

From: [Mike Martini](#)
To: [PRMD-WineryEvents](#)
Cc: [Georgia McDaniel](#); [Tennis Wick](#); [Eric Koenigshofer](#); [Kevin Deas \(Kevin.Deas@deasproperties.com\)](#); [Greg Carr](#); [Todd.Tamura@gmail.com](#); [Jacquelynn Ocana](#)
Subject: Winery Events Comparison Chart and Continued Conversation
Date: Tuesday, August 3, 2021 4:57:31 PM
Attachments: [Dry Creek Valley Guidelines for New Use Permits.pdf](#)
[Exhibit B Planning-Commission-Hearing-06 03 21.pdf](#)
[Sonoma Vintners Winery Use Permit Policy Parameters Definitions.pdf](#)
[Stakeholder Draft Sonoma Valley Guidelines with Map.pdf](#)
[SVCAC Ad Hoc Committee Draft Winery Guidelines.pdf](#)

EXTERNAL

I want to thank the Staff for their hard work to bring forward to the Planning Commission and comparison from the draft guidelines and definitions related to new winery use permit applications. Wading through subtle differences in style and template to present an “apples to apples” comparison is a heavy list. I would suggest, however, that the comparison should be among five different documents that I have attached to this email.

Of the three in the comparison only the Dry Creek Guidelines for New Use permits is the only set of guidelines and definitions that have actually been approved and operating. The SVCAC Ad Hoc Committee are in a draft form and resulted from limited review after the Sonoma Valley CAC decided to reject the Stakeholder Draft Valley Guidelines with Map that was the product of neighbors and wineries. Exhibit B is from the Staff Report from the June 3rd Planning Commission Hearing. You should also be considering the Sonoma Vintners Winery Use Permit Policy Parameters as a lot of out reach went into its preparation. There may be another document from other organizations such as Preserve Rural Sonoma County. In any case, the comparison should include all the work that has gone into this issue over the past five years.

What is interesting in comparing these documents is a common theme of mitigating impacts and not micro-managing activities.

I look forward to the continued conversation and ask that you let me know when the item will be heard again.

Thanks!

Mike Martini
Taft Street Winery

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Dry Creek Valley

Guidelines for New Use Permits with Visitor Serving Agricultural Uses

Section 1. Scope

The purpose of this document is to provide a set of definitions and preferred guidelines for use by the Dry Creek Valley Citizens Advisory Council (DCV CAC) in investigating, discussing and considering applications for new use permits that include visitor serving agricultural uses in agricultural and resource zones in the Dry Creek Valley watershed (map attached). The DCV CAC will provide advisory recommendations to the County of Sonoma and its Permit and Resource Management Department, Board of Zoning Adjustments, Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors.

These guidelines will help to establish clear expectations, so applicants and neighbors have a basis for more open dialogue and common understanding. The guidelines are a pilot program to assess the value of setting standards locally and will also help to inform future actions by the Board of Supervisors on visitor serving agricultural uses.

Section 2. Goals

1. Support agriculture and related agricultural promotion on a scale that best fits the character of Dry Creek Valley.
2. Establish a set of clearly defined guidelines for use by the Dry Creek Valley Citizens Advisory Council in considering use permits that include new visitor serving agricultural uses.
3. Communicate the guidelines so applicants, neighbors and County representatives have clear expectations and a basis for open dialogue and understanding.
4. Favorably consider new applications where the overall project is substantially consistent with the guidelines.

Section 3. How to Use this Guidance Document

These guidelines are specifically intended to be used in evaluating new use permit applications that request visitor serving agricultural uses (e.g. tasting rooms, promotional activities or events) and for modifications to add visitor serving uses to existing permits that were approved for agricultural processing only.

We recognize that all projects are unique. As such, each will continue to be reviewed on a case-by-case basis considering the specific aspects of the project, property, location, and planned mitigations. The Guidelines provide consistent definitions and a framework for identifying and evaluating important aspects of each project.

There are several categories listed in this document, and for each category, there is associated guidance as to what could be considered appropriate and could contribute to a favorable decision by the DCV CAC. It is not expected that any application would meet each of the preferred guidelines. A less than favorable condition in any one category would not necessarily equate to an overall unfavorable decision. In general, the overall

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combination of more and less favorable conditions will be used by CAC members to evaluate the use permit application.

Section 4. Guidelines

1. Access and Traffic

1. Access to the parcel on public roadways of at least 18 feet in width is preferred for use permits with visitor serving agricultural uses.
2. There is adequate ingress and egress to the property, including adequate site distances to the entrance and distance from crossroads and other driveways. The highest volume of expected visitors can enter and exit the property safely without traffic backup on public roadways.

2. Site

1. Parcels of at least 20 acres are preferred for use permits with visitor serving agricultural uses.
2. The majority of the usable land is in agriculture, some portion of which is pertinent to the visitor serving agricultural uses. However, it is not the intent to encourage the removal of woodlands or planting of crops on steep hillsides.
3. There is sufficient water on the parcel to support all new visitor serving agricultural uses without negatively impacting neighboring properties.
4. All parking is on-site. There is no parking along public roadways.
5. Parking plans that utilize road easements have the written agreement of all neighbors who share those easements.
6. Parking in vineyard rows and avenues may be inadequate in wet conditions.

3. Activities and Events

1. All activities and events will promote agricultural products grown or processed in the local area.
2. All activities and events will be hosted by the proprietor, with on-site management by the proprietor's staff. The facility will not be rented out for use by a 3rd party and no rental fees will be charged.
3. New use permits that support the guidelines below will be viewed as more favorable. See Section 6 for the Definitions of Activities and Events.

Activities and Events	Guidelines
Public and Direct Sales Activities During regular hours	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Limited to the Maximum Persons at One Time set in the use permit• Limited to the hours of 10am – 5pm

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Activities and Events	Guidelines
Direct Sales Activities Outside of regular hours	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 50 visitors at one time, or the Maximum Persons at One Time set in the use permit, whichever is less• Maximum of 12 times a year• Maximum of two per month• Limited to the hours of 8am – 10pm
Trade Marketing Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Limited to the Maximum Persons at One Time set in the use permit• Limited to the hours of 8am – 10pm
Association Sponsored Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Up to 15 event days per year• Traffic and parking plans required if Maximum Persons at One Time is exceeded• Limited to the hours of 10am – 5pm
Agricultural Promotional Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Maximum of 2 days per quarter• Events outside of regular hours limited to 2 event days per year• Limited to the hours of 8am – 10pm

4. Noise Impact

Noise impact is one of the most complex categories in Use Permits with Visitor Serving Uses. We encourage applicants to pay close attention to the Sonoma County General Plan 2020 Noise Element, particularly Policy NE-1c, when crafting their use permit application. Requests for outdoor amplified music, especially after 5pm, will typically require noise studies and mitigation measures and may not be appropriate for some projects.

1. All noise impact conforms to the Sonoma County Noise Standards as set forth in the General Plan.
2. Applicant has noted the distances in each direction from the visitor serving areas to the neighboring residences and indicated noise mitigations, if necessary. Projects with greater than required distances from property lines and existing residences are more favorable.
3. All outdoor amplified music ends by 9pm.

5. Food Service

1. Food service is allowed for wine and food pairings and in conjunction with activities and events, however operating as a restaurant is prohibited. More specifically:

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- the predominate activity in the tasting room is wine tasting, wine sales and related wine marketing, not dining
 - meal service is not available to the general public on a regular basis
 - no cooked-to-order food is served.
2. Catering and commercial kitchens are acceptable, including indoor or outdoor equipment such as stoves, wood-fired ovens and barbecues.
 3. Wine and food pairing offered to the general public is allowed between the hours of 10am and 5pm. Showcasing site or locally grown foods is encouraged.
 4. Sale of pre-packaged foods is allowed.
 5. All food service requires appropriate health permits under existing County regulations.

6. Facilities

1. Visitor serving areas: The area under roof dedicated to public tasting facilities does not exceed 2500 square feet. This does not include outdoor areas or space dedicated to uses such as kitchens, bathrooms, barrel rooms, storage or seated tasting.
2. New projects with proposed case production that fits with the scale of existing wineries in the Dry Creek Valley will be viewed favorably. Permitted case production for existing wineries in the Dry Creek Valley ranges from 500 cases to 350,000 annually. Eighty percent of the wineries in Dry Creek Valley fall in the range of 3,600 to 30,000 permitted cases. Larger projects will be considered based on compensating factors such as parcel size, road access and proximity to major highways.
3. Facilities are sited to minimize visual impact. Projects with buildings and landscaping that are of an appropriate scale to the area will be considered favorably.
4. Nighttime lighting levels are at the minimum necessary to provide for security and safety of the use and users. Exterior lighting that minimizes glare and spillover onto neighboring parcels will be considered favorably.
5. Marketing accommodations for private guests are allowed, provided that the use promotes, or markets agricultural products grown or processed on the site, the scale of the use is appropriate to the production and/or processing use and no commercial use of private guest accommodations is allowed (i.e. rental fees are not charged).

7. Local Focus

The community of Dry Creek Valley is dedicated to promoting local agriculture and wine grape processing. Projects that acquire agricultural products grown locally, specifically from Dry Creek Valley and Sonoma County, are preferred.

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1. New wineries that use at least 75% of grapes from Sonoma County will be viewed favorably.
2. Projects that use local foods from Dry Creek Valley and Sonoma County for visitor serving uses and projects that dedicate acreage for diversified agriculture will be viewed favorably.

8. Concentration

Different areas within the Dry Creek Valley are distinct in terms of concentration of residents, wineries and other developed uses, so it is difficult to establish specific limits. Requests for new use permits that take density into consideration and seek to reduce the impact on nearby existing wineries or residences will be viewed more favorably. Such factors as the proximity to other wineries, residences and intersections will be considered. In general, projects that are not clustered around existing developed uses or are closer to major highways will be viewed as more favorable.

Section 5. Suggested Best Practices

The applicant has met or offered to meet at least once with neighbors to describe and hear reactions to their plans.

