

Sebastopol Road  
*Urban Vision Plan*



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Prepared for:  
Sonoma County and the City of Santa Rosa

Prepared by:



# Sebastopol Road Urban Vision Plan

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# Sebastopol Road Urban Vision Plan

## I. INTRODUCTION

The Urban Vision Plan for Sebastopol Road Corridor affects that stretch of Sebastopol Road between Dutton Avenue to the east and Stony Point Road to the west, linking both sides of Sebastopol Road as well as the area north of Sebastopol Road, ending at the Highway 12 right-of-way. The corridor is within the community of Roseland in the southwest area of Santa Rosa, California. While portions of the subject area are within the boundaries of the City of Santa Rosa, the majority of the properties are located in the unincorporated area of Sonoma County.

This visioning effort was undertaken in order to create a consensus among the local community as to what future development of the corridor should look like and what types of uses should be located there. Past and ongoing planning and public improvement efforts have attempted to address the challenges of this corridor such as groundwater contamination, poor road conditions and declining properties. There are uses in the plan area that are incompatible and are no longer desirable (such as auto wrecking yards). Further, the Joe Rodota public trail passes through the backyards of industrial or empty parcels. Locating aesthetically pleasing uses on properties which adjoin the trail would enhance this unique feature. One result of the past public outreach efforts included a goal to create a neighborhood center or “community commons” with neighborhood serving and residential uses. This remains a community goal at the time of this report’s preparation.

The development of the Urban Vision Plan with its accompanying Land Use Concept and Neighborhood Center Concept occurred over a 6 month period in 2005, and included four interactive bilingual public workshops. The members of the community who participated in this effort included residents, business and property owners, special interest groups, and public agency staff and officials from the County of Sonoma Community Development Commission and the City of Santa Rosa.

During this effort issues were examined such as land uses, circulation, streetscape, and design criteria for future development that might occur along the corridor, with an emphasis placed on evoking a sense of community pride. As a demonstration of how the design criteria might work, a conceptual site plan was prepared encompassing the area of the Roseland Village Shopping Center and the adjacent Dutton Plaza. The site plan idea reflects one version of how those urban vision criteria could be translated onto the site by future developers of these key properties. While it is understood that it may not be possible for the site to be developed in strict adherence to the conceptual site plan, consistency may be accomplished by incorporation of the plan’s critical design elements such as the amiable relationship between future buildings and the street, a public plaza, rearward parking locations, and mixed-use development.

## II. THE PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

This section briefly describes the fundamentals of the planning and development process and how this document will be used during these processes.

### A. How the Development Process Works

What is development? Broadly speaking it is the construction of new structures such as roads, buildings, parking areas and landscaping. Property owners and other entities that have a right to develop a parcel of land are required to conform to the development standards and allowable uses that are set forth in the City and County General Plan and corresponding Zoning Ordinance. The Planning and Building Divisions of the City and County oversee implementation of these documents.

- The General Plan describes “what” the land in an area will be used for and “where” those uses may occur.
- The Zoning Ordinance addresses “how” those uses can be built as expressed in dimensions and quantities, otherwise referred to as development standards (e.g. where the building can be placed and how big the building can be).

There are different levels of compliance review depending on the size of a development project proposal. To demonstrate, we will assume a large scale development. The prospective developer will design a site with buildings and roads and parking, etc. (called a development plan or site plan) according to the standards of the planning and building documents. The next step is to submit an application for development to the City or County development review offices:

- The City of Santa Rosa Community Development Department, or
- The Sonoma County Permit & Resource Management Department

The County Community Development Commission, which oversees the Roseland Redevelopment District, may also be consulted. For most projects located within the unincorporated area, an application for a Utility Certificate must be filed with the City of Santa Rosa for the provision of public services (i.e. public water and sewer). Verification that a permit for a Utility Certificate has been filed with the City must be provided to the County at the time the development application is submitted.

The project review process is dictated by the scope and nature of the development project proposed. Generally, however, the project is reviewed for completeness and a detailed description is provided to other County or City divisions and applicable Federal, State and local agencies for their review and comment. An analysis of the project’s conformance to the applicable General Plan, Area Plan and Zoning Ordinance is conducted by staff. In addition, compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act is determined and any required environmental documents are prepared. Frequently, for development proposed in unincorporated areas, review is required by a joint session of the City/County Design Review Committee. Modifications to the project may be required as a result of inconsistencies with regulations, policies, design guidelines, or to mitigate potential environmental impacts. Once staff has completed the environmental analysis and prepared draft conditions of project approval, staff reports are written,

the project is scheduled for public hearing and notice of the hearing is provided to the public.

