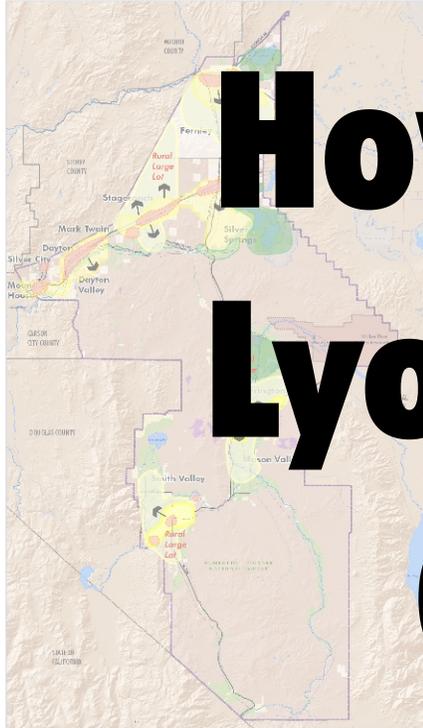
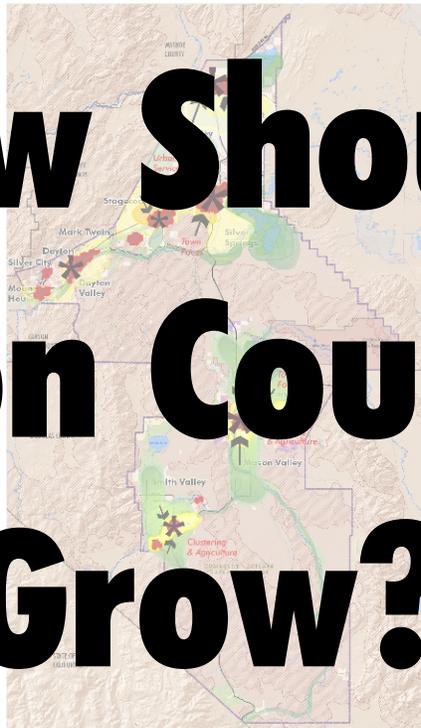




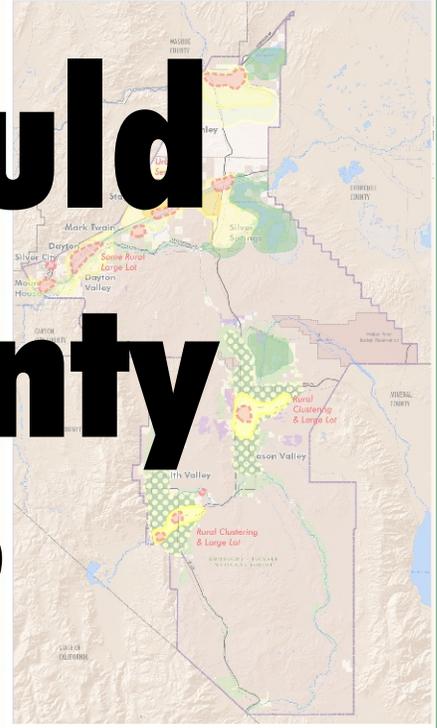
How Should Lyon County Grow?



Concept A



Concept B



Concept C

June 20, 2007

Please review this packet and provide comments by July 20, 2007, to help Lyon County prepare its Comprehensive Master Plan.

www.lyon-county.org

How Should Lyon County Grow?

Growth Areas and Areas of Change

What are the Concepts?

The future growth concepts in this packet explore different development patterns to accommodate new growth in Lyon County. The county has the opportunity now to decide how best to accommodate growth in the future and plan for land uses, transportation, sustaining resources, infrastructure, and other future needs. This is also an opportunity to define what makes our communities livable and describe the characteristics that create a high quality of life for current and future residents. Growth patterns have implications on costs, environment and resources, and community livability, as discussed with each concept. (For more information, read the section entitled, "Why Do Growth Patterns Matter?" on page 9.)

The three concepts in this packet are:

Concept A – Present Trends

Concept B – Community Core Focused

Concept C – Moderate Change

They are intended to represent a broad array of choices, to embody different values and spur discussion about the future shape, pattern, and direction of growth within Lyon County. They reflect preliminary input that the county has heard from the public during local community meetings and discussion at a workshop with the Planning Commission in June 2007. These concepts are also based on existing conditions and constraints, such as vacant and developed lands, current zoning, location of sensitive lands such as wetlands and rivers, and location of agricultural land.

The concepts are built around different "character areas" (see Character Areas map on facing page). The Concepts show an array of land use pattern types for potentially developable lands, as a place-based "menu" approach. This means that each character area has a range of choices about future land use patterns and characters that will ultimately comprise the County's plan.

Why Character Areas?

The landscape and developed areas of Lyon County are quite diverse from north to south, yet the county has some similar developed areas (e.g. semi-rural residential areas) and some large vacant parcels that are potential "areas of future change." These places with similar characteristics are the basis for character areas, which provide a manageable way to discuss land use patterns and future growth concepts. We have divided the county into five main areas where changes might occur, and three areas that we assume will remain relatively stable in the future as follows. (See Character Areas map, next page.)