1. This includes all neighbors who are likely to be impacted by the project.
2. Best practice suggests that multiple meetings over the course of the planning process are most effective, with one meeting very early in the project before plans are developed in detail.

Section 6. Definitions

A. Maximum Persons at One Time

The Maximum Persons at One Time is defined in each use permit as the total visitors on the site at one time. This number is set on a case-by-case basis in each use permit using a combination of the following factors:

1. Septic system capacity
2. On-site parking as follows:
 - a. 1 space for each employee
 - b. 1 space for every 2.5 visitors
3. Road access
4. Building occupancy levels as authorized by the Fire Department

B. Activities

1. **Public Sales Activities** are defined as wine tasting, tours, wine and food educational pairings, seminars and other hospitality related activities supporting the promotion of wine sales that are open to the public.

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- a. Will not exceed the Maximum Persons at One Time limit established in the use permit.
 - b. Do not require an invitation.
 - c. A fee may be charged.
 - d. May be advertised to consumers.
2. **Direct Sales Activities** are defined as by-invitation activities such as winemaker lunches or dinners, release days or pickup parties designed to promote the sale of agricultural products.
- a. Will not exceed the Maximum Persons at One Time limit established in the use permit.
 - b. A fee may be charged.
 - c. Invitations may be issued using such methods as mail, email, websites or social media.
3. **Trade Marketing Activities** are defined as by-invitation activities for staff, trade or distribution partners.
- a. Will not exceed the Maximum Persons at One Time limit established in the use permit.
 - b. Are not advertised to the consumers.

C. Events

1. **Association Sponsored Events** (often referred to as Industry Events) are defined as events sponsored by a recognized organization to promote wine sales and tourism, conducted across multiple sites within a specified geographic area.
 - a. Events will meet the requirements and follow the best practices of the association sponsoring the event.
 - b. Have adequate mitigation plans for septic and parking if they exceed the Maximum Persons at One Time limit.
 - c. Parking along public roadways is not allowed.
 - d. Limited to tasting room hours only.
2. **Other Agricultural Promotional Events** are those events that are expected to exceed the Maximum Persons at One Time limit.
 - a. Invitations may be issued (using such methods as mail, email, websites or social media).
 - b. Must be explicitly requested in the use permit specifying the number of events annually and the maximum size of each event.
 - c. Require adequate mitigation plans for septic and parking if the visitors expected exceed the Maximum Persons at One Time limit. Parking along public roadways is not allowed.

EXHIBIT “B”
CHAPTER 26. SONOMA COUNTY ZONING REGULATIONS
ARTICLE 18. AGRICULTURE AND RESOURCE-BASED USE STANDARDS

26-18-260 – Winery Standards

- A. Purpose. This Section 26-18-260 provides a greater level of detail for the desired character of development in areas zoned LIA - Land Intensive Agriculture, LEA - Land Extensive Agriculture, and DA - Diverse Agriculture. For the areas zoned LIA, LEA, and DA, this Section 26-18-260 identifies procedures and criteria applicable to new or modified use permit applications for winery visitor serving activities and winery events. The Standards in this division shall be referred to as “Winery Standards.”
- B. Applicable Areas. The provisions of this section apply to parcels zoned LIA – Land Intensive Agriculture, LEA-Land Extensive Agriculture, and DA -Diverse Agriculture. For split-zoned parcels, the provisions of this section apply to the portion of the parcel zoned for any of the agricultural zoning districts listed above.
- C. Local Advisory Guidelines. Citizen advisory councils/commissions established by the Board of Supervisors review projects subject to this section in accordance with their adopted local advisory guidelines, and make advisory recommendations to the Permit and Resource Management Department, Board of Zoning Adjustments, Planning Commission, and Board of Supervisors.
- D. Terms and phrases used in this section are defined as follows:
1. **Catering Kitchen** means a facility used for the preparation of food to be served in conjunction with winery visitor-serving activities and/or winery events. A catering kitchen associated with a winery and/or tasting room can include warming ovens, sinks and refrigeration, but no stove top, grill or range hood.
 2. **Commercial Kitchen** means a facility used for the preparation of food to be served in conjunction with winery visitor-serving activities and/or winery events. A commercial kitchen associated with a winery and/or tasting room can include counter space, sinks, microwave oven(s), warming oven(s), refrigeration, a stove or range, grill and an exhaust hood, and outdoor equipment such as pizza ovens or barbecues.
 3. **Food and Wine Pairing** means providing samples or tastes of site-grown or locally-grown food products that are showcased with different wines.
 4. **Rural Area** means any area not located within an urban service area designated on the General Plan Land Use Map.
 5. **Winery** means an agricultural processing facility that converts fruit into wine. Wineries may include crush areas, production rooms, case goods and barrel storage, tank rooms, warehouses, bottling lines, laboratories, administrative offices, tasting rooms, event space, commercial kitchen, and catering kitchen.
 6. **Winery Events** means events held at wineries and tasting rooms for the purpose of promoting and marketing agricultural products grown or processed in the County. Winery events are secondary and incidental to agricultural production activities occurring onsite and/or in the area and are consistent with General Plan Policy AR-

6d. There are two types of winery events: Agricultural Promotional Events and Industry-Wide Events.

7. **Agricultural Promotional Events** are directly related to public education, sales and promotion of agricultural products to consumers, including but not limited to: winemaker lunches, dinners, release parties, and wine club parties and similar events.
8. **Industry-Wide Events** are promotional activities sponsored by a recognized wine industry association that may involve multiple wineries and/or tasting rooms. Industry-wide events are held within a specified geographic area, during regular tasting room hours, and may last up to 3 consecutive days.
9. **Wine Trade Partners** means distributors, wine trade buyers, restaurant owners and their representatives, winery or tasting room owner(s), winery employees, and tasting room employees.
10. **Winery Visitor Serving Activities** means visitor serving activities that are part of normal winery and wine tasting room business operations. There are two types of winery visitor-serving activities: Sales Activities and Wine Trade Activities.
11. **Sales Activities** are wine tasting, pickup parties, tours, seminars and other hospitality related activities that support the promotion of wine sales.
12. **Wine Trade Activities** are by-invitation meetings, seminars, harvest parties and similar activities attended only by wine trade partners and are not advertised to the consumer.

E. Operating Standards.

1. Winery Visitor Serving Activities. Winery visitor serving activities are considered part of normal winery and tasting room business operations. All winery visitor serving activities must be consistent with the hours of operation, maximum number of guests allowed, building occupancy limits, and operational requirements specified in the use permit.
2. Winery Events. Winery events must be consistent with the hours of operation, maximum number of event days, maximum number of guests allowed, building occupancy limits, and operational requirements specified in the use permit.
3. Sizing of winery visitor serving activities and winery events, and maximum number of event days is based upon a variety of factors specific to the site and surrounding uses, including, but not limited to, septic capacity, available water supply, emergency access, availability of on-site parking, noise attenuation, increased risk of harm to people or property as a result of hazards, and the potential for negative cumulative effects related to noise, traffic, and water supplies.
4. Hours of Operation. The maximum hours of operation for winery visitor serving activities and winery events are specified below, unless further limited by the use permit.
 - a. Tasting Rooms. Regular business hours for tasting rooms are 10 am - 5 pm.

- b. Winery Visitor Serving Activities. The maximum hours of operation for winery visitor-serving activities are specified below by activity type.
 - (1) Sales Activities: 10 am – 5 pm.
 - (2) Wine Trade Activities: 8 am – 10 pm.
- c. Winery Events. The maximum hours of operation for events are specified below by event type.
 - (1) Agricultural Promotional Events may occur during the hours of 10 am – 10 pm, with all cleanup occurring no later than between 9:30 pm – 10 pm.
 - (2) Industry-wide Events may occur during the hours of 10 am – 5 pm.
- 5. Wineries and tasting rooms shall not be rented out to third parties for events.
- 6. On-Site Parking. The following on-site parking is required for wineries and tasting rooms:
 - a. 1 parking space per 2.5 guests and 1 space per employee. The parking standard may be reduced in accordance with Article 86. - Parking Regulations Sec. 26-86-010 (i).
 - b. Use of on-site unimproved overflow parking areas or shuttling may be allowed to accommodate winery events, if specified in the use permit.
 - c. Overflow parking and shuttling shall not be used to accommodate parking for winery visitor serving activities.
 - d. No parking is permitted along any public or private roadways or on shared vineyard roads.
- 7. Food Service. Food service is allowed as specified below.
 - a. All food service must be designed to promote and enhance marketing of wine. Food service shall be secondary and incidental to agricultural production, wine sales and education.
 - b. Operating the food service area as a restaurant, café, delicatessen or any food service offering cooked-to-order food is prohibited.
 - c. Food and wine pairings featuring local foods and food products is allowed in conjunction with winery visitor serving activities and winery events.
 - d. Prepared meals featuring local foods and food products is allowed in conjunction with wine trade activities and winery events.

- e. Retail sales of pre-packaged food in conjunction with wine tasting is allowed subject to the following limitations:
 - (1) Retail sale of pre-packaged food featuring local foods and food products is allowed during the regular business hours identified in the use permit.
 - (2) Retail sale of pre-packaged food is allowed for on-site consumption only. Outdoor seating areas may be allowed for use as outdoor picnic areas.
 - (3) Indoor seating area or table service in conjunction with retail sales of pre-packaged food is prohibited.
 - (4) Off-site signs advertising retail sales of pre-packaged food are prohibited.

- 8. Event Coordination and Traffic Management.
 - a. On-Site Coordinator. An on-site coordinator is required to address complaints about winery events both during and following an event. The on-site Coordinator shall:
 - (1) Ensure that the winery's website prominently lists a telephone number for the public to make event-related complaints; and
 - (2) Send an annual notice to owners and occupants of lots within 300 feet of the winery/tasting room lot boundaries to provide the "complaint hotline" telephone number.