The hearing process is a meeting with decision making officials which is open to the public, and the public can comment on the items being presented. This process starts at the Planning Commission and then the City Council or Board of Supervisors (County body). Once the development plans are approved and conditions of approval met, the developer can apply for building permits to start construction.

### **B. How this Document will be Used**

This Urban Vision Plan is intended to be presented to both the County Board of Supervisors and the Santa Rosa City Council. Adoption of the plan by these decision making bodies would render the document enforceable by both City and County development review agencies. The Vision Plan would then be referred to by City and County staff in evaluating development proposals by private land holders or any public agencies implementing redevelopment of public lands (parks, trails) or public rights-of-way (road improvements). Any entities applying for project approvals will be referred to the guidelines in this report in the early design stages of their project to assure they consider the objectives and design parameters described in this document.

The City has plans to further refine the Vision Plan into a comprehensive streetscape plan for the Sebastopol Road corridor. That plan will address upgrading the physical features of the Sebastopol Road right-of-way.

## **III. DESIGN ELEMENTS OF THE VISION PLAN**

The guidelines for design elements of the Vision Plan area are outlined below. It begins with the land use concept and urban design criteria for the greater planning area, secondly the streetscape enhancements, and lastly the “demonstration project” or Neighborhood Center Concept encompassing the Roseland Village Shopping Center and Dutton Plaza properties.

### **A. Land Use Concept Plan**

The land use concept plan associated with the Urban Vision Plan calls for a future rearrangement of current and new land uses to include: Mixed Use, General Commercial, Medium Density Residential and Public Parks/Plaza. The overall objectives of the new concept are to: 1) stimulate economic revitalization of the area by providing additional opportunities for a variety of commercial and residential uses, 2) provide more green spaces, 3) facilitate pleasant and safer pedestrian connectivity within and outside the area, including a greener streetscape, 4) help decongest traffic by introducing alternative traffic routes, and 5) provide public spaces for socializing, and a large community gathering space as a town square for special events.

#### **The Community Goals and Ideals**

- Celebrate the multi-cultural ethnicity of the area. Create a unique sense of place as an international village and market place.
- Provide a place for a community center and a library, social services, a cultural center, extended education facility, and youth activities center. If

possible some of these should occur at the Neighborhood Center (Roseland Village Shopping Center)

- Assure more choices in affordable housing types, not just rentals but ownership as well
- More green spaces throughout the area in the form of parks, landscaping, active parks, open space and a green streetscape, including the enhancement of the Rodota Trail
- Allow for a variety of businesses while remaining small business oriented. Maintain affordability for existing small businesses. Avoid displacement of existing businesses. Avoid “strip mall” type development.
- Add a market/grocery store in the Neighborhood Center. This could be part of the international market place use.
- Assure adequate parking for the businesses.
- New development should respect the small scale of local businesses, and have elements of early California historic character.

Each of the following land uses is described by types of uses, interface with other uses, and their location in the study area. The proposed new circulation system begins this description.

### 1. Circulation

In order to provide alternative routes and thereby reduce reliance on Sebastopol Road as the only access through the area, a new road network is being proposed.

#### a. New Frontage Road

The most important change is a new road introduced on the north side of the Rodota Trail that connects with cross streets to the West Avenue extension. This new route will help to bring new life and development to what is now the back alley of the area. The road would span from Hampton Way to West Avenue extended north. The right-of-way width would be 50’.



#### b. New Crossroads

Hampton Way- This road currently serves an industrial area and crosses over the Rodota Trail to dead end at a parking lot. Hampton Way would provide emergency vehicle access to the west end of the new frontage road. Pedestrian and bicycle access would also be provided.

Roundelay Lane- This narrow, private road currently serves a mobile home park and loops at the northern end of the park. It should provide bicycle and pedestrian access to the Rodota Trail.

Roseland Avenue- Roseland Avenue currently extends over the trail to provide access to three parcels to the north. It should provide motor vehicle, bicycle and pedestrian access to the frontage road.

