

Project Justification

Rincon del Rio

The following is a justification for allowing Continuing Care Retirement Communities (CCRC's) in the Nevada County Zoning Code and rezoning the Rincon del Rio site from "RA-3-PD" to "PD-CCRC":

CCRC's provide a variety of housing options and resident support services in an age-restricted campus setting. CCRC's are designed as "aging in place" communities that recognize and accept aging as a dynamic process and combine three levels of care independent living, assisted living and nursing care. They can be found in urban, suburban, and rural areas throughout the United States. While many people may remain in independent living arrangements their entire life, at some point they will need assistance. CCRC's are designed to provide the services necessary for various levels of the aging process with a common goal of maximizing independent living and sustaining quality of life.

Senior living is changing dramatically in the United States and CCRC's reflect that change. The traditional rest-home concepts, where people are isolated in single rooms waiting to die is no longer acceptable. Seniors want connectivity, an active social environment, nutritional variety, and security. Today's seniors are highly educated, health conscious, have worldly vision and have more discretionary income than in the past. They have interests beyond golfing, fishing and hiking. They want to be part of an active environment, have a lock and leave option so they can enjoy travel, live in a maintenance free environment, visit libation stations and /or pubs, enjoy views in scenic surroundings and stay near their family without having to leave their community. They want to reap the benefits of their life's hard work.

Nevada County's General Plan encourages the construction of multi-family and single-family housing for seniors. However, the County's zoning regulations define senior citizens and disabled housing facilities as only being permitted in the R2 and R3 zoning districts. In reviewing the GIS zoning maps for the County, we find the following:

- There are no R3 parcels without the MH (Mobile Home) combining district. Mobile home parks and mobile homes generally do not provide universal building designs conducive to senior living.
- There are only 16 vacant lots over one acre in size that can serve a senior housing facility, however none of these vacant parcels are served by public sewer. A senior housing facility could not be supported using a septic system.
- Of those 16 vacant parcels, only four are greater than five acres in size and do not have the MH combining district. Three of the four are located in the City of Grass Valley's Sphere of Influence (SOI).
- All senior housing facilities that are not mobile home parks are located within the City of Grass Valley.

- Currently, there are only 294 senior active living units in the City and County and 635 assisted living units.
- In the recent census, data reports show approximately 45% of Nevada County's population is over the age of 50 which equates to approximately 44,900 people. In the primary market area there are 44,310 seniors in the age groups 55 to 74. Market studies referenced below indicate current demand for over 693 new active living residential units.
- Demographics of the current senior housing indicate that over 60% of the units are occupied by singles. Senior housing generally uses less than 1/2 of the sewer and water than a single-family residence and generates approximately 1/3 of the traffic that a single residence generates.

Given the factors above, it is clear the County does not have sufficient zoning available to house seniors.

In addition to the lack of zoning available to supply senior housing, a telephone survey was conducted by Opinion Works within the ZIP code areas of the South County. The results of the 406 telephone interviews of seniors are summarized as follows:

- 94% found Nevada County to be a nice place to live
- 97% enjoyed the natural environment
- 50% wanted more quality housing options
- 42% desired more assisted living and skilled nursing options
- 79% wanted homes designed so they could age in place and stay in Nevada County
- 93% wanted sustainable building design
- 86% wanted to stay in Nevada County.
- 21% feared they would be required to leave as result of their age and inability to find appropriate housing

The interesting component of this survey was that all of the seniors interviewed lived outside the urban areas. As shown above, the only permissible zoning location for senior housing is in the urban areas and within R2 and R3 zoning designations, however the lands that have such zoning are inadequate to serve the existing senior population and are not serviced with sewer or public water, and in general are not large enough to provide the amenities generally found in a CCRC, and they are not what most Nevada County Seniors want.

Therefore, we are requesting the County amend the Nevada County Land Use and Development Code to allow Continuing Care Retirement Communities (CCRC's) as outlined in this application within the R2, R3, R1, and RA zoning classifications.

More Senior Housing is needed

More and more US citizens are approaching retirement age. As baby boomers age, we expect to see a significant increase in the number of people 65 years of age and older within Nevada County and surrounding area. Currently 12.5% of the US population is 65 years of age and older. In the next 25 years, that number is expected to increase to over 25% of the US population. Life expectancy is expected to continue to increase.