 - b. Traffic Management Plan. Traffic management and parking plans are required to address the maximum number of people visiting during winery visitor serving activities and winery events. For events exceeding 100 participants and for events that require use of overflow parking, the traffic management plan shall include the following:
 - (1) Provisions for event coordination to avoid local traffic delays.
 - (2) Parking attendants for each day of the event.
 - (3) A shuttle plan, if shuttling is requested, to support each day of the event. A convenient and secure "park and ride" area must be provided.
 - (4) A plan for on-site parking requirements and queuing of traffic.
 - (5) Enforcement of the on-street parking restrictions.
 - (6) Subsequent changes to the approved Traffic Management Plan shall be submitted in advance to the Permit and Resource Management Department.

- 9. Noise Attenuation Setbacks. Noise is attenuated by distance from the noise source. To ensure compliance with the Sonoma County General Plan Noise Element thresholds for maximum allowable exterior noise exposure levels, winery visitor serving activities and winery events shall meet the required setbacks provided in Table 18-2 below:

Table 18-2: Required Noise Attenuation Setbacks

Noise generating land use	Setback measured from the exterior property line of any adjacent noise sensitive land use
Parking lots	450 feet
Outdoor areas involving groups of people or non-amplified music (i.e. acoustic)	625 feet
Outdoor areas involving amplified music, or loud instruments such as brass instruments, horns, or drums	1,600 feet

Exceptions to the setbacks listed in Table 18-2 above may be allowed when a project-specific noise study prepared in accordance with the Permit and Resource Management Department Guidelines for the Preparation of Noise Analysis determines the project will comply with the Sonoma County General Plan Noise Element due to intervening structures or natural features, available open land on noise sensitive parcels, or by incorporating noise mitigation measures.



Winery Use Permit Policy, Parameters & Definitions

Section 1 – Background

Winery

The establishment and operation of a winery involves many levels of regulation and compliance as it involves the production of an alcoholic beverage subject to state and federal excise tax.

Permits are required from the federal Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau (Bonded Winery Permit) and the California Alcoholic Beverage Commission (Winegrower – Type 02 License). This license defines the allowable operations to include:

- the conversion of fruit into wine,
- the sale of wine to consumers for consumption on the licensed property,
- the sale of wine to consumers to remove from the licensed property,
- the sale of wine to licensed retail and restaurants for resale to their customers,
- the sale of wine to licensed distributors for resale to licensed retail and restaurants, and
- the sale of wine to licensed distillers or vinegar producers.

Sonoma County General Plan

The Sonoma County General Plan (in its Agricultural Resources Elements) has many goals, objectives and policies specifically supporting the multi-generational agricultural heritage of Sonoma County and the stabilization of the farmer's economic situation. These goals represent the growing of agricultural crops, the processing of the crop as well as the sales and marketing of the product. Wineries are part of that processing.

Specific goals of note include:

- **GOAL AR-4:** Allow farmers to manage their operations in an efficient, economic manner with minimal conflict with nonagricultural uses.
- **GOAL AR-9:** Provide agricultural permit processing procedures that are rapid and efficient.

Specific policies of note include:

- **Policy AR-4a:** The primary use of any parcel within the three agricultural land use categories shall be agricultural production and related processing, support services, and visitor serving uses. Residential uses in these areas shall recognize that the primary use of the land may create traffic and agricultural nuisance situations, such as flies, noise, odors, and spraying of chemicals.
- **Policy AR-4d:** Apply the provisions of the Right to Farm Ordinance to all lands designated within agricultural land use categories.
- **Policy AR-8b:** Encourage programs for promotion and marketing of agricultural products grown in the County

Sonoma County Zoning Code

The Sonoma County Zoning Code describes the uses allowed by right in the Land Use Designations described in the General Plan as well as those uses allowed by application for and approval of a Conditional Use Permit (CUP). The CUP outlines the conditions for approval and helps to mitigate and protect underlying goals and policies of the General Plan.

Wineries and Tasting Rooms are allowed by Conditional Use Permit in the three major agricultural land use designations: Land Intensive Agriculture (LIA) Sec 26-04-020; Land Extensive Agriculture (LEA) Sec 26-06-020; and Diverse Agriculture (DA) Sec 26-08-020.

Winery Business Activities

As described in Winery above, a Winery is permitted to sell its products through several channels from directly to a consumer, to a distributor in another state. The General Plan Policy AR-8b “encourages programs for promotion and marketing of agricultural products”. This today results in a wide range of sales, marketing and promotion activities associated with a Winery that are a normal part of managing the business.

All wineries, even those without public tasting rooms, must engage in these business activities to survive and be viable.

Non-Winery Events

A Winery is an attractive site for reasons of its location in an agricultural region, its association with food and wine and, very often, interesting architecture and design. As such, these sites are often sought out for events not related to the Winery operation or its sales and marketing of its products.

Section 2 - Parameters

Consideration of an application for a Conditional Use Permit for Winery operation recognizes and incorporates three specific parameters for operation:

- **Production:** This parameter sets the production limits of the winery in terms of cases per year and is determined by facility capacity and production area.
- **Hours:** This parameter sets the hours that the winery may operate and recognizes Production Hours, Business Hours, and Public Access/Serving Hours
- **Capacity:** This parameter sets the Maximum Persons at One Time allowed at the winery, and is determined by floor area, parking, septic, site area and access.

Additional parameters related to compliance with other regulatory agencies including water, hazardous materials, public works/roads, access, and public health are also incorporated into the Conditional Use Permit.

Section 3 - Guidelines

Rather than attempting to lock in a particular business model, a Conditional Use Permit should instead speak to the Winery's impactful usage: Production Activities, Public-Serving Activities (those activities open to the public), and Business Activities (activities limited to staff, consultants, and sales partners). This will enable the Winery to evolve its business while ensuring that it remains a good neighbor.

The following guidelines will be followed in the review and approval of the application:

1. Non-Winery Events event may be limited in the Conditional Use Permit as to number and may be subject to additional mitigation.
2. Activities outside of the parameters of Hours and Capacity, as well as Public-Serving Activities that are not Winery-specific (such as industry events) without respect to Hours and Capacity, may be limited in the Conditional Use Permit as to number and may be subject to additional mitigation.
3. Business Activities within the parameter of Capacity but outside of Hours are not limited in Conditional Use Permit but may be subject to additional mitigation.
4. Winery-specific Public-Serving Activities within the parameter of Hours but outside of Capacity are not limited in the Conditional Use Permit as to number but may be subject to additional mitigation such as porta potties, parking attendants, offsite parking or provided transportation.
5. Any Activity occurring within the parameters of relevant Hours and, where applicable, Capacity is not limited in the Conditional Use Permit.

Specific Area Guidelines

Sonoma County has identified three areas that have asked for and received special attention in the formation of a Citizens Advisory Committee to develop, review and recommend specific guidelines for that area. They include Dry Creek Valley, Sonoma Valley and Westside Road (pending). Consideration of a Conditional Use Permit for a Winery in one of these areas are subject to recommended guidelines developed for that area but will not be less rigid than the Guidelines described above. No authority is delegated to Citizen Advisory Committees to modify standards or regulations set forth in the General Plan or Zoning Ordinance.

Section 4 – Definitions

Winery

Facilities and equipment for the conversion of fruit into wine and engage in the production and sale of wine (from CA ABC).

Maximum Persons at One Time (MPOT)

Maximum Persons at One Time is the total number of people that can be accommodated on site based on standard calculations of floor area, parking spaces, septic and ingress/egress constraints. The number shall be spelled out in the Use Permit Application.

Business Hours

Business Hours are the hours that normal winery business is conducted on site covering issues of operations, finance & accounting, human resources, and sales & marketing. Business Hours will be spelled out in the Use Permit Application.

Public Access/Serving Hours

Public Access/Serving Hours are the hours that the winery is open to the public and may offer public tasting and sales of wine to the public. Public Access/Serving Hours may include weekend hours and be adjusted seasonally to reflect Daylight Savings Time. Public Access/Serving Hours will be spelled out in the Use Permit Application.

Production Hours

Production Hours are the hours of winery production and reflect the necessity of production activity based on harvest issues. Production Hours will be spelled out in the Use Permit Application.

Winery Business Activities

Winery Business Activities are any activities taking place at the winery within Business Hours, not open to the public, specifically focused on the production, sale and promotion of wine (an agricultural product), and are within the MPOT described in the Use Permit Application.

Winery Business Activities include, but are not limited to: business to business meetings, trade partner/distributor meetings, sales meetings, wine trade events, wine education/seminars, trade tours and tastings, media tours & tastings, grower relations meetings, employee appreciation activities, and industry receptions. Food including meals may be served in conjunction with these activities as described in "Food Service" below.

In addition, Business Activities include administrative activities such as staff meetings, accounting and finance, and human resources.

Public Access/Serving Activities

Public Access/Serving Activities are any activities taking place at the winery during Public Access Sales Hours open to the public, specifically focused on the sale and promotion of wine (an agricultural product), and are within the MPOT described in the Use Permit Application.

Public Access/Serving Activities include but are not limited to: wine tasting, wine club pick up, new releases, open house, food & wine education, tours & tastings and, tasting room sales.

Food, including meals may be served in conjunction with these activities as described in "Food Service" below.

Non-Winery Events

Non-Winery Activities are any activities that are not directly associated with the sales and marketing of the wine produced at the Winery. Non-Winery Activities will be limited by the Use Permit and may have restrictions on number, hours, and amplified music. Non-Winery Activities will require evidence of mitigation of impacts in the form of notice to neighbors, additional parking, parking attendants, or portable toilets.

Non-Winery Activities include political and charitable fundraising activities; association sponsored events; corporate events and weddings.

Amplified Sound

All activities on a permitted winery are subject to the Noise Element of the Sonoma County General Plan.

Food Service

Food Service is the service of food specifically prepared and paired with the service of the wine in conjunction with Business Activities and Public Access/Serving Activities. Meal Service may be provided by Third Party Vendors (caterers or food trucks) or by onsite kitchens. Third Party Vendors must have required permits from County Public Health. onsite kitchens are subject to compliance with County Public Health as conditioned in the Use Permit.