West Avenue- As part of the redevelopment of the Roseland Village Shopping Center, West Avenue should be extended north through the new development and connect to the frontage road. This will provide alternative routes for both northerly and southerly travel directions. It may accommodate parallel or diagonal parking (as shown in the Neighborhood Center Concept) and wide sidewalks. Crossing areas should be provided across the West Avenue extension in order to allow for safe pedestrian access to and from the western portion of the shopping center. The incorporation of bulb outs and alignment with interior paseos should be considered at pedestrian crossing locations.

c. **Bicycle and Pedestrian Access**

Bicycle use is a key component of a sustainable transportation system and should be promoted in order to reduce traffic congestion and tailpipe emissions and to integrate physical activity into everyday travel. Safe, efficient bikeways and end-of-trip facilities are necessary to support and encourage bicycle travel. Accordingly, secure and convenient bicycle parking should be provided at shopping and employment centers, parks, schools and multifamily residential developments, etc. Further, bicycle circulation emphasizing interconnections between residential and commercial areas should be considered as part of the project review process, as should connections to the Joe Rodota Trail.

The Joe Rodota Trail should be enhanced with new landscaping. New development and redevelopment of properties adjoining the trail should embrace and frame the trail with pleasant facades.

Bicycle and pedestrian safety on the Joe Rodota Trail at the new cross streets should be emphasized. Good visual cues should mark where the cross streets intersect with the trail, to ensure both motorists and trail users anticipate cross traffic. Consideration should be given to installing bollards with reflective materials or lighting at these locations on the trail. In order to assign the right-of-way to the bicycle corridor where streets cross the trail, stop signs should be provided for vehicular traffic and yield signs for trail users.

**2. Mixed-Use Development**

Mixed-use development allows for a 24 hour presence of people in the commercial areas of the corridor and helps to create a village type of atmosphere. New buildings should incorporate commercial and retail on the ground floor, office or residential on the second floor, and residential uses on the third and potentially fourth floors. Four stories is the maximum height. This applies to those parcels fronting Sebastopol Road along both sides of the road generally between Burbank Avenue and Avalon Avenue. The new buildings should be situated at the back of sidewalk with onsite parking areas tucked behind them. To help reduce the number of driveway cuts to interior parking areas, shared driveway access is encouraged.



### 3. General Commercial

General commercial development is encouraged along the western portion of the Sebastopol Road corridor between Burbank Avenue and Stony Point Road and includes some properties along Stony Point Road. This allows for maintaining some of the existing businesses and provides a transition from the larger scale retail establishments in this area of the corridor to the future mixed use planned to the east. There is another area with this designation at the southwest corner of Dutton and Sebastopol Road which ties into the existing commercial uses at that intersection. The types of uses should be consistent with the both the City and County General Plan land use designations (Retail Business Service and General Commercial, respectively). New buildings should be situated at the back of sidewalks with onsite parking areas tucked behind them. Strip Mall style development is strongly discouraged.



**4. Medium-Density Residential (8-18 units/acre)**

Medium density residential development, which would allow both ownership and rental housing, is recommended along the north side of the corridor behind the Mixed Use and General Commercial areas. It is envisioned that small, local parks would be provided in conjunction with the future development of Medium Density areas, with each park designed to serve as a focal point of the residential development. The parks should be publicly accessible and have direct access to and from the Rodota Trail. The residential buildings should allow for surveillance (if not frontage) on the trail. In other words, avoid buildings backing onto the trail, if at all possible. In addition, the residential development should provide pedestrian connectivity to adjacent commercial areas. The area between Roundelay Lane and West Avenue extended is encouraged to include home occupations.



**5. Public Parks/Plaza**

An approximately 4 acre neighborhood park is proposed on the east side of Roseland Avenue and south of the new frontage road, bisected by the Joe Rodota Trail. Smaller neighborhood parks of about one acre in size are proposed within the new medium density residential neighborhood areas, with connection to the Rodota Trail. These smaller parks shall be accessible to the public, but may be privately owned and developed.

A public plaza is proposed to be the focus of the new mixed use development between West Avenue and Avalon on the north side of Sebastopol Road (see the description in item C.1 below).

