

Nevada County
Local
Agency
Formation
Commission

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LAFCo · 950 Maidu Avenue · Nevada City · CA · 95959 · 530-265-7180

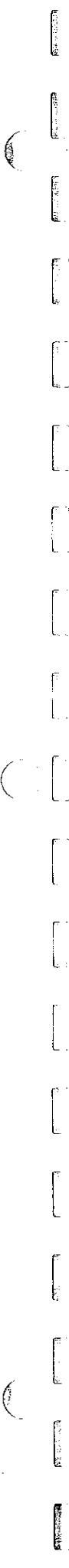
NOTICE OF PREPARATION

Date: February 25, 2019
To: Responsible Agencies, Organizations, and Interested Parties
From: Nevada County Local Agency Formation Commission
Contact: Nevada County Local Agency Formation Commission
SR Jones, LAFCo Executive Officer
950 Maidu Avenue,
Nevada City, CA 95959

Subject: Nevada City Sphere of Influence Update Environmental Impact Report

In discharging its duties under Section 15020 of the State CEQA Guidelines (California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Chapter 3, Section 15000 et seq.), the Nevada County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo), as lead agency, intends to prepare an Environmental Impact Report (EIR), consistent with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)(Public Resources Code [PRC] Section 21000 et seq.) and the State CEQA Guidelines, that address the potential physical environmental effects of the Update of the Sphere of Influence (SOI) of the City of Nevada City (SOI update). In accordance with State CEQA Guidelines Section 15082, LAFCo has prepared this Notice of Preparation (NOP) to provide responsible agencies, trustee agencies, involved federal agencies, special districts, Nevada County, adjacent cities, neighboring landowners, agencies with jurisdiction by law, public and private utility providers and other interested parties with sufficient information describing the SOI update and its potential environmental effects in order to provide a meaningful response.

LAFCo has determined that for the environmental analysis for this project, a Program EIR under CEQA will provide the most appropriate level of detail. Section 21166 of the CEQA Statutes, and Sections 15162 and 15168 of the CEQA Guidelines set forth the standards of a Program EIR. A Program EIR is generally used for projects that will result in the issuance of rules and regulations that are likely to result in a series of linked, logical actions. These actions are typically related geographically, likely to have comparable environmental effects, and if needed, are able to be mitigated through the implementation of standard measures. Similar to a Project Level EIR, the Program EIR still evaluates the proposed project and considers the environmental effects, but the Program EIR does so in a way that enables the subsequent use of a tiered CEQA document. The tiered document is prepared when the full detail of future projects is available. Accordingly, at this time, a sufficient level of detail about future potential projects within the SOI update area is not known and a Program EIR is the most appropriate CEQA document for those potential series of actions.



As specified by the State CEQA Guidelines, the NOP will be circulated for a 30-day review period. LAFCo requests and welcomes public input and input from other stakeholders and public agencies during this review. If no response or request for additional time is received from any responsible agency by the end of the review period, the lead agency may presume that responsible agencies have no response.

Documents or files relating to the SOI update are available at:

Nevada County Local Agency Formation Commission
950 Maidu Avenue, Nevada City, CA 95959

and on the LAFCo website:

<https://www.mynevadacounty.com/907/Local-Agency-Formation-Commission-LAFCo>

Written or email comments in response to this NOP should be directed to, LAFCo at the address below. Comments should be provided to LAFCo at the earliest possible date, but no later than 30 calendar days after receipt of this NOP. This NOP was sent to state agencies and filed with the State Office of Planning and Research on February 25, 2019, posted with the Nevada County Clerk's Office and published in The Union newspaper on February 24 2019, and mailed or email to interested parties on or before March 27, 2019. Please include "Nevada City Sphere of Influence Update NOP Comments" in the subject line and send or email all comments to:

SR Jones
LAFCo Executive Officer
Nevada County Local Agency Formation Commission
950 Maidu Avenue, Nevada City, CA 95959
(530) 265-7180
lafco@co.nevada.ca.us

The 30 day comment period for this Notice of Preparation closes at 5:00 p.m. on **March 27, 2019**.