Food Service is allowed as part of Business Activities and Public Access/Serving Activities.

Effect of Winery Parameters and Definitions

The parameters and definitions provided herein apply to prospectively to new winery applications. There is no intent to render any existing winery use non-conforming.

July 27, 2020

DRAFT SONOMA VALLEY WINERY GUIDELINES

Purpose

The purpose of the Sonoma Valley Winery Guidelines (“Guidelines”) is to provide a local framework for evaluating new or modified use permit applications on land that is zoned Agricultural (DA, LIA, LEA). The intention of these Guidelines is to protect Agricultural Zones, to advise how much winery-related activity is allowed on these lands, and to minimize cumulative impacts.

The Guidelines identify evaluation criteria that will be considered by the Sonoma County Citizens Advisory Commission (SVCAC) when considering projects located in Sonoma Valley that are applying for a permit (such as a new winery use permit or modification of an existing use permit). The SVCAC will use the Guidelines to provide advisory recommendations to the Permit Sonoma staff, as well as the Board of Zoning Adjustments, Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors when considering these permit applications.

The Guidelines are also intended to advise applicants on the design of their projects and on the events-related facilities and programs when preparing a use permit application. Each project is regarded as unique in the evaluation process, and each will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis by the SVCAC and by Permit Sonoma.

Siting Criteria

I. Winery Facilities Siting Criteria

A. Access

Public roadways of at least 18’ in width are preferred. The following will be considered with regard to access:

1. **Ingress/Egress.** Is there adequate ingress and egress to the property?
2. **Sight Distance.** Are there adequate sight distances at ingress/egress points to the site?
3. **Peak Capacity.** Can the peak volume of expected visitors enter and exit the property safely without significant traffic backup on public roadways?

Traffic impact analyses shall assess impacts based on project-generated trips as well as a scenario where project-generated trips are inflated by 20% to account for cumulative impacts in the Sonoma Valley concentration area.

B. Setbacks

The following issues will be considered when evaluating the appropriate setback distance from property lines for winery facilities:

1. **Minimum Distance.** Setbacks will be site specific, however a minimum setback to meet the County noise standards at the property lines is required for smaller parcels.
2. **Noise Attenuation.** When considering the proposed activity and intensity of use, setbacks shall be adequate to maintain a 65 db noise standard at the property line. Noise attenuation strategies, including setbacks from property lines and noise muffling interventions, may be combined to meet this standard, however permanent structures and installations for noise muffling must meet Scenic Corridor and Scenic Resource requirements.
3. **Visual Impacts.** Facilities should be sited to minimize visual impact, especially in scenic areas/corridors. Setback distances shall be designed to ensure that the visual impacts of the new facilities are minimized.
4. **Lighting.** Nighttime lighting levels shall be limited to what is necessary to provide security and safety for users. Setbacks shall be sufficient to limit light visibility from public travel ways and to maintain the rural and scenic qualities of the Sonoma Valley. Exterior lighting shall be consistent with Dark Sky standards (e.g. low mounted, downward casting and fully shielded to prevent glare).

II. Tasting Room Siting Criteria

A. Minimum Parcel Size

The minimum parcel size that is required to qualify for a tasting room on land zoned Agricultural is 10 acres. An exception may be made to this minimum when the applicant is a small agricultural producer and when the project is not located in a concentrated area.

B. Maximum Site Area for Tasting Room and Tasting Associated Areas

Experience indicates that tasting rooms can attract increased visitation to an area, and can result in nuisances related to noise, traffic, and site development. When evaluating applications, the SVCAC shall make a recommendation to Permit Sonoma staff and decision-making bodies based on the following considerations:

1. **Rural Character.** In general, the character of the project shall be compatible with the density and intensity of existing developments within 500 feet of the project. For larger properties where the 500 foot limit may not reach beyond the property line, the character of the proposed development shall be compared with the character of existing development on the nearest 5 parcels in all direction of the subject property.
2. **Design and Location.** When considering the parcel size, the level of agricultural production, and the scenic qualities of the property frontage, SVCAC shall consider whether the requested size, location, and design of the tasting room is appropriate.

3. **Maximum Area:** Table 1 below summarizes how the acreage allowed for Accessory Winery Uses should be calculated taking into account parcels of various sizes in the Agricultural Zones in Sonoma County.

The calculations in Table 1 for the area allowed in Accessory Winery Uses on any given parcel are based on the size of the parcel and apply the following methodology:

- a. Up to 25% of the gross parcel size is allowed for the first 10 acres of the parcel.
- b. Ten percent (10%) of the gross parcel size may be added based on the portion of the acreage that is in excess of 10 acres.
- c. A maximum of 6.5 acres for any parcel can be used for accessory uses.
- d. Acreage for ponds is not included for the purpose of these calculations.
- e. Of the total of a. and b. above, no more than 70% may be used for production, office space, parking, etc. and no more than 30% may be used for hospitality, such as tasting rooms, food and wine pairing, event space, parking, etc.

Table 1 reflects these calculations, and shows the resulting acreage allowances for varying sizes of parcel in the Agricultural zones.

Table 1: Maximum Percentage of Accessory Winery Uses Allowed per Parcel Acreage

Parcel Acres	Max Total Percent in Accessory Use	Max Total Acres in Accessory Use	Accessory Production Use (70%)	Accessory Promotional Use (30%)	Max Total Acres in Production/Promotional Accessory Uses
First 10 acres	25%	2.5	18%	8%	1.75/0.75
10.01 acres to 50 acres	10%	4.0	7%	3%	2.8/1.2
50 acres or larger	Capped at maximums for a 50-acre parcel				
TOTAL		6.5			4.55/1.95
Examples by Parcel Acreage		Max Total Acres in Accessory Use			Max Total Acres in Production/Promotional Accessory Uses
3		0.75			0.53/0.23
9		2.25			1.58/0.68
15		3.00			2.1/0.9
40		5.50			3.85/1.65
120		6.50			4.55/1.95
300		6.50			4.55/1.95

C. **Number of Tasting Rooms.** Production has an effect on the size and number of tasting rooms that are appropriate to support the operation of wine facilities of various sizes. Larger wineries with a higher annual case production and a higher number of guests per day may have both a public tasting room and one or more private tasting rooms, the total number of which shall be determined in the Use Permit on a case-by-case basis.

D. **On-Site Parking**

The following on-site parking is required for tasting rooms and winery events:

1. 1 space per 250 square feet; plus
2. 1 space per 2.5 guests and 1 space per employee.
 - o The employee parking requirement may be reduced for wineries that implement an employee commuter program. Reductions will be assessed on a case-by-case basis. If at any point an approved employee commuter program is discontinued, the winery shall be required to meet the standard parking requirements for employee parking specified in the Guidelines.
3. Where events are proposed that could exceed the parking provided on-site, shuttle service shall be provided to transfer guests to and from off-street parking locations. Shuttles from off-site public parking areas are encouraged, but not required, for all events with over 50 guests.
4. No parking is permitted along any public or private roadways or on shared vineyard roads.

E. **Separation Criteria**

Special consideration should be given to the separation that is required between facilities that are located in areas of the Sonoma Valley that are subject to winery event concentration. See the attached “Winery Event Concentration – Sonoma Valley map” for the current locations of such areas of concentration.

Winery Tasting Room and Events Operating Standards

I. Operations

A. Hours of Operation

1. The hours of operation for tasting rooms and industry-wide events shall be limited to 10 am-5 pm., except as follows:
 - a. Tasting rooms may apply for later hours, with approval to be decided on a case-by-case basis depending on site specifics and impacts. If a Tasting room proposes to operate past 5:00pm, applicant must demonstrate that the extended hours will :
 1. have a net positive effect, or no effect, on traffic in the area;

2. occur in areas which have adequate setbacks to neighboring residences;
 3. not impact the dinner hour at neighboring residences.
2. The hours of operation for Agricultural Promotion Events and Private Events shall be limited to 10am-10pm, with the following conditions:
 - a. If the event is in close proximity to neighboring residences, all cleanup after the events shall occur between 9:30 and 10 pm.
 - b. If the event is not within close proximity to residences, then clean up may occur between 10 and 10:30 pm. If complaints are received regarding noise after 10 pm, then clean-up must be rescheduled to prior to 10 pm.
 3. The hours of operation for Wine Trade Events shall be limited to 8am to10pm (9:30-10pm cleanup)

B. Food Service

Food service is allowed for wine and food pairings or in conjunction with activities and events. More specifically:

1. The primary activity in the tasting room shall be wine tasting related to wine sales and wine marketing, not dining.
2. All food service shall be designed to support the wine experience, and food service shall be secondary to wine sales and education.
3. Operating the food service area as a restaurant is prohibited
4. Catering and commercial kitchens are acceptable only when approved in the Use Permit. As preparation areas for the food service allowed in the Use Permit, they may include indoor or outdoor equipment such as stoves, wood-fired ovens and barbeques.
5. Sale of pre-packaged foods in conjunction with wine tasting is allowed subject to County limitations.
6. Prepared meals or appetizers featuring local foods and food products may be offered in conjunction with agricultural promotional events, such as wine club parties, and winemaker dinners, and with food and wine pairings. Such meals/appetizers may be provided by a licensed caterer or prepared in the approved commercial kitchen located in the location in the winery building shown on the project floor plan.
7. Daytime food and wine pairings may occur during tasting room hours subject to the following conditions:
 - a. Food and wine pairings shall be as selected by the winery, with no menu options allowed.
 - b. Food served with pairings shall be limited to small appetizer-size portions.
 - c. Winery shall not engage in any pre-advertisement of the menu.

C. Food and Wine Pairing

When food and wine pairing is allowed in the evening after 5pm, it is considered an Agricultural Promotional Event under these guidelines and is allowed only when

requested in the use permit application and approved, subject to the following conditions:

1. Food and wine pairings must be selected by the winery, with no menu options allowed.
2. Food pairings must be limited to small appetizer-like portions that showcase site-grown or locally-grown foods.