Community Core example



Semi-Rural Development



Rural Residential Development



Agricultural Area

1. Community Core Areas

These are the incorporated cities and places with town-like densities. The community core areas consist of:

- the incorporated cities of Fernley and Yerington,
- settlement areas, including Silver City, Mound House, Dayton, Mark Twain, Stagecoach, Silver Springs, Mason, Wellington, and Smith.

2. Semi-Rural Development

These are the places with mostly residential development dispersed typically at a low density of generally 1 home per 5 acres to 1 home per acre.

3. Rural Residential Development

These are places with mostly residential development dispersed typically at a very low density of 1 home per 20 acres or lower.

4. Mostly Vacant

Lyon County has several places with large intact privately owned vacant parcels. They are mostly near Stagecoach, Silver Springs, and Dayton Valley, as well as in Mason and Smith Valleys.

5. Agricultural Areas

Agricultural areas are the private farms and ranches, including irrigated and rangelands with some dispersed residential development—mostly in Mason and Smith Valleys.

Relatively Stable Areas

The following three character areas will likely not develop or change much in the future.

6. Industrial and Mining Areas

These are the existing mineral extraction or manufacturing properties.

7. Open Space and Recreation Lands

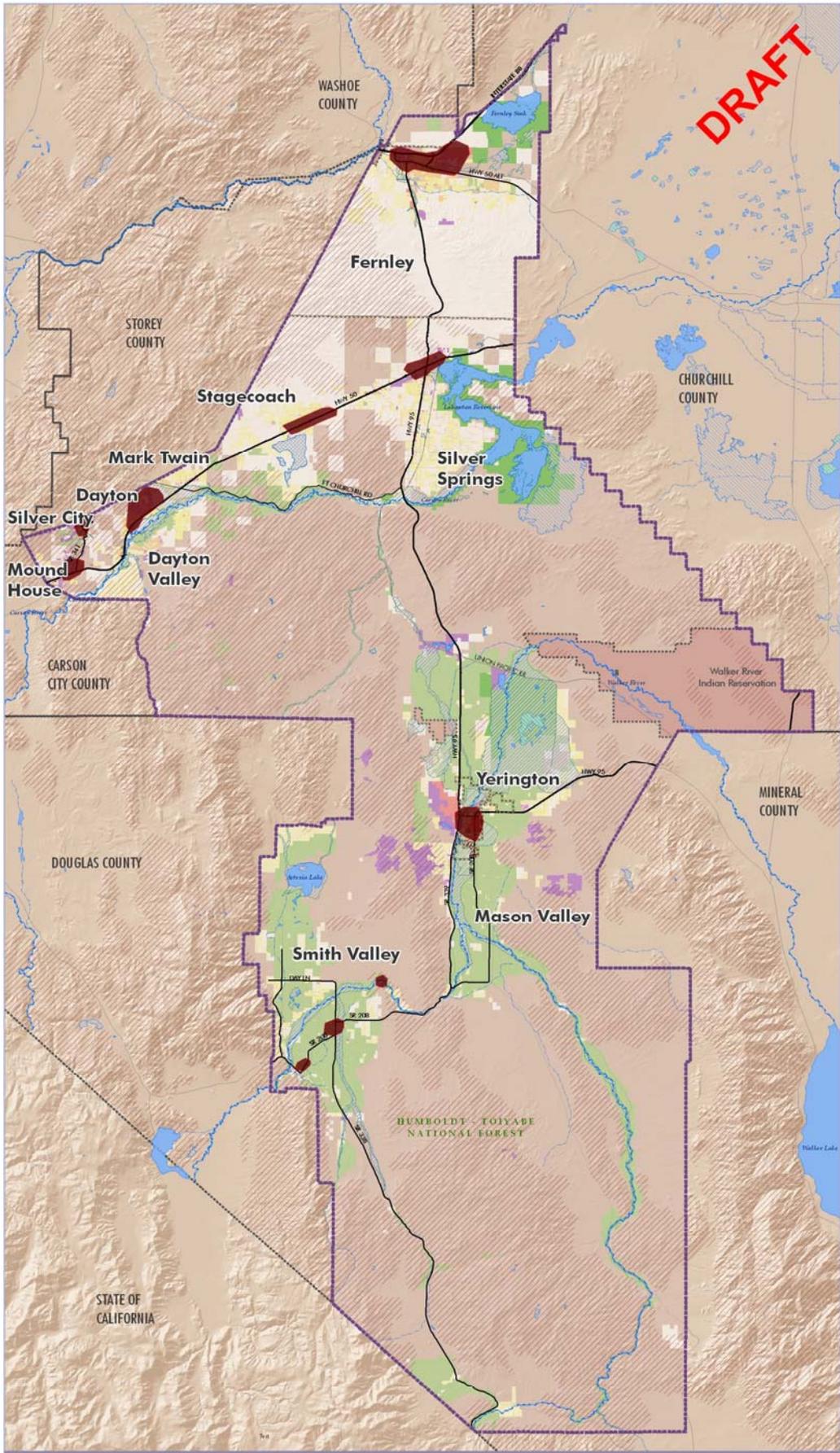
Several open space and recreation areas, such as Lahontan Reservoir and Wildlife Management Areas, appear throughout Lyon County. They will continue to be open space and recreation.