Agencies that will need to consider the the Nevada City (City) Sphere of Influence Update Environmental Impact Report when deciding whether to issue permits or other approvals should provide the name of a contact person and email address. Comments provided by email should include "Nevada City Sphere of Influence Update Environmental Impact Report EIR NOP Comments" in the subject line, and the name and mailing address of the commenter in the body of comment.

Regional Location

The City of Nevada City (City) is the County seat of Nevada County (County) in the western foothills of the Sierra Nevada Mountains, approximately 70 miles northeast of Sacramento, CA. Nevada County is bounded by the the Middle Fork of the Yuba River and Sierra County on the north, the state of Nevada to the east, Yuba County to the west, and the Bear River and Placer County to the south. The regional geography of the County transitions from low lying foothills on the edge of the Sacramento Valley to the high mountains of the Sierra Nevada Range and the high plateau beyond. The City is within the western third of the County in a location in the valley of Deer Creek at an altitude of approximately 2500 feet in an area of transition to the the generally steep, granitic terrain of the Sierra Nevada mountains.

The major transportation routes that provides regional connectivity through the City are the north-south trending State Route 49 (SR 49) which through Nevada City is conjoined with east-west trending State Route 20. Hwy 49 connects Nevada City to the south with Placer County and I-80 and to the north to Sierra County. Hwy 20 connects Nevada City to the west to Yuba City and I-5 and to the east to I-80 and Truckee. I-80 is located approximately 25 miles south of the City and is the major connector for the City to Sacramento and the Bay area, and to Reno. **Figure 1: Regional Location Map**, shows the position of the Nevada County in northern California and in relation to the surrounding counties. **Figure 2: Vicinity Map** shows the City in relation to other cities, towns, and major roadways in closer proximity.

Project Location

The City's jurisdictional boundaries include approximately 1,470 incorporated acres (2018 Nevada County GIS data). The city is located within a basin on the western slope of the Sierra Nevada at approximately 2,500 feet above mean sea level (amsl). Deer Creek flows through the center of town. The City is surrounded by rural residential development and forest lands. Lands to the east, north, south and west of the City boundary are included in the City sphere. These unincorporated lands are primarily designated and developed for residential uses.

The residential developments in western Nevada County are predominantly single-family units, with multiple-family development occurring mainly in the two cities Nevada City and City of Grass Valley to the southwest of the project area. The majority of the City area consists of rural residential uses surrounding the approximate 30-acre downtown area on the westerly side of SR 49\20 and with primary access from Broad Street. The City had an estimated population of 3,226 people, and Grass Valley had an estimated population, as of January 2018, of 13,041 people (CDOF, 2018b).

Nevada City Sphere of Influence Update

Introduction

Nevada County Local Agency Formation Commission is responsible for determining the boundaries of cities and special districts within its area of responsibility and jurisdiction. Along with its own locally adopted guidelines, the Nevada County LAFCo operates under the Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act, located at Section 56000 and following in the Government Code (CKH). Under the provisions of the Act, LAFCo has a mandate of:

- Discouraging urban sprawl
- Preservation of prime agricultural land and open space
- Assuring provision of efficient local government services
- Encouraging orderly growth and development of local agencies

The tools that enable LAFCo's to accomplish those goals are the Municipal Service Review (MSR), the Sphere of Influence (SOI), and the authority under CKH to control change of the boundaries and organization of public agencies.

MSRs are informational reports that provide information on the provision of public services and the capacity of agencies to provide services. They are prepared either on an individual agency basis or regional basis. This information is then used to prepare a SOI plan for each public agency.