D. Private Guest Accommodations

Private marketing accommodations and agricultural farmstays are allowed as regulated by the Sonoma County Zoning Ordinance.

II. Events

A. Agricultural Promotional Events.

The purpose of agricultural promotional events is to promote local agricultural products grown or processed on-site or the local area. When phased projects are approved, the promotional events shall at all times be subordinate to the winery production itself. See Table 2 in Section II.E. for the maximum number of Agricultural Promotion Events allowed under these Guidelines.

B. Events Other Than Agricultural Promotional Events

Annual private events, such as fundraisers, and concerts, may be permitted if requested and approved in the winery use permit subject to the following conditions:

1. Occasional cultural events-may be permitted with a cultural event permit and are limited to up to four (4) times per year, but for no more than two (2) years in a row.
2. Private and cultural events planning in concentration areas should take into account events at other wineries and the commercial venues in the area to reduce impacts.
3. Sizing of the event should be based upon event space capacity, septic capacity, available water supply, safe access to and from the site, on-site parking, noise mitigation, etc.
4. Renting of winery facilities as a venue for events staged or operated by others is not allowed.
5. See Table 2 in Section II.E. for the maximum number of annual private events allowed under these Guidelines

C. Industry-wide Events (Association Sponsored)

Since most industry-wide event last for 2-3 days, and usually occur over a weekend, the number of industry-wide events is stated in terms of “event days”. Each participating tasting room is limited to the total number of event-days specified in the Use Permit. Industry-wide events shall:

1. Meet the requirements, and follow the best practices, of the association sponsoring the event.

2. Have adequate mitigation plans for septic and parking when septic capacity and the required number of parking spaces when the maximum number of guests are exceeded for these larger events as approved in the use permit.
3. Parking along public roadways is not allowed.
4. See Table 2 in Section II.E. for the maximum number of Industry-wide Events allowed under these Guidelines.

D. On-Site Coordinator

All activities and events must be hosted by the proprietor or have on-site management by the proprietor's staff. A designated person on the proprietor's staff must be available at all times during the events to address complaints or resolve problems. The On-Site Coordinator shall:

1. provide a telephone number listed on the winery's own website through which neighbors and members of the public will have a direct way to make any complaints; and
2. send out a notice to site neighbors to inform them that the "complaint hot line" is available should they wish to call.

E. Maximum Number of Events

These Guidelines recognize that there is already a considerable over-concentration of winery event activity in place in the Kenwood, Cornerstone, and Glen Ellen areas of the Sonoma Valley, and that special provisions need to be made in those areas to limit the impacts and cumulative effects of such over-concentration.

Table 2, therefore, provides a summary of the standards that should be applied in over-concentrated areas as compared with the standards to be applied in areas not yet subject to overconcentration in the Sonoma Valley. The shaded areas on Table 2 show where the guideline standards differ depending on whether a project is inside, or outside, of a concentrated area.

Table 2: Permitted Hours and Maximum Number of Events per Event Type

Event or Activity Type:	Event-days and hours in Concentrated Areas:	Event-days and hours Outside of Concentrated Areas:
Public Agricultural Promotional and Direct Sales:		
Permitted Hours:	10am – 5pm	10am-5pm
Agricultural Promotional Direct Sales Outside of Regular Hours:		
Permitted Hours:	5pm-10pm (9:30-10pm cleanup)	5pm-10pm (9:30-10pm cleanup)
Maximum Number of Events	12/year, max 2/month	24/year, max 3/month
Wine Trade:		
Permitted Hours:	5pm - 10pm (9:30-10pm cleanup)	5pm - 10pm (9:30-10pm cleanup)
Maximum Number of Events	4/year	8/year
Industry-wide:		
Permitted Hours:	10am – 5pm and until 10pm (including clean-up) if permitted in use permit	10am – 5pm and until 10pm (including clean-up) if permitted in use permit
Maximum Number of Events	12 event days/year	12 event days/year
Private Events:		
Permitted Hours:	10am - 10pm (9:30-10PM cleanup)	8am - 10pm (9:30-10PM cleanup)
Maximum Number of Events	2 event days/quarter, or Events outside of regular hours: 2 event days/year	2 event days/quarter, or Events outside of regular hours: 8 event days/year
Cultural Events with Zoning Permit		
Permitted Hours:	10am – 10pm if permitted in zoning permit	10am – 10pm if permitted in zoning permit
Maximum Number of Events	4 event days/year; no more than two years in a row	4 event days/year; no more than two years in a row
Total Max. No. of Event Days	20 event days/year	44 event days/year

In its Use Permit application, the applicant may select the number of events in each category up to the maximum for that category, but the total combined number of event days for agricultural promotional events and for wine trade and industry-wide events combined shall not exceed the Total Maximum Number of Event Days listed in Table 2.

Private and cultural events approved for the site by special permit are not included in the calculation for the Total Maximum Number of Event Days.

III. Required Plans

A. Marketing Plan

Event coordination is the key to improving the over-concentration problem in the areas where it now, and should apply to all agricultural promotional, industry-wide, wine trade, private or special events.

Since the mid-1990s, the County has included a condition in all Use Permits for all newly approved wineries that requires the winery to comply with any event coordination program that may be adopted in the future. All new winery permits also carry this condition. The combined effect is that all winery-related use permits issued from the 1990s through the present already have this particular condition of approval.

A Marketing Plan is also required as a standard Condition of Approval in all new use permits. It should include provisions for event coordination, and require that all activities and events per calendar year be clearly described in the plan and enumerated in the use permit. Non-agricultural promotional events require a use or zoning permit.

In order to monitor the effects of the Marketing Plan, and to confirm that the plan is being followed, the Use Permit should require that data regarding the numbers of visitors from each winery event and the total tasting room attendance for the previous year be submitted to the County annually.

B. Traffic Management Plan

Traffic management and parking plans are standard conditions of approval for new and modifications of winery use permits. These plans should take into account the maximum number of people visiting the tasting room during tasting room hours as well as during agricultural promotional, industry-wide and private events.

Definitions

I. Types of Events

Agricultural Promotional Events

Agricultural promotional events are events that are held outside of regular tasting room hours, and are directly related to public education, sales and promotion of agricultural products to consumers, including but not limited to: winemaker lunches and dinners, release parties, and wine club parties and similar activities. These are the primary types of events permitted in agricultural and resource areas. The number of agricultural

promotional events and maximum number of guests allowed shall be as specified in the use permit.

1. Public Sales Activities

Public Sales Activities include wine tasting, tours, wine and food educational pairings, seminars and other hospitality related activities that support the promotion of wine sales, that are open to the public, and that:

- a. Will not exceed the maximum number of guests allowed in the use permit.
- b. Do not require an invitation to attend.
- c. May require payment of a fee to attend
- d. May be advertised to consumers.
- e. Are consistent with the hours of operation, occupancy limits and operational requirements required by the Use Permit.

2. Direct Sales Activities

Direct Sales Activities are defined as by-invitation activities such as winemaker lunches or dinners, release days or pickup parties that are designed to promote the sale of agricultural products, and that:

- a. Will not exceed the maximum number of guests allowed in the use permit.
- b. May require a fee to attend.
- c. Are by Invitations circulated by mail, email, websites or social media.

Industry-Wide Events (Association Sponsored)

Promotional activities are events that are sponsored by a recognized industry association, may involve multiple wineries or tasting rooms within a specified geographic area, and are generally held during regular tasting room hours. Where required, it will be the responsibility of the industry sponsor to apply for a cultural event permit for the event. Most industry-wide events last 2-3 days, usually over a weekend, so the number of industry-wide events is stated in terms of “event-days”. Each participating tasting room is limited to the total number of event days, as specified in the use permit.

Special Events

“Special event” when related to winery events is a term that was used in the 1990s before the term “agricultural promotional event” became common. Currently, a “special event” in Sonoma County is a specific event (bicycle race, marathon, parade, etc.) that occurs within a roadway right-of-way and requires an encroachment permit.

Therefore, where a “special event” is referenced in an approved use permit in the agricultural or resource zones of Sonoma County, it will be considered an “agricultural promotional event” for the purpose of these Guidelines

Private Events

Private events include charitable events, fundraisers, weddings, concerts and similar events. To be allowed, they shall be identified and described in the use permit, and the winery's marketing plan shall be specific about the number and size of allowed private events.

Cultural Events

Cultural Events are occasional events which attract a large gathering of people (35 or more people) such as parades, concerts, festivals, races, or any large gathering where there is amplified music, where promotion is by advertisement to the general public, or where a fee is charged to attend. A zoning permit is required (although there are exceptions), plus a Fire Permit. Cultural events are permitted no more than 4 event-days in any one-year period and they shall not occur for more than two years in a row.

Wine Industry Trade Events

Wine industry trade events include meetings, seminars, celebrations, parties and dinners that involve multiple trade partners, that do not exceed 35 attendees, and that occur outside normal winery hours or tasting room hours. Wine industry trade events must be requested and approved in the use permit if they are held outside and/or include amplified music or sound. Wine trade events that occur indoors without amplified music do not need to be included in the use permit.

Wine Trade Meetings

Wine trade meetings are by-invitation meetings or seminars with distributors, wine trade buyers, restaurant owners, and employees of the winery that occur during business hours, do not exceed 35 attendees, and are not advertised to the consumer. Wine Trade meetings are not counted as events if they do not create noise or traffic impacts

II. Winery Facilities

Winery

A winery is a building or property that produces wine, or a business involved in the production of wine. Wineries may include crush areas, production rooms, case goods and barrel storage, tank rooms, warehouses, bottling lines, laboratories-and administrative offices.

Tasting Room

A facility for the retail sales of wine, hard cider, or fruit distilled spirits made from locally grown agricultural products, in which samples or tastes of products are provided to consumers.

A wine tasting room in an agriculturally zoned area is connected to a licensed winery on the property that produces wine from Sonoma County and/or adjoining counties grapes,

at least some of which are grown on the property. It is a designated area, limited in size, and it is used as an accessory use to a winery.