8. Public and Range Lands

Lyon County contains a large amount of public lands managed by federal agencies. The public lands are interspersed with some private inholdings used primarily for grazing. The County does not have jurisdiction over these areas, but can work with agencies to influence management.



How Should Lyon County Grow?



COMPREHENSIVE MASTER PLAN

Legend

- Lyon County
- City Limits
- Rivers & Streams
- Lakes & Reservoirs
- Roads & Highways
- Railroads

Character Areas

- Community Core
- Industry and Mining
- Semi Rural
- Rural Residential
- Open Space
- Agriculture
- Vacant
- Public Land

Source: Lyon County Parcel Data, Jan. 2007



0 1 2 4 6 8 Miles

Draft: May 10, 2007
CLARION, Fehr & Peers

Concept A: Present Trends

How Might the Future Look?

General Description

Concept A represents development patterns allowable by current zoning in Lyon County and current market trends. Under this concept, Lyon County by 2026 may have a larger share of its development occurring in the unincorporated county outside of community core areas as part of subdivisions and rural lot splits. Residents are likely to see commercial development that extends along highways in the North and Central part of the county. Very limited environmental quality and design quality standards would continue to determine how site plans occur.

Land Use Mix and Patterns and Resources

Growth and Land Use Mix

With Concept A, development would continue to disperse away from community core areas with densities and patterns similar to what occurs in the county today. Retail and industrial land uses spread along the major highways and county roads, and are auto-oriented without coordinated planning. A lot of vacant land is available in the unincorporated areas where new homes could be built on large lots in the county not connected to community water or sewer systems. Several large residential subdivisions may be built on large intact vacant parcels with community water and sewer. Development outside of the county's community cores would generally be larger lot residential development. The county may continue to experience an imbalance of residential and non-residential land uses, where most jobs are at the north end of the county or in Carson City and Reno.

Environment and Resources

This concept assumes "status quo" on resource protection so that fairly unrestrained development occurs on steep slopes, in floodplains, and around wetlands. It does not propose any additional set aside of open lands. This concept also does not emphasize farmland conservation.

Utilities and Services

With this concept, most new rural developments would rely on well and septic systems. New developments would extend their internal roads connecting to existing highways and county roads that would serve new development.

Ease to Implement

Concept A is generally the "baseline" concept because implementation would require minimal changes to current policies. Initially, this concept is the easiest of the three to implement. However, over the long-term the county would likely see higher costs of providing services, potential problems with water and air quality which might be costly to fix, and increasing traffic problems given current highway and local road configurations.

Growth In Character Areas

Community Cores

The community core areas, including cities of Fernley and Yerington, would continue to expand outward through annexation, providing a mix of housing and commercial services in or around their periphery. Development in settlements such as Dayton, Mound House, and Smith would continue to disperse along the highways and county roads (both commercial and residential).

Semi-Rural Residential Areas

Residential subdivisions would continue to spread outward in the Central area and around Smith and Mason Valleys. Generally, this development will occur as 5 acre lots (rural residential).

Rural Development Areas

Development in the rural residential development areas, including along Highway 50 and at the periphery of Smith Valley and Mason Valley agricultural areas would continue as 1 unit per 20 acres (rural subdivisions).

Large Intact Vacant Lands

Development in the large intact vacant lands including near Stagecoach and Silver Springs would be a mix of 1 unit per 5 acres and 1 unit per 20 acres (large rural subdivisions) and predominately residential.