## B. Streetscapes

The workshop participants expressed a desire for a lush and colorful landscaped ambiance along Sebastopol Road, to enhance the pedestrian experience. The Plan accomplishes this through the use of broader sidewalks, landscaped medians, historic style street lamps, shade trees, flowers (roses) and bike lanes. Street lighting along Sebastopol Road, and throughout the Urban Vision Plan area, should be fully shielded to avoid glare, light trespass and sky glow.

The two five foot wide bike lanes would still be provided as well as ten foot wide parking lanes on either side of the street where practical between driveway cuts, but not within the merge lane areas at the Dutton Avenue or Stony Point Road intersections.



### 1. Sidewalks

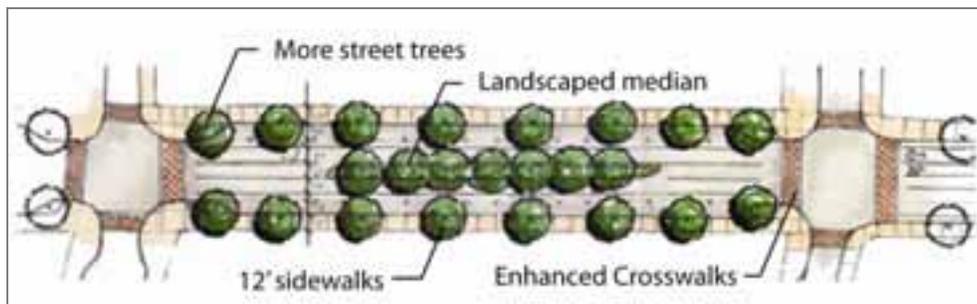
Currently sidewalks along Sebastopol Road vary from five to eight feet. Sidewalks should be widened to 12 feet on both sides of Sebastopol Road from Burbank Avenue to Dutton Avenue, and should be 15 feet wide along the Sebastopol Road frontage of the Neighborhood Center on the Roseland Village Shopping Center site. Sidewalks should be a minimum of eight feet wide from Burbank Avenue to Stony Point Road.

### 2. Crossings

In order to provide shorter distances for people to walk across Sebastopol Road, bulb outs at the sidewalk and ornamentally paved crosswalks would be provided at the intersections along Sebastopol Road including Hampton, Burbank, McMinn/Roseland, and West. The ornamental paving of crosswalks should be accompanied by thermoplastic painted lines to increase safety of pedestrians at crosswalk locations near the elementary school. Street lamps should be provided at those crossings.

### 3. Medians

The area of Sebastopol Road between Burbank and Dutton Avenues should be one lane of travel each way with strategically placed landscaped medians. The median locations are conceptual. Precise median location will be determined through the street design process, which will evaluate driveway locations, stacking lane distances and access for emergency vehicles.



### C. A Neighborhood Center

The Community envisions the Roseland Village Shopping Center and the Dutton Plaza as an ideal location for a neighborhood center. Currently these properties are underutilized due to the age and obsolete sizes of buildings and/or layout of the buildings on the sites. Some of the buildings are vacant and in poor condition with a large expanse of parking lots and no landscaping. New uses proposed for the center are intended to create a mix of commercial retail, personal services, offices, residential uses, and pedestrian amenities.



The Urban Vision Plan should be utilized in the preparation of a site plan for a future mixed use development on the Roseland Village Shopping Center site. Ideally, the Dutton Plaza would be included as a part of the redevelopment effort. This would require coordination of the three property owners; however, the conceptual plan would allow for the two owners of the Roseland Village Shopping Center to develop independently of Dutton Plaza. The community would strongly endorse the development if it contained the following elements:



#### 1. Public Gathering Place

The community has expressed a strong desire for a public gathering place in the form of a Town Square of approximately one acre in size. It should be flanked on three sides by three to four story mixed-use buildings, and be situated in the Roseland Village Shopping Center property somewhere between West and Avalon Avenues as they extend into the parcel. The Town Square should be located to the back of the new 15 foot sidewalk, facing onto Sebastopol Road.

The public gathering place should contain the following features:

- A water feature such as a fountain
- A gazebo or bandstand for music or theatre events
- Public seating in the form of raised planters and benches
- Trees, lawn (also used for seating or play) and garden areas
- Paved areas for a farmers' market, outdoor dining, and outdoor vendors
- Public art (fountain, benches, sculpture in gardens) perhaps with historical references for the area
- Or a Tower Element at a main junction.