Normal operating hours are 10am–5 pm. A later closing time may be allowed based upon site specifics and decided on a case-by-case basis. A custom crush facility may have a public tasting room for wines on site, but approval is site specific and decided on a case-by-case basis. With use permit approval, a wine tasting room that is located on a commercially zoned parcel may have operating hours that extend to 10pm.

Event Space

An area used for agricultural promotional and industry-wide events that is separate from the designated tasting room, but that provides samples or tastes of products to consumers during an event. An event space may be physically connected to a winery or it may be a legal separate structure on the property. Event space may also include outdoor event areas allowed in the Use Permit. Permitted private events may be held in event spaces.

If the land on which the winery is located is under the Williamson Act, no permanent structure dedicated to events shall be constructed or maintained on the contracted land per the Sonoma County Uniform Rules. If the land is not under the Williamson Act, hospitality events may be allowed in a separate building, but on a case-by-case basis as approved in the Use Permit.

Accessory Outdoor Space

An outdoor area that is dedicated to visitor-serving uses, such as picnic areas, during regular tasting room hours. It may be a patio under a roof, or an uncovered area with picnic tables. Visitors may use accessory space for sitting and for eating pre-packaged food and wine purchased in the tasting room. Accessory space is separate from the daytime food and wine pairing area.

Accessory Winery Uses

Accessory uses are divided into production, including office space, etc. and hospitality that includes tasting rooms, food and wine pairing, event space, etc. Only a limited percentage of the total winery parcel size may be dedicated to accessory uses as specified in Table 1 of these Guidelines. The actual percentages applied to agriculture and accessory uses will be dependent on site specific factors, such as traffic, setbacks, usable land, septic, water, etc.

Commercial Kitchen

A facility for the preparation of food to be served at winery dinners and trade events. A commercial kitchen includes a stove for cooking food used in wine pairing during tasting room hours and for full meals (like wine maker dinners) that are served after hours during an event approved in the winery's use permit. Restaurants are prohibited.

Catering Kitchen

A commercial kitchen that has warming ovens, sinks and refrigeration, but no stove top or range hood.

III. Winery Event Terms

Food Service

Food service at wineries is allowed in tasting rooms, and includes:

- a. retail sales of pre-packaged local food products, or
- b. samples or tastes of pre-packaged local food products offered in conjunction with wine tasting;
- c. food and wine pairing;
- d. prepared dinners or appetizers featuring local food products that are offered in conjunction with the agricultural promotional events that are approved in the use permit.

Food service must support the wine experience, and the food served must be secondary to the wine.

Food and Wine Pairing

Applies to the providing of samples or tastes of site-grown or locally-grown food products served in small appetizer–like portions that are showcased with different wines.

Locally Grown

Applies to agricultural products that are grown and produced within Sonoma County and/or on adjoining counties,(with exceptions made for years of fire, flood and disease). Agricultural products served on property zoned RRD (Resources and Rural Development) must be produced on site.

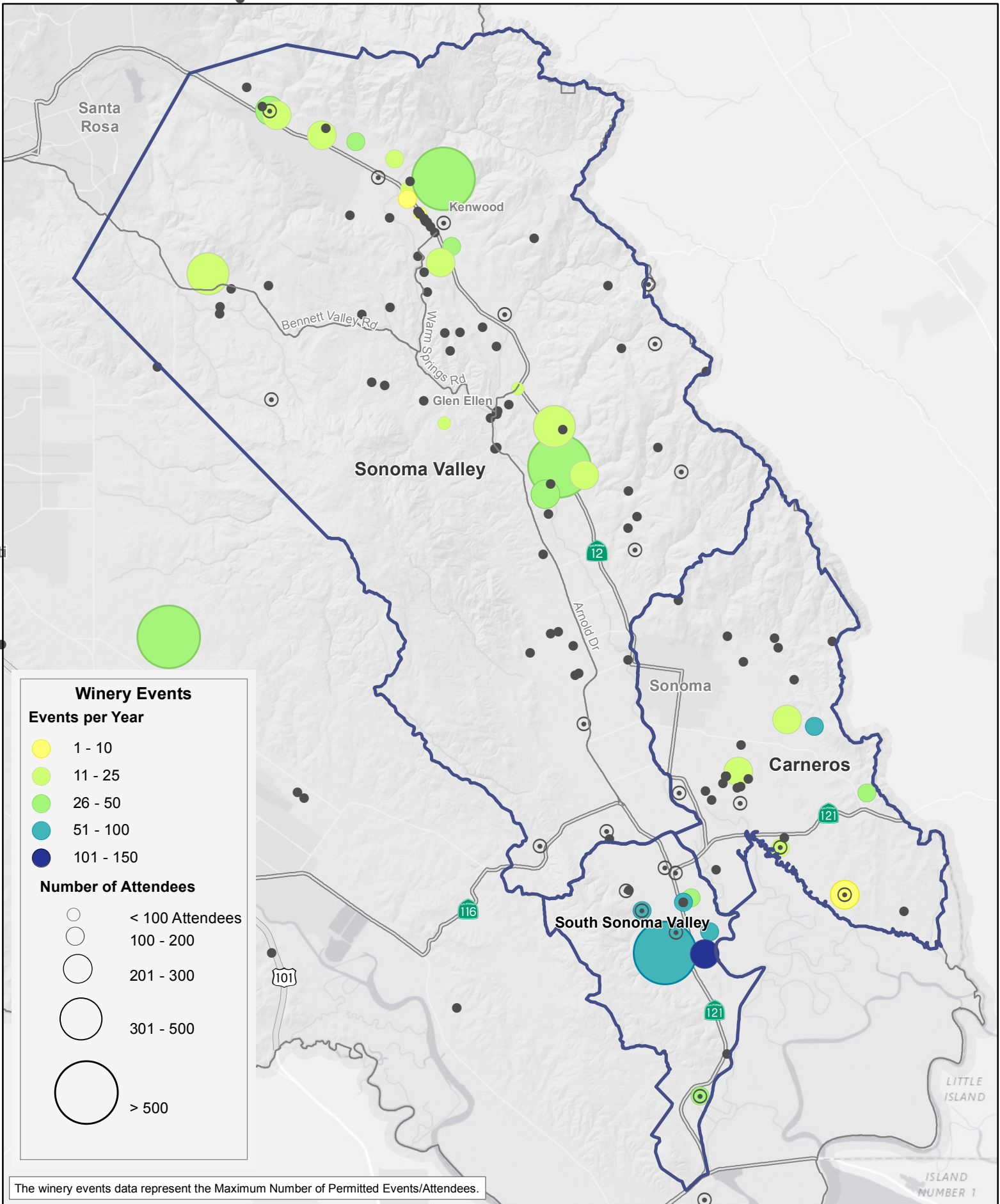
Wine Trade Partner

Wine trade partners are distributors, wine trade buyers, restaurant owners, and employees of the winery.

Over-Concentration

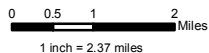
Over-concentration of visitor-serving and recreational uses can occur where several winery and winery-event facilities that are regularly conducting events are located in the same area or along the same route. An over-concentration of uses occurs when:

1. road conflicts occur where traffic conflicts with pedestrians, bicyclists and motorists from the local neighborhoods;
2. traffic levels exceed General Plan objectives on a specific or cumulative basis;
3. groundwater drawn to serve the facilities negatively impacts the aquifer and surrounding neighbor's wells; and
4. the uses are detrimental to rural character of the area.



Winery Event Concentration - Sonoma Valley

- Approved Winery
- Pending Winery
- ▭ Winery Event Concentration Area
- ▬ US Federal Highway
- ▬ State Highway
- ▬ Road



County of Sonoma
 Permit and Resource Management Department
 2550 Ventura Avenue, Santa Rosa, California 95403
 707-565-1900 FAX 707-565-1103



SVCAC AD HOC COMMITTEE DRAFT SONOMA VALLEY WINERY GUIDELINES

Purpose

The Sonoma Valley Winery Guidelines (“Guidelines”) provide a local framework for evaluating use permit applications on land that is zoned Agricultural (DA, LIA, LEA). The intention of these Guidelines is to protect Agricultural Zones by advising how much winery-related activity is allowed on these lands, and by managing these uses in a way that minimizes cumulative impacts.

The Guidelines identify criteria that will be used by the Sonoma County Citizens Advisory Commission (SVCAC). The Guidelines affect applicants for a new winery or modification to an existing winery. The SVCAC will use the Guidelines to make recommendations to the Permit Sonoma staff, as well as the Board of Zoning Adjustments, Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors.

The Guidelines are also intended to advise applicants on the design of their projects. Each project is regarded as unique in the evaluation process, and each will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis by the SVCAC and by Permit Sonoma.

With respect to these Guidelines, the following should be noted:

1. While decision makers should make every attempt to follow the Guidelines, the circumstances of each particular application and site may suggest that deviations are appropriate.

For Example: A project applicant may have a parcel that he/she feels would make a good winery site even if the site does not meet the Guidelines for minimum parcel size. The application is for production and processing and does not include a tasting room or events. The site is very compatible with the neighborhood...good noise attenuation, etc. In a case like this the CAC may feel that the project could be recommended in spite of the smaller parcel size.

2. Where these Guidelines establish a maximum level of usage, the permit decision may not ultimately provide for that level.

For Example: A project applicant proposes a winery and tasting room with the maximum number of events allowed under the Guidelines. However, the site is constrained due to topography, nearby residences, parking, etc. etc. In a case like this,

the CAC may feel that a lesser number of events is necessary in order to minimize these problems.

3. A currently permitted project remains subject to the conditions of that permit and is not affected by these Guidelines.

For Example: A winery project that was previously approved with a smaller number of events than allowed under the Guidelines does not automatically get to hold the larger number based upon the new Guidelines. However, the owners could apply for a use permit to increase the number of events. Similarly, a project that was approved for a greater number of events would be able to continue at that level.