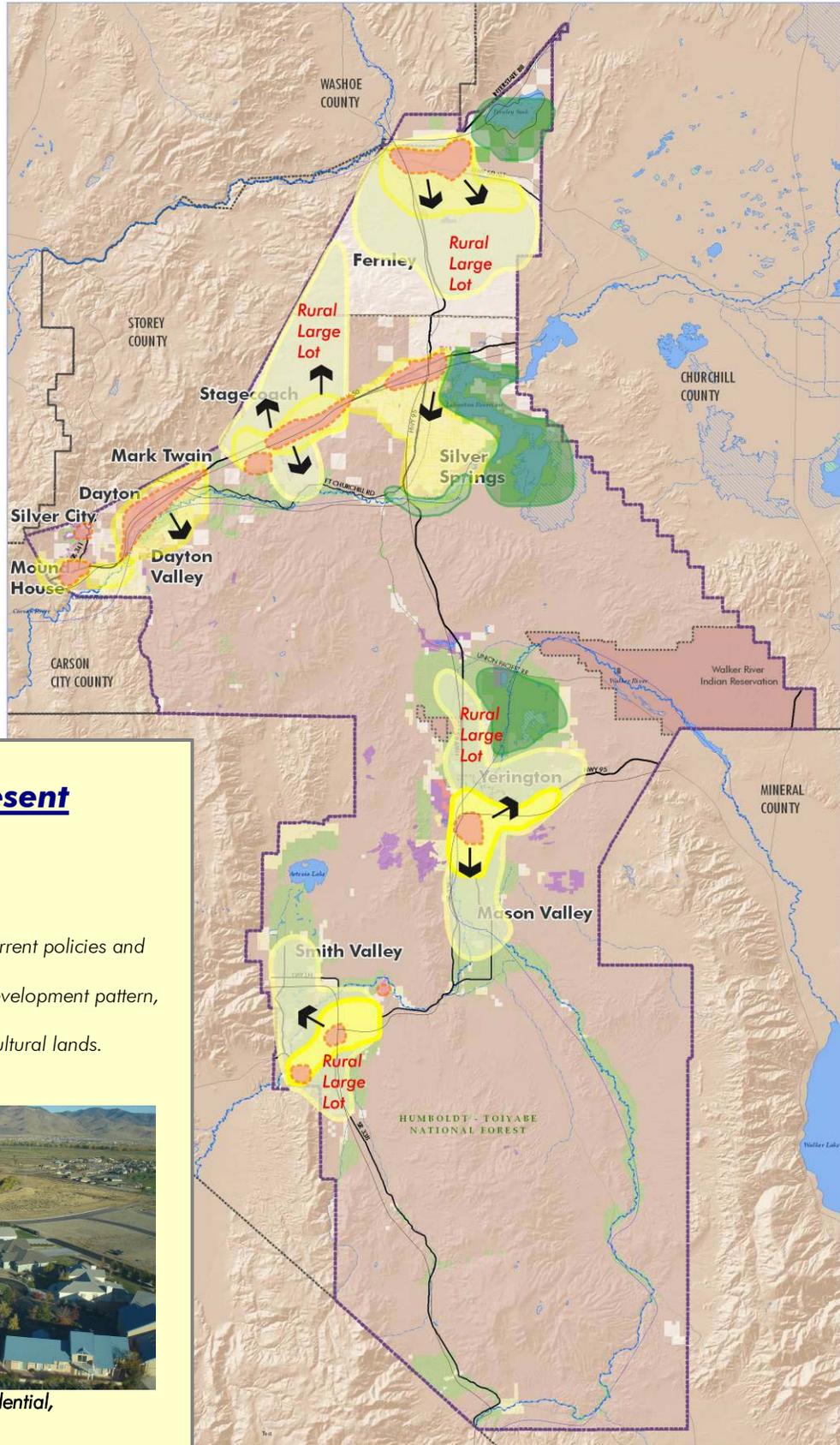
Agricultural Areas

Some agricultural production would continue so long as the market supports it, but lands in the Mason and Smith Valleys will likely subdivide and develop over time for rural residential purposes unless land owners take voluntary measures to conserve land (such as through conservation easements). Generally, the residential development would occur on 20 acre lots (rural subdivisions), assuming no zone changes. Zoning changes could possibly result in smaller lot sizes and increased densities.

What would it take to Accomplish Concept A?

Concept A would not require any substantive policy shifts or regulatory changes and would continue to rely on dispersed delivery of services. The County would keep current zoning and in place and would not adopt any new standards or incentives. The concept would require some minimal continued cooperation with cities. Costs would increase in order to provide services to a larger number of residents living in dispersed areas in the future, either resulting in higher taxes or reduced levels of service (if residents are unwilling to increase county tax revenue).

How Should Lyon County Grow?



Concept A: Present Trends

This concept features:

- Continuation of current policies and trends,
- More dispersed development pattern, and
- Reduction in agricultural lands.



Most development is residential, semi-rural and rural.

Concept A

How Should Lyon County Grow?

Concept B: Community Core Focused

How Might the Future Look?

General Description

With Concept B, Lyon County in 2026 would see growth that is more compact and development occurring in and around the community cores with more focus on balancing residential, employment, and retail land uses. The concept encourages less growth in the remote unincorporated areas (outside of community cores) than Concepts A and C. The agricultural areas around Smith and Mason Valleys would primarily continue for agricultural production, but would allow some residential development especially in alternative rural patterns such as clustering. In addition, the concept promotes alternative development and conservation approaches for areas with sensitive resources or hazardous features, such as steep slopes, wetlands, or floodplains.

Land Use Mix and Patterns and Resources

Growth and Land Use Mix

With Concept B, the community core areas would continue to grow, with “downtowns” and retail areas that are walkable and that contain a mix of economically viable uses. It also promotes neighborhoods around the periphery of core areas. A higher percentage of new development would connect to public water and sewer systems. Some large lot development would still occur with Concept B (i.e., 5 to 20 acre lots). However, some alternative rural development patterns including clusters, could also occur to conserve open lands. It also includes some mixed-use planned communities on the large intact lands (near Stagecoach and Silver Springs).

Environment and Resources

Concept B suggests a more proactive approach to enabling agricultural lands in Mason and Smith Valleys to remain intact and operational. It also focuses on providing connected open space and steering development away from sensitive resources such as wetlands, playas, floodplains, and steep slopes. Alternative development patterns could help maintain open space and agriculture and additional standards and/or guidelines could help protect resources.