## 2. International Market Place

One of the buildings facing the plaza should allow for an International Market Place to create a destination in Roseland for visitors to patronize, ideally offering crafts and foods of the various ethnicities present in Roseland. This could be configured as small portals that face onto the plaza (e.g. the San Francisco Ferry Building), or small stalls inside a larger building. The building should have multiple means of access from parking areas and the plaza. The same building could also house a local grocery store to serve the neighborhoods, similar in scale to Lola's Market on Dutton Avenue.



## 3. Paseos

The mixed-use buildings should be arranged on and around the plaza so as to provide for wide paseos or walking alleys with connections to the public plaza, other smaller plazas and parking areas. The buildings should have varied setbacks and facades to provide an exciting pedestrian experience along the paseos. An abundance of landscaping amenities such as palm trees in planters, planters for seating, and pots of colorful flowers should be provided. The paving should have a texture similar to old world tile pavers.

## 4. Relationship of Buildings to the Street

The mixed use buildings should have an interactive relationship with the sidewalks and the public plaza. Allow for the ground floor uses to open onto the plaza, to facilitate such uses as outdoor dining. Ground floor uses along the streets should have good visibility to the pedestrian and follow the architectural guidelines as described in items 8 and 9 below.

## 5. Circulation

Primary access to the Roseland Village Shopping Center property would be provided by the extension of Avalon and West Avenues north across Sebastopol Road into the site to serve the parking areas. These access roads should provide diagonal parking where appropriate.

## 6. Parking

Parking on the Roseland Village Shopping Center site should be provided as surface parking fields situated behind the buildings so as to be screened from the street. The parking fields should be landscaped per City standards. A pedestrian walkway through the parking lots from the main plaza area to the Joe Rodota Trail should be provided. In the future, if the volume of visitors and residents warrants it, a parking structure should be considered, with retail uses on the ground floor.



### 7. Connection to Joe Rodota Trail

There should be strong pedestrian connections between the public plaza, the mixed use development and the Joe Rodota Trail.

### 8. Architectural Character

The buildings of the Neighborhood Center should possess the following characteristics:

- The scale should complement the scale of buildings found along the corridor, with facade widths no greater than 30 foot increments. Vary the setbacks of each façade that faces a paseo. Avoid a monolithic box-like design.
- Consider stepping the top floor back to allow for outdoor space and reduce the massing along its street frontage.
- Materials should include stucco with a hand troweled plaster appearance, wood frame windows and doors.
- Windows should be symmetrical on the building façade.
- Incorporate archways in building entries, or arcades.
- Entry doors should be recessed from the storefront wall plane
- Use colorful tile details (consider using material made by local artisans)
- Incorporate balconies and French doors in upper floors.
- The roof should have an overhang, with exposed structural elements such as rafters, and tiled roofs
- Roof lines should vary to avoid one long continuous overhang.

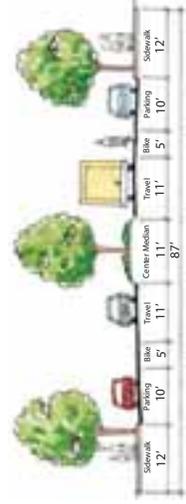


### 9. Building Heights

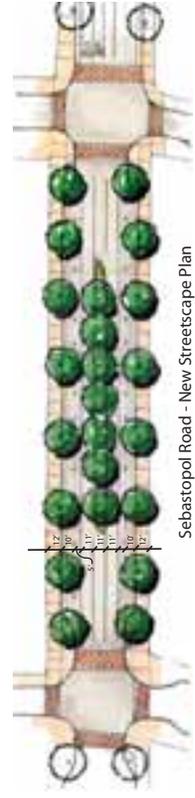
Buildings on these properties would range from three- to four-stories in height with retail on the ground floor, office or residential on the second floor, and residential on the third and fourth floors.



- Legend**
- Plaza
  - New Parks
  - Multifamily
  - Mixed-Use: Stores/offices/housing
  - Commercial Stores/offices auto sales & services storage, etc
  - Mobile Homes
  - Enhanced Crosswalks
  - Marked Trail Intersection
  - Enhanced Redota Trail



Sebastopol Road - New Street Section



Sebastopol Road - New Streetscape Plan