4. These Guidelines are intended to complement County regulations. Many issues pertaining to winery permits are addressed through existing County policies, codes, and practices and are not thought to necessitate further guidance in these Guidelines.

For Example: The Guidelines do not include some of the more common aspects of a project, such as septic capacity, building codes, and drainage requirements.

Definitions:

Event. A gathering of 30 or more people at a pre-scheduled date and time, whether or not a fee is required to attend. Gatherings of less than 30 people are considered to be regular day to day activities of the applicable use, unless otherwise identified in the use entitlements. Some events last for two or three days. In these cases, each day is counted as a separate event.

For Example: A tasting room that is open all day every day for walk-in customers would not be considered an event, regardless how many visitors were to attend during the open hours. However, a scheduled gathering...maybe a wine club release party or a charity fundraiser, say on a particular day or night, would not be an event unless it were to involve more than 30 people.

Agricultural Promotion Event. An event that is directly related to the sales and promotion of the agricultural product from the site or local area. Examples include wine club gatherings, wine club releases, wine trade gatherings, and regional tastings as part of Industry-Wide Events.

Industry-Wide Event. An agricultural promotion event that is sponsored by a recognized wine industry association involving multiple wineries or tasting rooms within a specified geographical area.

Private Event: An event other than an agricultural promotion event, such as fundraising for charities, ballot measures, political campaigns, and similar purposes, or parties, concerts, weddings, celebrations, etc.

Winery. An agricultural processing facility that produces wine from wine grapes. A winery may include crush areas, production rooms, case goods and barrel storage, tank rooms, warehouses, bottling lines, laboratories, and administrative offices.

Tasting Room. A visitor serving use accessory to the production and/or processing of agricultural products. A winery tasting room would include the sampling and retail sales of wine made from locally grown wine grapes and other wine related products.

Event Space. An indoor or outdoor part of a winery or tasting room used for hosting events.

Locally Grown Agricultural Products. Agricultural products that are primarily grown and produced within Sonoma County and/or at neighboring counties in close proximity to the proposed use.

Over-Concentration. Over-concentration of visitor-serving and recreational uses can occur where several wineries, tasting rooms, and events are located in the same area or along the same route. An over-concentration of uses occurs when:

1. road conflicts occur where traffic conflicts with pedestrians, bicyclists and motorists from the local neighborhoods;
2. traffic levels exceed General Plan objectives on a specific or cumulative basis;
3. groundwater drawn to serve the facilities negatively impacts the aquifer and surrounding neighbor's wells; and
4. the uses are detrimental to rural character of the area.
5. more than two (2) winery and/or tasting room facilities are located within a ½ mile stretch of road.

Siting Criteria

Winery Siting Criteria:

A. Access. Public roadways of at least 18' in width are required. The applicant must show that the design will address:

1. Ingress/Egress. Follow County standards for ingress and egress to the property.
2. Sight Distance. Follow ASHTO sight distance standards.
3. Parking. "No Parking" signs should be installed and enforced along adjacent County roads
4. Traffic. Traffic impact analyses shall assess impacts based on project-generated trips as well as a scenario where project-generated trips are inflated by 20% to account for cumulative impacts in the Sonoma Valley concentration area. No traffic backups on public roadways.
5. Potential evacuation guidance and routes shall be posted on site.

B. Setbacks. Setbacks will be site specific and follow Sonoma County zoning standards from all applicable property lines. These setback standards will also apply to parking lots.

C. Noise Attenuation. When considering the proposed activity and intensity of use, the proposed use must meet the standards of the General Plan Noise Element. In addition, no outdoor amplified sound is allowed during events. Noise attenuation strategies, including setbacks from property lines and noise muffling interventions, may be combined to meet this standard, however permanent structures and installations for noise muffling must meet Scenic Resource requirements.

D. Visual Impacts. Facilities should be sited to minimize visual impact, especially in scenic areas/corridors. Setback distances shall be designed to ensure that the visual impacts of the new facilities are minimized.

E. Lighting. Nighttime lighting levels shall be limited to what is necessary to provide security and safety for users. Setbacks shall be sufficient to limit light visibility from public travel ways and to maintain the rural and scenic qualities of the Sonoma Valley. Exterior lighting shall be consistent with Dark Sky standards (e.g. low mounted, downward casting and fully shielded to prevent glare).

F. Maximum Winery Size. Winery size should be the minimum necessary to process the proposed level of wine grape production that will supply the winery.

For example: The extent of the processing operation should always be in proportion to the proposed production of wine grapes. This is a judgment call for CAC members, BZA members, or Board members as there is not a standard square footage that fits every project. Red wine is different from white wine in terms of the size of the facility. The key is to examine the specific uses of each portion of the facility and be satisfied that the proper relationship exists.

Tasting Room Siting Criteria

A. Tasting rooms are subject to the same Guidelines identified in subsections A-E above. Stand-alone tasting rooms are not allowed. Tasting rooms should be secondary and incidental to the proposed levels of production and processing.

For example: Similar to the previous example for winery size, the extent of facilities for visitor serving uses should be proportional to the extent of wine grape production and/or wine-making. A small production winery should not include a large tasting room or event space, but this is also a judgment call for CAC and decision makers. Again the key is to examine the specific uses of each portion of the facility.

B. Minimum Parcel Size. The minimum parcel size that is required to qualify for a tasting room is 20 acres. An exception may be made to this minimum when the applicant is a small agricultural producer.

C. Maximum Site Area for Tasting Room and Other Accessory Uses

The size of the facility should be secondary and incidental in proportion to the proposed production and/or processing of the winery.

Permanent structures for hospitality uses are limited to 20% of the total size of all of the non-residential buildings on site.

Permanent structures for offices and other administration purposes are limited to 15% of the total size of all of the non-residential buildings on site.

D. On-Site Parking. The following on-site parking is required for tasting rooms and events:

1. 1 space per 250 square feet of the winery production facility; plus
2. 1 space per 2.5 guests and 1 space per employee for the tasting room and events.
3. Where events are proposed that could exceed the parking provided on-site, shuttle service shall be provided to transfer guests to and from off-street parking locations. Shuttles from off-site public parking areas are required, for all events with over 50 guests.
4. No parking is permitted along any public or private roadways or on vineyard roads.

E. Separation Criteria. The entire Sonoma Valley is considered either to be over-concentrated or to become over-concentrated in the near future. Wineries and tasting rooms are limited to 2 per half mile.

F. Source of Wine Grapes. Wines offered for sale or tasting should be produced from at least 75% grown in Sonoma County.

Winery, Tasting Room, and Event Operating Standards

A. Hours of Operation. The hours of operation for wineries and tasting rooms shall be limited to 10 am-5 pm.

The hours of operation for Events shall be limited to 10am-9pm. All cleanup after the events shall occur by 10 pm.

The owner/host or other responsible party shall cancel events during any period when a red flag warning is in effect for the subject area.

B. Food Service. Food service is allowed for wine and food pairings or in conjunction with activities and events, provided that the primary activity in the tasting room shall be wine tasting related to wine sales and wine marketing, not dining.

1. A restaurant is prohibited.
2. Catering is acceptable and may include indoor, but not outdoor equipment such as stoves, wood-fired ovens and barbecues.
3. Sale of pre-packaged foods in conjunction with wine tasting is allowed per County standards.

C. Food and Wine Pairing. Daytime food and wine pairings may occur during tasting room hours, subject to the following conditions, and only with food prepared off-site. Food and wine pairing is allowed in the evening after 5pm only in conjunction with approved events, and the food and wine pairings must be selected by the winery, with no menu options allowed.

D. Private Guest Accommodations. Private marketing accommodations and agricultural farmstays are allowed as regulated by the Sonoma County Zoning Ordinance.

E. Agricultural Promotion Events. The purpose of agricultural promotional events is to promote local agricultural products grown or processed on-site or the local area. When phased projects are approved, the promotional events shall at all times be subordinate to the winery production itself. The owner/host, or other responsible party shall provide community notification of events.

F. Industry-wide Events. Industry-wide events are considered to be agricultural promotion events. Each participating tasting room is limited to the total number of events specified in the Use Permit. Industry-wide events shall:

1. meet the requirements, and follow the best practices, of the association sponsoring the event.
2. provide a plan for overflow parking
3. shall not allow parking along public roadways.
4. provide community notification of the event.

G. Private Events. Private events, such as fundraisers and concerts, typically occur on one day. Private events must end before sunset and shall provide community notification in advance of the event.

H. Maximum Number of Events. The total number of events, including agricultural promotion, industry-wide, and private events are limited to a maximum of 12 per year. In addition, events are limited to one per month, except that the one in a month may be an industry-wide event lasting up to 3 days.

I. Event Space. No permanent structure dedicated to events shall be constructed or maintained. Events may be held in any indoor or outdoor area that is commonly used for the winery or tasting room facility.

J. On-Site Coordinator. All activities and events must be hosted by the proprietor or have on-site management by the proprietor's staff. A designated person on the proprietor's staff must be available at all times during the events to address complaints or resolve problems. The On-Site Coordinator shall:

1. provide a telephone number listed on the winery's own website through which neighbors and members of the public will have a direct way to make any complaints; and
2. send out a notice to site neighbors to inform them that the "complaint hot line" is available should they wish to call.

K. Event Proposal. Event coordination is the key to improving the over-concentration problem in Sonoma Valley and should apply to all events. Each application shall clearly state the type of events, the number of events, and the number of attendees for each event.