Utilities and Services

Because much of the future development is close to community cores, more homes and businesses would be served by community water and sewer. The focused development and mix of land uses would provide options for transit and potentially put homes and jobs closer together than Concept A, with less strain on roads over the long term. In addition, the county would see less expansion of services to remote areas (e.g., sheriff and road maintenance).

Ease to Implement

Of the three scenarios, Concept B would entail the most changes to current policies to implement it. Over the long-term, though, the County could save costs of providing services to remote areas and could avert increasing traffic problems because of a better balance of land uses. It could also alleviate some potential problems with water and air quality because of

environmental protection measures and because fewer homes and businesses would rely on septic systems. In addition, this concept could enable settlements and places in the County to continue land use patterns that support retention of their historic, “small town,” and rural character and that contribute to vital, healthy, quality neighborhoods with amenities.

Growth in Different Character Areas

Community Core Areas

With Concept B, the existing towns would continue to expand outward to some degree, but some policies would support and encourage development on vacant lots and redevelopment and revitalization within town limits and in settlements.

Semi-Rural Residential Development

Concept B shows semi-rural development (including some with commercial services) continuing to occur in undeveloped areas, but clustered to protect natural resources and wildlife habitat.

Rural Residential Development

Concept B shows clustered rural development patterns in remote areas and a focus on agricultural retention with an aim to reduce development in areas not served by utilities or emergency services, and areas that have high resource values. It also steers development from steep slopes, wetlands, and floodplains to lands closer to community cores.

Large Intact Parcels

The large intact parcels may develop to allow mixed-use communities with a balance of residential and non-residential uses and public spaces such as open space.

Agricultural Areas

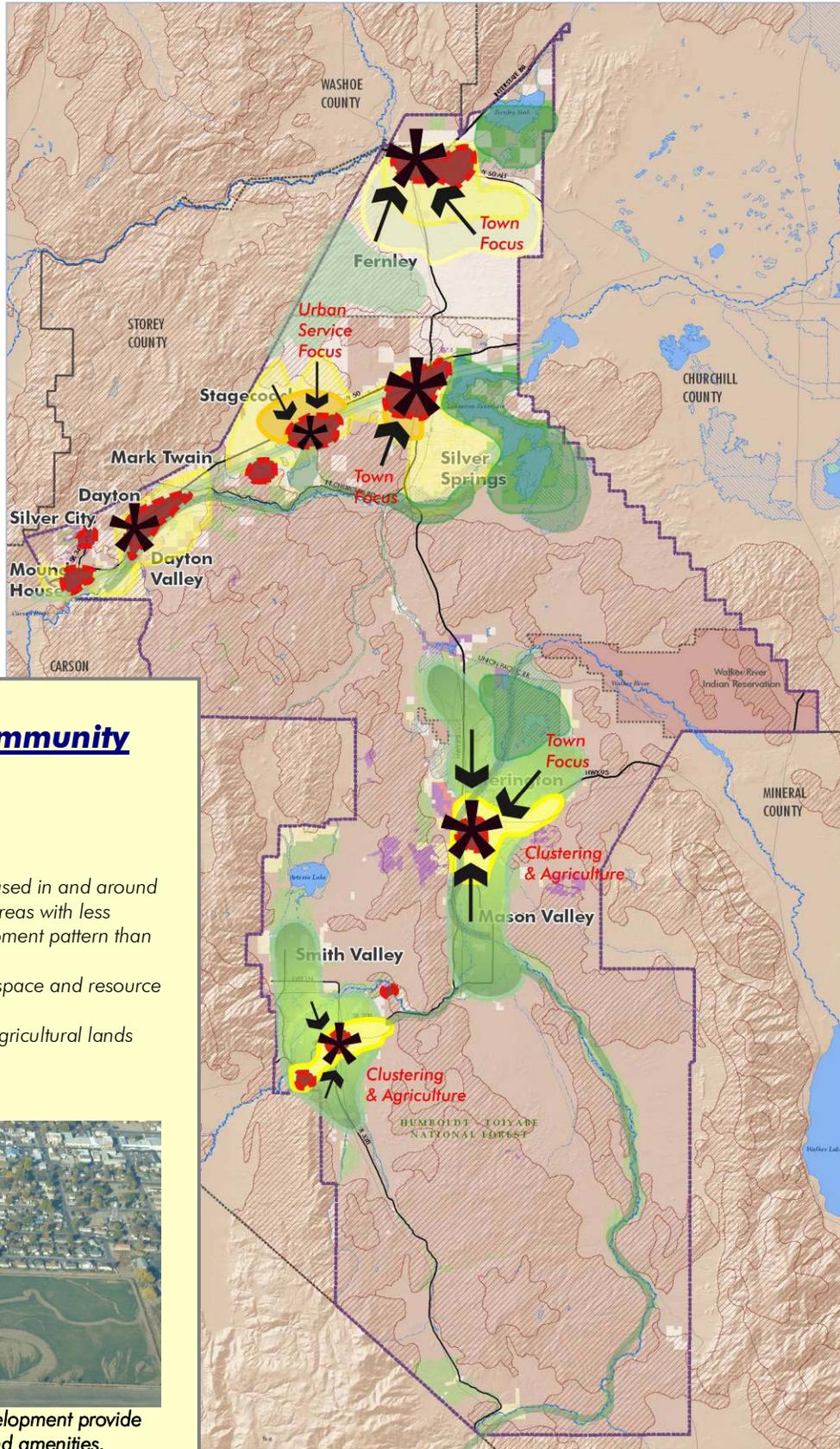
Concept B emphasizes retention of irrigated agricultural lands areas, which would mean that only limited residential development would occur in irrigated agricultural areas and development rights and density would shift away from these areas.