The Nevada County U.S. Census Quick Facts indicates that 16,888 of its 98,764 population (17%) is 65 years of age and older. As of 2008, 44,900 of Nevada County residents (45%) are 50 years of age or older. That number is expected to increase to 76,680 by the year 2030. A market analysis was prepared by Senior Traditions for the Primary Market Area (PMA) which included the South County, Grass Valley, Nevada city, Hwy 49 corridor, and communities served by the local Sutter Auburn Faith Hospital. The report concludes that the PMA would derive 75% of the senior population for Rincon Del Rio from these areas and 25% from the Sacramento Metropolitan area in greater San Francisco Bay Area.

The current 2008 total population in this PMA is projected by Claritas, Inc. to be 192,927. The 2007 Active Adult Housing Pool 55 to 74 years of age was 44,310. By 2012, the 55 to 74 age population is projected to grow to 54,816, which is a 24%+ increase.

Using annual income data for seniors in the PMA and general statistical projections for the age group of 70+ years of age with annual incomes of more than \$30,000, approximately 8664 seniors are residing in the PMA. Using traditional market indicators the report concluded a demand for approximately 693 senior living housing units is presently needed.

What are other areas doing?

As reported in the Atlanta Business Chronicle published June 29, 2007, the Atlanta Regional Commission has been working with communities to remove barriers to encourage “age in place” facilities so that people can stay in their homes and communities longer. The Commission’s study concluded that a significant increase in the senior population had been occurring over the past few years and estimated that from 2000 to 2015 the senior population is anticipated to double. By 2031 one in five residents will be over the age of 60. The report indicated that “we need to rethink the way we are providing services and the way our communities will be built to support people as they age”. The neighborhood base housing options are critical as physical and health needs change as individuals live longer. Communities that promote health and active lifestyles are more important as more senior citizens live alone and grow frail. Neighbors and friends must be close by to ensure safety and security. The report also found that traditional residential zoning required seniors to either live in homes larger than they want or move to sterile commercial areas not conducive to residential activities. In response, the Commission recommended the formation of a Residential Senior Living (RSL) overlay zone as an interim fix to encourage more Active Senior Living. The essence of this RSL zone is to permit senior living developments within traditional neighborhoods. Since the adoption of the RSL overlay zone, over 21 applications within the planning area have been requested. In summary, the report recommended that the Government look at the population changes and provide means for senior citizens’ needs such as transportation, senior housing, and the idea of mixed-use communities that cater to seniors.

In another study conducted by the Southern New Hampshire Planning Commission, the Commission looked at the effects senior housing would cause in their region. The study quantified the number of seniors within the areas and the impediments to developing senior housing. The study found that traffic generation from senior housing was approximately 1/3 of a single-family residence; retirees usually avoid rush hour traffic and prefer the convenience of shopping locally rather than driving long distances. The majority of buyers in the 60 to 64 age range desired to stay close to their family, had either management or professional backgrounds, were interested in possible second careers and were in generally good health and mentally youthful. Most zoning districts allowed for some form of senior housing. The concept of senior living retirement communities that incorporates many of these factors was recognized as a desirable use. They wanted to encourage more housing to be designed for senior lifestyles.

Not all local jurisdictions recognize CCRC's but they do provide significantly higher incentives to encourage Senior Housing. For example, Placer County allows Senior Housing in the RM residential zone and neighborhood commercial areas. The density for senior living communities is the same as the base district density but the Placer County Zoning Code allows for up to 225% density bonus if specific amenities are provided on site.

The City of Santa Rosa allows Senior Housing in the form of CCRC's in all zones that allow for residential use without density limitations.

The City of Grass Valley allows senior housing in their Residential, Multifamily, Business Park and Commercial zones without density limitations. Eskaton Village, the City's most recent senior campus, which is similar to a CCRC, consists of 118 patio homes and an 80 unit independent and assisted care facility. Eskaton Village is located on a rural 40 acre site adjacent to Nevada Union High School.

Economic benefits of senior housing

The National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) wrote a comprehensive document regarding the various components of senior housing. Chapter 7 of the report outlined the various economic benefits to local jurisdictions that typically encourage senior housing. The report found there are basically three phases of senior housing:

Phase I: *Construction.* Jobs, wages, and local taxes (including permit, utility connection, and impact fees) generated by the development, construction and the sale of homes. The jobs include on and off-site construction work as well as jobs generated in the retail and wholesale industry, transportation services to/from the site, and professional services required to build a home and deliver it to a buyer.

Phase II: *The Ripple Effect.* The wages and profits earned in Phase 1 are spent on other locally produced goods and services. Spending generates additional income for local residents, which is spent on more locally purchased goods and services and so on. This recycling of income back into the community is usually called a "multiplier" or "ripple effect".

