with some of the agencies involved.

**4. Councilmember Comment**

Vicki Clewes reported that there would be a Communities Organizing to Prepare for Emergencies (COPE) planning meeting on February 22 from 9 am to noon at the Hollydale Community Club.

**5. Public Comment on Matters not listed on the Agenda**

## 6. The West County Services Center: Social Safety Net Services

Representatives from Sonoma County service agencies provided updates on programs available at the West County Services Center highlighting resources for residents.

### Human Services Department (*Bryan Hacke & Stephany Clopton*)

The **Sonoma County Human Services Department** provides **assistance with CalFresh (food benefits), Medi-Cal (health coverage), and Workforce Training**. Staff are available at the **West County Services Center on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 12:30 PM – 5:00 PM** to assist with applications, answer questions, and conduct intake interviews.

Additionally, the department will soon begin **In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) caregiver trainings** at the West County Services Center, designed to equip caregivers with the skills necessary to support older adults and individuals with disabilities in their homes.

### Behavioral Health Services (*Charles Alarie, Sonoma County Department of Behavioral Health*)

The **Behavioral Health Division** offers **mental health and substance use disorder services** for residents experiencing severe and persistent mental illnesses such as **bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, and PTSD**. Their **Community Mental Health Clinics (CMHCs)** serve clients in **Cloverdale, Petaluma, Guerneville, and Sonoma**—focusing on areas outside of Santa Rosa.

Key services include:

- **Therapy and psychiatric support**
- **Case management**, including home visits to support clients with accessing resources
- **Medication support**, including injectable medications provided by a traveling psychiatric nurse
- **Peer support services**, a new addition to their program

The department also collaborates with **federally qualified health clinics** to assist individuals who require **lower levels of care** and works closely with organizations providing **housing and homelessness services**.

### Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Program (*Areli Alvarez-Figueroa, Sonoma County Department of Health Services*)

The **WIC Program** provides **food assistance, nutrition education, breastfeeding support, and referrals to health and community resources** for pregnant individuals, new parents, and children up to age five.

Notable program updates:

- **Increased fruit & vegetable benefits:**
  - **\$26/month** for children (1-5 years old)
  - **\$47/month** for pregnant and postpartum individuals
  - **\$52/month** for fully or partially breastfeeding individuals
- **Eligibility:** No Social Security Number or citizenship status is required, and families receiving **Medi-Cal, CalFresh, or CalWORKs** generally qualify.
- **Accessing WIC Services:**
  - Available in **Guerneville twice a month (2nd & 4th Thursdays)**
  - Services also available in **Santa Rosa, Petaluma, and Sonoma**

- Appointments can be scheduled via phone or online

**West County Community Services (WCCS) & Committee on the Shelterless (COTS)**  
*(Dannielle Danforth, Erin Kruger & Chris Cabral)*

**WCCS and COTS** are leading the new **Keep People Housed** program, a **homelessness prevention initiative** launched in **December 2023**.

**Program Overview:**

- Provides **short-term financial assistance** to households at **immediate risk of eviction or homelessness**
- Aims to **reduce the number of people entering homelessness**
- Open to renters countywide; prioritizes **households with high vulnerability scores**

**Impact Since Launch (Dec 16 – Jan 31):**

- **630+** applications received
- **\$150,000+** in financial assistance distributed
- **266 households supported so far**

**How to Apply:**

- Residents can apply online at [KeepPeopleHoused.org](https://KeepPeopleHoused.org)
- Applications are reviewed using an **evidence-based scoring system** to prioritize the most vulnerable households
- Bilingual assistance is available, and applicants can **apply online, by phone, or in person at the West County Community Services office**

**Funding:**

- **Public-private partnership** with **\$3.9 million over two years**
- **\$2.6 million** in private funding from **All Home**
- **\$1.3+ million** from **Sonoma County, Santa Rosa, and Petaluma**
- Additional **private fundraising efforts** are underway to extend the program beyond the pilot period

**Success Measurement:**

- Households receiving assistance will be **surveyed at 6, 12, 18, and 24 months** to track long-term housing stability
- The program aims for **90% of recipients to remain housed**, with the **10% experiencing homelessness serving as an indicator that high-risk individuals are being reached**

**Q & A included:**

- **Equity & Prioritization for Keep People Housed** - Applications are scored based on vulnerability factors such as disabling conditions, history of homelessness, and ZIP code to ensure those at highest risk receive assistance first.
- **Language Support for Keep People Housed:**  
16-17% of applications required translation services; bilingual staff are available to assist applicants.
- **Community Feedback Integration:**  
Agencies actively review public concerns and adjust programs accordingly (e.g., expanding

emergency alerts and improving storm response efforts after community input)

o **Public Awareness & Outreach Efforts:**

Programs use websites, social media, local partnerships, and bilingual resources to reach the community.

Sonoma County has received more applications for Keep People Housed than larger counties like San Francisco, Alameda, and Santa Clara, demonstrating strong awareness and demand.