What Would it Take to Accomplish Concept B?

Concept B would entail changing current county policies, possibly zoning, and resource protection standards. The county could use the following tools to accomplish this concept:

- ✓ Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) Program, such as proposed in Smith Valley.
- ✓ Density Transfer on large parcels.
- ✓ Alternative or sliding scale zoning for remote areas that are costly to serve.
- ✓ Cooperation with incorporated cities.
- ✓ Clustered development incentives or standards.
- ✓ Basic resource protection standards for air and water quality and safe developments, such as: (a) limited or no development on steep slopes, (b) limited development around wetlands. (c) Guidelines for wildlife-friendly development, or (d) Restricted development in floodplains.

How Should Lyon County Grow?



Concept B: Community Core Focused

This concept features:

- Development focused in and around community core areas with less dispersed development pattern than current trend,
- Connected open space and resource protection, and
- Conservation of agricultural lands where possible.



Neighborhoods and development provide parks and open space and amenities.

Concept B

How Should Lyon County Grow?

Concept C: Moderate Change

How Might the Future Look?

General Description

With Concept C, development patterns in 2026 would retain some of the characteristics of today, but growth would continue to disperse in some parts of the unincorporated county (outside of community core areas), with a slight increased emphasis on alternative development patterns (such as clustering) to help conserve agricultural lands, “raising the bar” on site planning and development quality, and focusing development in areas where it can better be served by water and sewer.

Land Use Mix and Patterns and Resources

Growth and Land Use Mix

The community core areas would continue to grow with some focus on revitalizing or improving cores and providing a mix of housing and development around the periphery of towns where it can be connected to community water and sewer.

Rural development patterns would include some large lot development—as part of rural subdivisions—and also incorporate some alternative patterns such as clusters and mixed housing and service settlements on the large intact lands and in agricultural areas such as near Stagecoach and in Smith and Mason Valleys.

Environment and Resources

This concept does not emphasize resource or agricultural protection, but alternative patterns could help maintain open space and agriculture and protect resources such as steep slopes, floodplains and streams and wetlands. The Smith and Mason valleys outside of settlements could generally continue as agriculture, but would be interspersed with some residential development.

Utilities and Services

Some of the future development will be close to community cores where it can be served by community water and sewer. The focused development would put less strain on roads over the long term than Concept A.

Ease to Implement

This concept would require some changes to current policies to implement it. Over the long-term the county would likely see higher costs of providing services and increasing traffic problems given current highway and local road configurations. However, water quality problems might be minimized if development steers away from important natural resources and if more homes and businesses can be connected to community water and sewer instead of relying on wells and septic systems. In addition, similar to concept B, this concept could enable places in the county to continue the historic patterns that support retention of their “small town” and rural character. The fiscal impacts of this concept would likely fall somewhere between A and B. Although clustered development and some areas of focused development would help contain growing service costs, dispersed development patterns would result in higher costs to provide

services, or reduction in service levels in some areas of the County.

Growth in Different Character Areas

Community Core Areas

The areas would continue to grow mostly in a dispersed pattern without much emphasis on providing a mix of housing and development in or around the periphery of settlement areas. A slightly lower overall density of development may occur in and around the settlement areas than in Concept A, although generally development in the county would occur on 1 to 5 acre lots. The concept shows some clustered development.

Semi-Rural Areas

The concept shows large lot residential development in the undeveloped lands around the core areas.

Rural Residential Areas

A blend of clustering and large lots are shown in most remote areas and agricultural valleys, although most rural residential areas would continue to be predominately 1 unit per 20 acres lots.

Large Intact Vacant Areas

This concept suggests that new large scale developments on large intact vacant parcels could develop with a mixed complement of housing, jobs, and services focused near existing services and away from steep slopes to provide a better balance and mix of land uses to alleviate some traffic on roads. The area near Stagecoach is shown this way.