Phase III: *The Ongoing Annual Effect.* When a home is occupied, the occupants pay taxes, spend money, and otherwise participate in the local economy. As new housing for seniors is provided, another set of economic "ripple effects" results, and new permanent increases in economic activity occurs, such as more retail sales, increased local tax receipts and increase

property taxes. New senior housing doesn't always mean that the new homes will be occupied by seniors moving in from outside the community. In fact, that is usually not the case as most studies show, seniors prefer to stay in their community rather than move. If a senior moves into a new unit from the same local area, and the vacated unit is backfilled, the community retains its older citizens who would otherwise move out of the area, and the vacated unit still provides its economic contribution. In any case, the new senior housing results in a gain to the local economy, and the community keeps its social fabric.

In addition, the Sierra Business Council published a case study (see Senior Traditions report pg. 37) that promotes and identifies specific strategies to “plan and provide health care, childcare and elder care”. In a case study from Kremmling, Colorado (approximately 100 miles west of Denver) the area experienced a significant economic downturn in the early 1990s and caused approximate 20 % of its workforce to be unemployed. As an economic development strategy, the Chamber of Commerce formed a committee and studied the demographics and determined that the older population was vulnerable, as no housing with care options existed in their market area. They recognized that this was the cause for senior residents to leave their community to seek out alternative living communities that could accommodate their aging needs. They also learned the unfortunate aspect of displacing senior residents from their families. Economically, the relocation of seniors was also devastating as they took their income and spending capabilities away from the local town. They listed an assisted living community as one of their top priorities. They were successful in launching an assisted living venture and opened up a 24 unit Cliff- view Assisted Living Center which is owned by the County Housing Authority and managed separately. This is another example of how the senior living accommodations can promote economic development in the area.

Another consideration is that adult children reside primarily in the market area of their employment. When confronting aging parent issues for parents who live away from their adult child, the adult child generally has to take an inordinate amount of time off from work to travel outside the primary market area to visit and care for their parents. Since there is a huge shortfall of senior living communities within the Nevada County market area, the only option for adult children's parents is generally limited to moving them away from their family. The opportunity of creating a much needed senior living community in Nevada County will serve this unmet need and will have a significant positive impact on the local work force.

In general senior living has a positive impact on the local economy. It demands little impact on local roadways, does not affect local schools, provides tax base revenue for park and recreation, has minimal sewer and water demands, and allows seniors to stay in close proximity to their adult children. Senior living communities are positive economic contributions to the area. They create jobs, keep people from moving out of the area, keep money local, and promote a family network.

Defining a CCRC

CCRC's are diverse. They can range for high rise building to campuses on large acreage. The residences may be Lodge type attached units, townhomes, duplexes and larger clusters, group homes, cottages, and single family homes. Floor plans in CCRC's are varied from studios and one bedroom to two and three bedrooms. They can be found in urban, suburban, and rural areas. Communities offer different services and programs, but common to most are common dining

room, activity and exercise areas, and outdoor recreation and swimming pools. CCRC's combine three levels of care; independent living (IL), assisted living (AL), and nursing care (NC).

Continuing Care Retirement Communities are designed for healthy people who are looking for security. They meet the needs of seniors who don't want additional worries about where they are going to live as they grow older and how they are going to cope with potential future illness or the frailty of extreme old age. If you move to a CCRC, you know you can continue to live in the same development no matter what happens to your health -- and you know how much your care is going to cost.

A continuing care retirement community or CCRC offers a long – term continuing care contract that provides for housing, residential services, and nursing care, usually in one location, and usually for a resident's lifetime.

CCRC's can provide different types of nursing care. There are two types of nursing care services associated with these facilities; intermediate care facilities which provide custodial and intermediate care, and skilled nursing facilities which provide custodial, intermediate, and skilled care. Custodial care is nonmedical care that includes around-the-clock supervision, as well as assistance with personal needs such as eating, bathing, dressing, grooming, toileting, and mobility. An intermediate Care Facility is licensed by the State to provide 24-hour basic medical care under the supervision of a registered nurse who may be on call and not necessarily on duty. Basic medical care includes rehabilitative and recuperative care, but not more intensive medical procedures such as intravenous therapy and feeding tubes.

All providers offering continuing care contracts must first obtain a certificate of authority and a residential care facility for the elderly (RCFE) license. The California Department of Social Services (Department) is responsible for the oversight of continuing care providers. The Department's Community Care Licensing Division has two branches that participate in the regulation. The Senior Care Program monitors continuing care providers for compliance with the Community Care Licensing laws and regulations regarding buildings and grounds, accommodations, care and supervision of residents, and quality of service. The continuing Care Contracts Branch is responsible for reviewing and approving applications to operate a CCRC and monitors the ongoing financial condition of all CCRC providers and their ability to fulfill the long – term contractual obligations to residents.

