

Letters to the Editor

ID'ing Valley Springs will be a group effort

Editor:

What and where is Valley Springs? The community plan meeting Feb. 19 made it clear this is a question that needs an answer. The community will continue to take steps to answer that question at the next meeting March 4, 7 p.m., at the Community United Methodist Church, 135 Laurel St.

The area for the Valley Springs Community Plan update is not yet specific, but clearly it is not limited to the old town center and environs. Community boundaries have not changed in over 30 years, while the community has grown tremendously. It is up to local citizens to decide what areas should be included in an update. Boundaries can be changed.

The 1974 Valley Springs Community Area Plan is 3,932 acres (not **1,550** acres) - one of the smallest plan areas in Calaveras County - yet we have one of the largest population centers.

Residents of Gold Creek and La Contenta subdivisions learned at the community plan meeting they are included in the U.S. Census Community Area for Valley Springs, but they are not included in the Community Plan area. Does this make sense?

Who is a resident of Valley Springs? There are no city boundaries - we live in an unincorporated area of Calaveras County. The 2000 U.S. Census said Valley Springs had a population of **2,560**, but the CalTrans sign coming into town says the population of Valley Springs is **7,592**. Forty of the 55 people who attended the meeting had a Valley Springs mailing address. Most of them considered Valley Springs "their" town, even though most didn't live "downtown". And all had an interest in how the community will grow.

By the end of the evening, participants agreed to form a community plan group, and selected seven elements for study and visioning. Of the 40 participants, 19 volunteered to work on the following: Circulation, Community Boundaries/Study Area, Conservation and Open Space, Economics, Housing, Land Use, and Safety.

Possible next steps at the March 4 meeting are--forming working committees, choosing coordinators, selecting a group name, and discussing a community survey. All Valley Springs area residents are encouraged to attend.

Board Members

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Valley Springs