Agricultural Areas

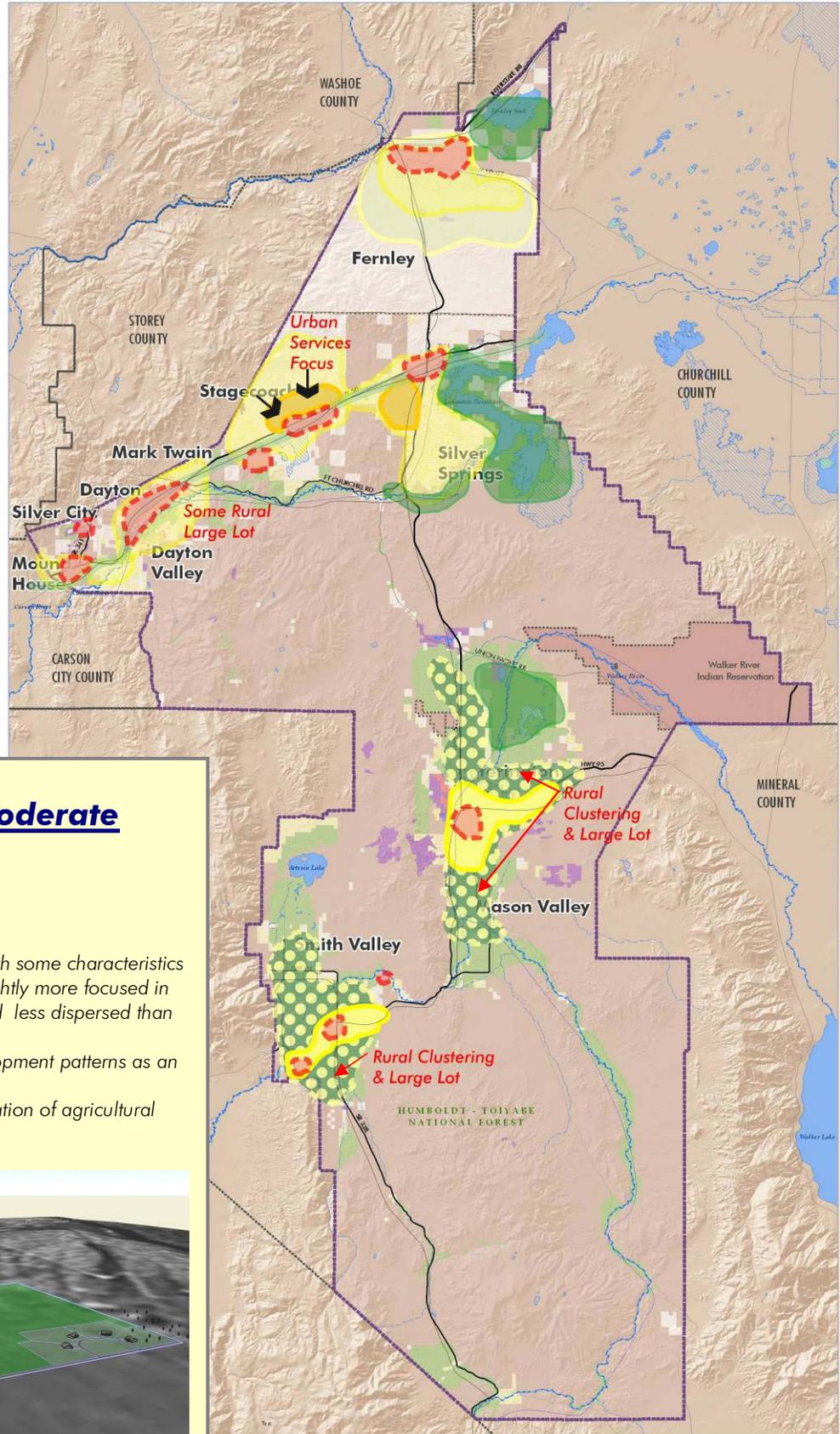
This concept shows most irrigated agricultural areas (Mason and Smith valleys) with potential for clustered development or large lots.

What would it take to Accomplish Concept C?

This concept assumes a blend of current development pattern trends and density in some areas with some changes and additional use of alternative development patterns for areas with agricultural lands, and environmental features such as wetlands or floodplains. Provisions could be mandatory or incentive-based. Tools might include:

- ✓ Clustered development standards or incentives to shift development away from sensitive areas (such as floodplains, wetlands, and steep slopes) and to conserve agricultural lands.
- ✓ Resource protection guidelines or standards.
- ✓ Site planning and residential and commercial guidelines or standards.

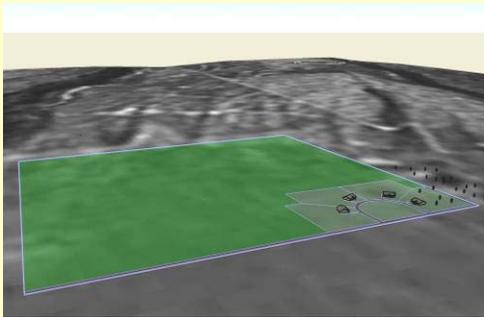
How Should Lyon County Grow?



Concept C: Moderate Change

This concept features:

- Development with some characteristics of today, but slightly more focused in communities and less dispersed than current trend,
- Clustered development patterns as an option, and
- Modest conservation of agricultural lands.



Concept C

How Should Lyon County Grow?

Why do Growth Patterns Matter?

Why are we asking these questions about growth concepts and why might the present growth trend (dispersing rural growth) not be the best choice for the County's future?