The California Department of Social Services (CDSS) is the State agency responsible for approving, monitoring, and regulating CCRC providers. Two branches within CDSS participate in this function. Local Community Care Licensing District Offices continually monitor CCRCs to ensure compliance with California's Community Care Licensing Laws regarding physical plant, accommodations, care and supervision, and quality of service. The Continuing Care Contracts branch has the primary responsibility for overseeing continuing care contract providers. This branch evaluates provider applications to determine the financial feasibility of proposed communities and monitors the development of projects. Then, on an ongoing basis, the performance and financial condition of each provider is evaluated to assess their ability to fulfill contractual obligations to residents.

What is Rincon del Rio

Rincon del Rio CCRC adds a dynamic design element to traditional types of CCRC's. The design of Rincon del Rio is to provide age in place design features with the goal of keeping people in independent living arrangements for their entire life by offering life style programs that focus on social activity, nutrition, exercise, and dignity, with the comfort of knowing that care services are available if needed.

Service and amenities provided include an aquatic center, fitness center, community gardens, yoga, art/clay studios, woodshop, garage, computer/business center, spa, nutritional service, consigner services, day trips, library, college-sponsored learning programs, discussion/book groups, sports court, dining, housekeeping, special diet programming, transportation, personal assistance and security.

The type of housing and care provided includes the following:

Independent/ Living housing is age-restricted (60+) and is typically 900 to 2000 square feet on a single level, with social and recreational amenities provided. Maintenance of home exteriors, yards and recreational complexes is provided. Independent Congregate Living consists of "resort style" apartments and community amenities available within the Lodge building.

Independent Active Living units are for healthy, active seniors. They range from:

- One and two-bedroom apartments or single-family cottages
- Duplexes and four-plexes

Assisted Living provides more comprehensive services but offers fewer amenities and reduced living space. Sometimes referred to as "Transitional Living," it is designed for adults who need help with everyday tasks and physical mobility support, but full-time nursing or custodial care is not required.

Assisted Living units are for those who need some assistance in Activities of Daily Living (ADLs), such as bathing, eating, and dressing, but who also want to maintain independence. The units may be:

- Existing residence with in home assistance.
- Apartments with scaled down kitchens or kitchenettes
- Extended group type housing
- Congregate Apartment Housing

Nursing Care consists of custodial care including nonmedical "around-the-clock" supervision as well as assistance with personal needs such as eating, bathing, dressing, grooming, toileting, and mobility. Intermediate care will be provided under the supervision of a registered nurse and licensed by the State and will include 24-hour basic medical care such as rehabilitative and recuperative care, but does not include more intensive medical procedures such as intravenous

therapy and feeding tubes. In addition Rincon del Rio will also work with the local Hospice Agency to provide the dignity to age in place.

As a senior who develops a need for Assisted Living or Nursing Care recovers, they are welcome to resume independent living if their medical professionals agree they are again able to manage on their own.

Residential Memory Loss. Rincon del Rio will provide a specialized facility offering services and housing designed to accommodate those with various dementias. This level of care offers twenty-four hour supervision, secure (locked) and self-contained living environments to control wandering and spatial disorientation, meals, activities, and care services specific to each resident.

Rehabilitation Services. Rincon del Rio will provide rehabilitation services that are typically utilized on a short-term basis after a hospitalization, injury or illness. Rehabilitation focuses on:

- Physical therapy to help your strength, mobility and fitness
- Occupational therapy to help you with your daily activities
- Speech-language therapy to help with speaking, understanding, reading, writing and swallowing
- Treatment of pain

Rincon del Rio: Establishes a Healthy, Sustainable Lifestyle for an Aging Generation *Chuck Durrett, AIA*

We can help seniors fulfill their desires for a more rewarding living arrangement that better supports their well being, **physically, socially** and **emotionally**. Rincon del Rio makes it possible to be comfortable and easy to visit friends, new and old, without getting in a car at all. But it can only do that if we create the critical mass on site, in other words, give them enough possibilities to do so on site, enough relationships, enough variety of activities.

This is a community to enable and honor the active seniors, and the elders of Nevada County. This is a community that is designed in whole, with a full compliment of activities and places to go. Rincon del Rio creates a largely community based support system that allows for seniors to not only live in a fun and fulfilling environment, but also to be there for each other — to be able to support each other. The environment at Rincon del Rio will help relieve seniors of the effects of isolation, loneliness, or a lack of social opportunities, as well as the need to travel distances to meet their basic needs. These opportunities will be provided on-site.