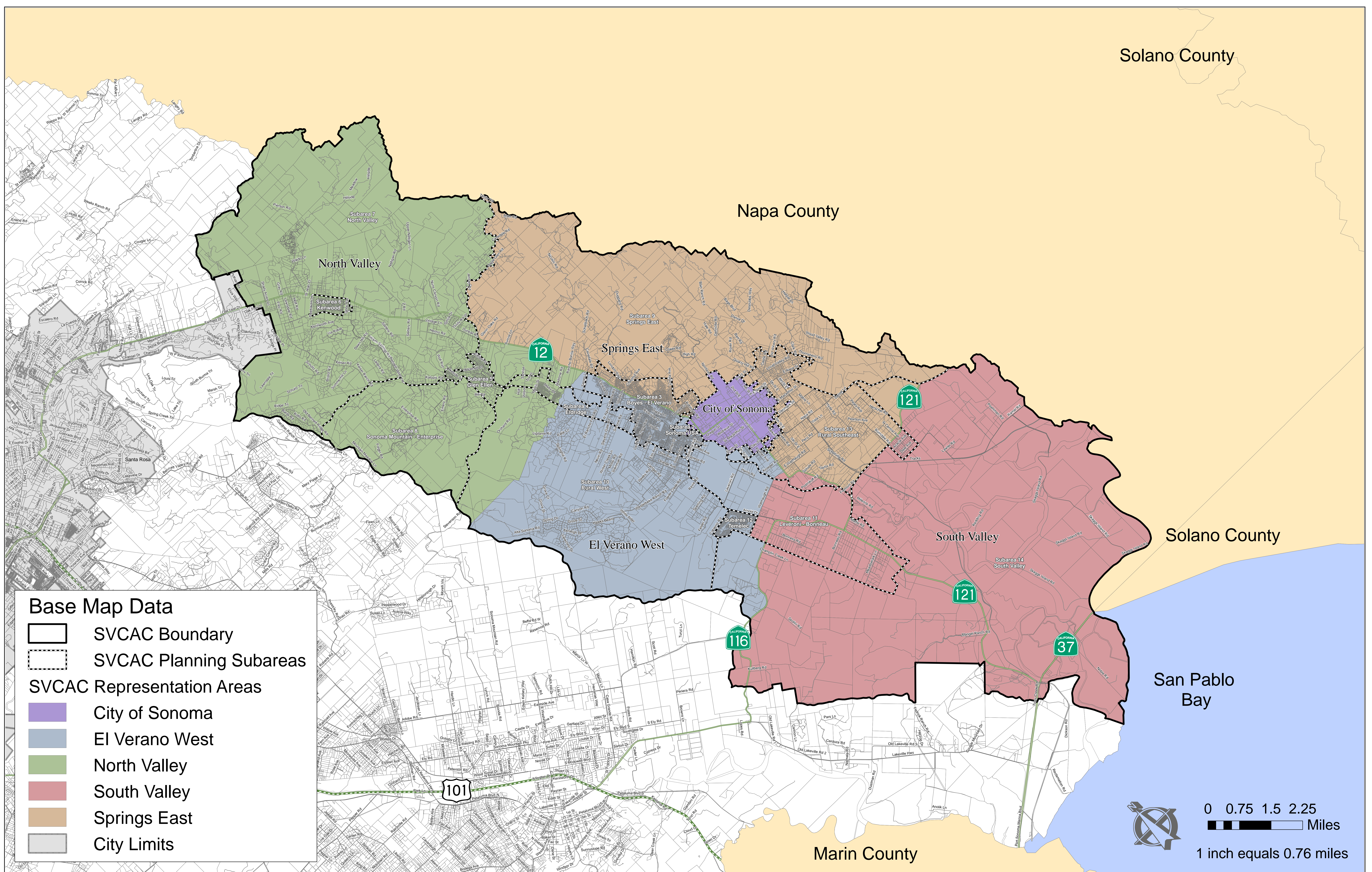
Since the mid-1990s, the County has included a condition in all Use Permits for all newly approved wineries that requires the winery to comply with any event coordination program that may be adopted in the future. All new winery permits also carry this condition. The combined effect is that all winery-related use permits issued from the 1990s through the present already have this particular condition of approval.

The approved event plan should be clearly set forth as a standard Condition of Approval in all new use permits and should include provisions for event coordination.

In order to monitor the effects of the permit, and to confirm that it is being followed, the Use Permit should require that data regarding the numbers of visitors from each winery event and the total tasting room attendance for the previous year be submitted to the County annually.

L. Traffic Management Plan. Traffic management and parking plans are standard conditions of approval for new and modifications of winery use permits. These plans should take into account the maximum number of people visiting the tasting room during tasting room hours as well as during any event.

M. Over-concentrated Area Map. The attached map of the Sonoma Valley Planning Area is the area that is considered to be over-concentrated. [Permit Sonoma to provide map]



Base Map Data

- SVCAC Boundary
- SVCAC Planning Subareas

SVCAC Representation Areas

- City of Sonoma
- El Verano West
- North Valley
- South Valley
- Springs East
- City Limits

0 0.75 1.5 2.25 Miles

1 inch equals 0.76 miles

Sonoma Valley Citizen Advisory Commission Area

On March 11, 2014, the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors adopted a Resolution authorizing Chair to execute Joint Powers Agreement between the County of Sonoma & the City of Sonoma continuing the Sonoma Valley Citizens Advisory Commission for a period of five (5) years from January 1, 2014, to December 31, 2018. (First District)

Map Scale and Reproduction methods limit precision in physical features displayed. This map is for illustrative purpose only, and is not suitable for parcel-specific decision making. The parcels contained herein are not intended to represent surveyed data. Site-specific studies are required to draw parcel-specific conclusions. Assessor's parcel data are current as of July 1, 2013. For more current parcel data consult the County of Sonoma Assessor's Office.

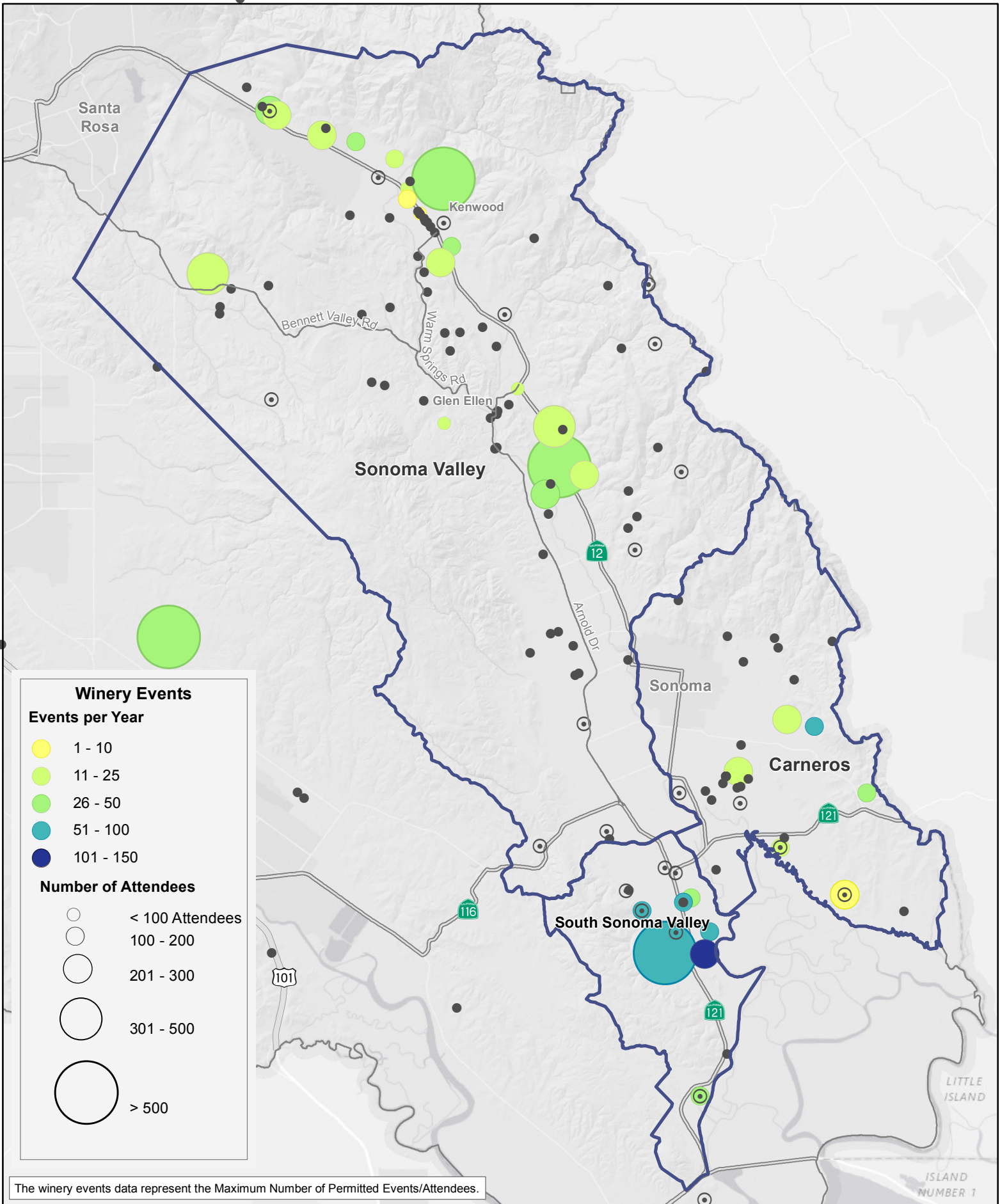
No part of this map may be copied, reproduced, or transmitted in any form or by any means without written permission from the Permit and Resource Management Department (PRMD), County of Sonoma, California.

Author: PRMD GIS Date: February 24, 2014 S:\GIS-DATA\PRMD_BASE\PRMD Department Projects\Comprehensive Planning\Sonoma Valley Citizens Advisory Commission\MXD's\Sonoma Valley Citizens Advisory Commission E-size.mxd

County of Sonoma
 Permit and Resource Management Department

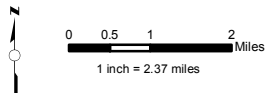
2550 Ventura Avenue, Santa Rosa, California 95403
 707-565-1900 FAX 707-565-1103





Winery Event Concentration - Sonoma Valley

- Approved Winery
- Pending Winery
- ▭ Winery Event Concentration Area
- ▬ US Federal Highway
- ▬ State Highway
- ▬ Road



County of Sonoma
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