Lyon County, like many counties in the Western U.S., has experienced fiscal strain in recent years due to fast growth. The County is responsible for providing a wide variety of services to residents and business, including sheriff, fire protection, health and human services, libraries, and parks. With increasing demand for services, it is increasingly becoming a challenge to provide a consistent and high quality level of service. In addition, the County is facing increased pressure to ensure its communities have an adequate and clean water supply and good air quality—resource considerations that relate to growth patterns. Finally, settlement areas and agricultural communities are considering how to retain their unique qualities—either historic, small town, or rural, country settings.

At this end of this planning process, the County and its citizens may determine that it will “stay the course” with present trends; however, it should do so with consequences in mind and knowing that alternative patterns are available. Alternatively, the County could choose to make minor or more dramatic shifts in future growth patterns that could improve the long-term outlook.

Thus growth patterns matter because research shows that dispersed development ultimately has more potential “costs” to the County as described below related to three topics: (1) fiscal, (2) environmental, and (3) community.

Fiscal (Cost) Considerations

- Costs to build new facilities to serve dispersed locations (e.g., fire stations, parks, roads).
- Costs to maintain dispersed utilities and roads.
- Costs to provide on-going services to dispersed population (e.g., law enforcement)
- Costs (taxes) may increase for all residents due to impacts on existing service levels

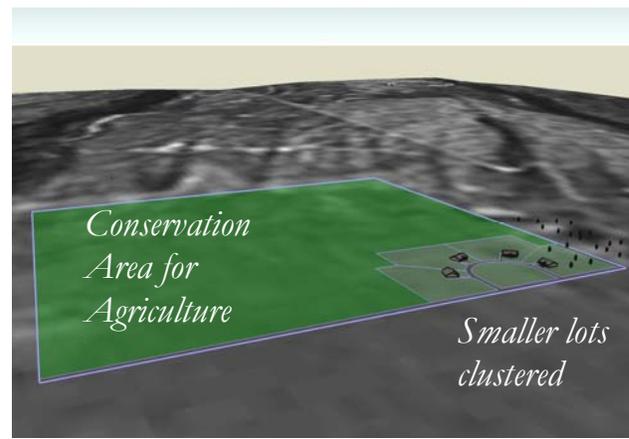
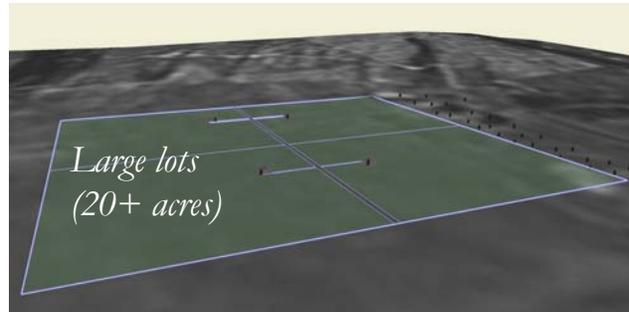
Environmental Considerations

- Amount of land consumed for development has a bearing on the County's environmental quality:
 - Air quality
 - Water quality
 - Views
 - Wildlife
- How development is configured on-site affects environmental quality.

Community Considerations

- Development patterns affect whether the County's desirable characteristics can be retained (e.g., small towns and settlements).
- Growth patterns can contribute to retention or loss of the County's agricultural base.
- Dispersed development can contribute to a loss of “sense of community”

- Dispersed patterns can affect human health (e.g., air and water quality, ability to walk safely, access to medical facilities for aging population, etc.)



Examples of Large Lots (top) and clustered lots to conserve agriculture (bottom)

Draft Vision for Lyon County

Lyon County will guide growth and change to meet the needs of current and future residents, building on its heritage, and exploring new and innovative techniques to address challenges. The County will work together with its diverse communities to meet shared goals while respecting and promoting the individual character of each community. Residents will enjoy an excellent quality of life characterized by: diverse lifestyle opportunities, quality housing choices, plenty of clean air and water, access to open lands and wildlife, outstanding public schools, an efficient transportation network, and a range of employment and occupational choices. Our rural character, born of our agricultural and mining heritage, will continue to be a strong part of Lyon County's identity.



How Should Lyon County Grow?

Please Provide Your Comments!

Tear off this page and return it to Lyon County by Friday, July 20, 2007.

Mail information is on the back.

OR fax it to (775) 246-6144.

OR send email to: masterplan@lyon-county.org.

1. Where do you live? (Please check one of the boxes below or write a community name if "other".)

- Dayton (Dayton Valley)
- Fernley
- Mark Twain
- Mason Valley

- Mound House
- Silver Springs
- Silver City
- Smith Valley

- Stagecoach
- Yerington
- Other:

2. Which Growth Concept or combination of concepts best represents your vision for the future of Lyon County?

- Concept A – Present Trend
- Concept B – Community Core Focused
- Concept C – Moderate Change (Raise Bar)
- Combination of Concepts _____ and _____ (please describe which aspects you like of each one below)

3. What, if anything, would you change about the concept(s) you selected to make it better reflect your vision for Lyon County's future?

4. Do you have any comments about the draft Vision (page 9) or the Growth Concepts?

Please attach additional sheets if you need more room to write comments.

Thank you!

Name (optional) _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____



How Should Lyon County Grow?

Fold, staple or tape, and return to address below,

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