Rincon del Rio makes it possible for seniors to get so much of what they need by virtue of proximity — in the village — without driving at all. We need to do what we can to get seniors off of the road. *Having* to drive sets seniors up for failure or worse, and giving them a pedestrian and convenient and senior-friendly neighborhood sets them up for success.

Seniors can take care of many of their own needs — if given the opportunities. In other words, you can have “assisted living” without having it feel like an institution. A full compliment, and

old-fashioned town or a neighborhood if you will, where you can walk over to the café when the nephew comes to visit, to the vegetable garden, to the gym, the exercise pool, and to the evening classes on belly dancing or nutrition.

Last year Americans drove 5 billion miles caring for seniors in their homes (Meals on Wheels, Whistle Stop Nurses, among others). In Nevada County alone, Telecare made 60,000 trips in massive, lumbering, polluting vans-buses, schlepping a couple of thousand seniors to doctor's appointments, to pick up medicine, or to see friends — usually carrying only one senior at a time. In the Nevada City cohousing community there are 21 seniors, and since the beginning we have not witnessed a single Telecare bus in the driveway. In cohousing it happens organically by caring neighbors: “Can I catch a ride with you?”; “Are you headed to the drug store?” This alternative is much more fun and inexpensive for all involved, and much less damaging to the environment. Rincon del Rio addresses this problem, by enabling residents to stay close to home.

Bill Thomas, M.D. and prominent author on issues affecting seniors, describes our currently predominant scenario of caring for seniors as the “\$3 trillion dollar dilemma.” The cost of care for the 78 million new senior/baby boomers “coming of age” will be \$3 trillion dollars more nationwide per year (20 years from now) than it is now (and that is in a nation with a \$13 trillion dollar GDP — to put it into perspective). It goes without saying, that the current pattern is not sustainable from an environmental, cultural or financial point of view. This problem will affect Nevada County in the same way unless we are proactive and realistic in addressing these budget concerns.

State and Federal Government will have proposed legislation to reduce carbon emissions by 2% per year until 2050. Last year, carbon emissions increased by 1.4% — we are obviously headed in the wrong direction. To achieve the goal of reducing our carbon footprint, we need to rethink collectively how to allow seniors to achieve their full potential into their last 20-30 years while simultaneously addressing environmental concerns — a win-win situation. Rincon del Rio provides the opportunity for seniors to be party to the solution.

Summary

As outlined above we believe there is a serious shortfall in desirable senior housing opportunities in Nevada County. By amending the zoning of the Rincon del Rio property to PD-CCRC (Planned Development) and allowing CCRC's as proposed by Rincon del Rio, we can provide opportunities for quality senior housing in a campus setting in a rural environment where one can spend their twilight years surrounded by nature with peace of mind, friends, security, and the surety of healthcare.

For more information about this kind of community-based supportive housing, and the inherent environmental, social, and economic benefits it provides, please review *Senior Cohousing: A Community Approach to Independent Living, second edition* published by New Society Publishers (www.newsociety.com), or any of the following resources on the topic.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Importance of Community, Proximity, Social Engagement for Seniors and Others

Books and Articles:

Frumkin, Howard, Lawrence Frank and Richard Jackson. *Urban Sprawl and Public Health: Designing, Planning and Building for Healthy Communities*. 2004.

Langdon, Philip. *A Better Place to Live: Reshaping the American Suburb*. 1995.

Moe, Richard and Carter Wilkie. *Changing Places: Rebuilding Community in the Age of Sprawl*. 1997.

Norwood, Ken and Kathleen Smith. *Rebuilding Community in America*. 1995.

Planning By Design: A Healthy Communities Handbook. The Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing. 2009. Available at: <http://www.mah.gov.on.ca/Page6737.aspx>

Putnam, Robert. *Bowling Alone: the Collapse and Revival of American Community*. 2001.

Van der Ryn, Sim and Peter Calthorpe. *Sustainable Communities: A New Design Synthesis for Cities, Suburbs and Towns*. 1991.

Whyte, William. *The Social Life of Small Urban Spaces*. 1980.

Kaplan, Karen. "Happiness is Contagious, Research Finds." *Los Angeles Times*. December 5, 2008.

Campoli, Julie. *Above and Beyond: Visualizing Change in Small Towns and Rural Areas*. 2002.

Arendt, Randall. *Rural By Design: Maintaining Small Town Character*. 1994