## 7. County Update

### A. Staff Report: Governance Study Update

Debbie Ramirez provided a report on the ongoing Governance Study, addressing frequent public inquiries. The Municipal Advisory Council (MAC) does not directly advocate for governance changes, as it operates as an extension of county government. However, community members are encouraged to:

- Stay informed by signing up for updates via the Governance Study website
- Organize and propose governance solutions, such as forming a utility district or business district
- Engage with neighbors and local representatives to explore possible changes

### B. Staff Report: CalTrans State Route 116 Guerneville Sidewalk Project Update

Debbie Ramirez provided a report on the Caltrans Guerneville sidewalk project. Community members seeking updates on the Guerneville Sidewalk Project can sign up for weekly Guerneville Chamber of Commerce newsletter which will include updates from Caltrans.

Supervisor Hopkins was unable to attend the meeting due to a schedule conflict and Debbie Ramirez provided the following County update: The Board of Supervisors declared a local emergency following the early February storms, enacting temporary eviction protections for affected residents. These protections currently apply countywide, but the Board plans to refine them to focus on the hardest-hit areas. The Department of Emergency Management has incorporated community feedback into its storm response strategy by increasing the frequency of emergency alerts and issuing flood warnings earlier, now triggered at 32 feet instead of 36 feet. A pilot program has installed a live traffic camera on Green Valley Road for real-time road monitoring, with potential expansion to other flood-prone areas. Community members are encouraged to share their storm experiences through a county survey.

## 8. Consent Agenda

### A. January 9 Minutes

Guerneville South / Pocket Canyon Representative: Betsy Van Dyke motioned to approve.  
Guerneville Representative: Spencer R. Scott seconded the motion.

The motion passed with the following vote:

  7   In Favor      0   Opposed

**9. Ad Hoc Committees**

A. Community Engagement & Outreach Plan Ad Hoc: First meeting scheduled for February 10

Vicki Clewes reported that the **Communications & Engagement Ad Hoc Committee** met on February 10th to review and streamline the existing Engagement Plan. The committee is working to improve communication strategies and explore new outreach methods, such as flyers, posters, and social media, to increase public participation. Carrie Hernandez has provided fresh perspectives in refining these efforts. A proposal to list upcoming Ad Hoc Committee meetings on the regular meeting agenda was introduced and received unanimous support to improve transparency. The committee will continue refining the plan and exploring additional strategies to enhance public awareness and engagement.

The council discussed the formation of a **Land Use Ad Hoc Committee in response to a proposed cargo container storage facility in Pocket Canyon**, near Forestville and Guemeville. Given the potential impact of the project, council members considered whether a dedicated ad hoc committee was necessary to review the proposal and gather more information.

Several members expressed interest, with Cari Hernandez, Betsy Van Dyke, and Thai Hilton agreeing to participate. With consensus of the MAC, Chair Pip Marquez de la Plata formed an ad hoc committee to assess the intended use, zoning considerations, and potential community impact of the facility. As this is a temporary, non-standing committee, meeting(s) will be held virtually via Zoom for efficiency.

Patty Thayer will also be consulted for potential involvement. Additionally, the committee will evaluate not only the project itself but also the process for handling land use issues to improve the MAC's process around land use advisory duties.

**10. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 6:23 PM





**Dear Supervisor Hopkins,**

As Chair of the Lower Russian River Municipal Advisory Council (LRRMAC), I'm happy to share a summary of what we've accomplished in 2024. Our council has been working hard to address key issues affecting our community and to keep communication open between residents and county government.

## **Key Activities and Discussions**

### ***Community Engagement***

- Adopted a 2024 Community Engagement and Outreach Plan to improve communication with residents.
- Connected with the community by hosting booths at local farmers markets and participating in events like Russian River Pride.

### ***Infrastructure and Public Safety***

- Formed an ad hoc committee to gather input on redesigning the Guerneville Plaza, collecting over 200 survey responses.
- Focused on road improvements, flood mitigation, and emergency preparedness, including expanding the GMRS radio network.
- Worked with county officials to advocate for better rural road maintenance through the Pavement Preservation Program.

### ***Environmental and Economic Initiatives***

- Partnered with Russian Riverkeeper and Sonoma County Regional Parks to improve public access and environmental stewardship along the lower Russian River.
- Explored the formation of an Enhanced Infrastructure Financing District (EIFD) to fund important infrastructure projects in West County.

### ***Housing and Social Services***

- Received updates on affordable housing projects like George's Hideaway and pushed for more workforce housing options.

- Took part in discussions about homelessness and substance abuse challenges affecting our communities.

### ***Governance and Planning***

- Contributed to discussions on the 2020 Safety Element Update and the new Environmental Justice Element of the Sonoma County General Plan.
- Provided feedback on the Local Coastal Plan and other county-wide planning initiatives.

### ***Looking Ahead***

We're committed to being a strong voice for our diverse communities, ensuring the unique needs of the Lower Russian River area are heard. Moving forward, we'll continue focusing on big issues like climate resilience, affordable housing, and economic development.

Thank you for your support and partnership. We look forward to working together in the coming year to keep improving the quality of life in our region.

**Best,**

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Pip".

Pip Marquez de la Plata  
Chair, Lower Russian River Municipal Advisory Council