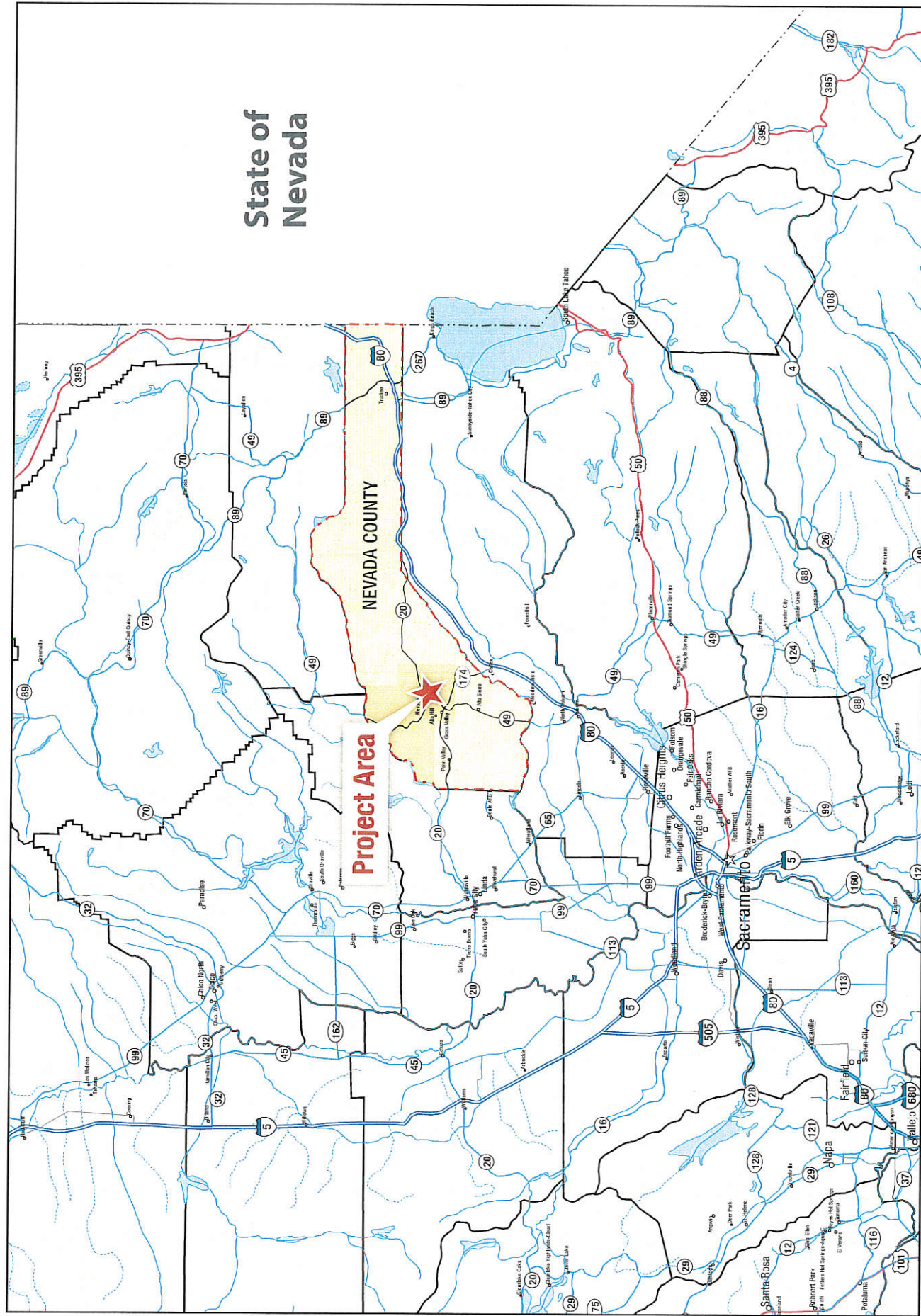


FIGURE 1: Regional Location Map
Nevada City Sphere of Influence Update

Nevada City Sphere of Influence Update



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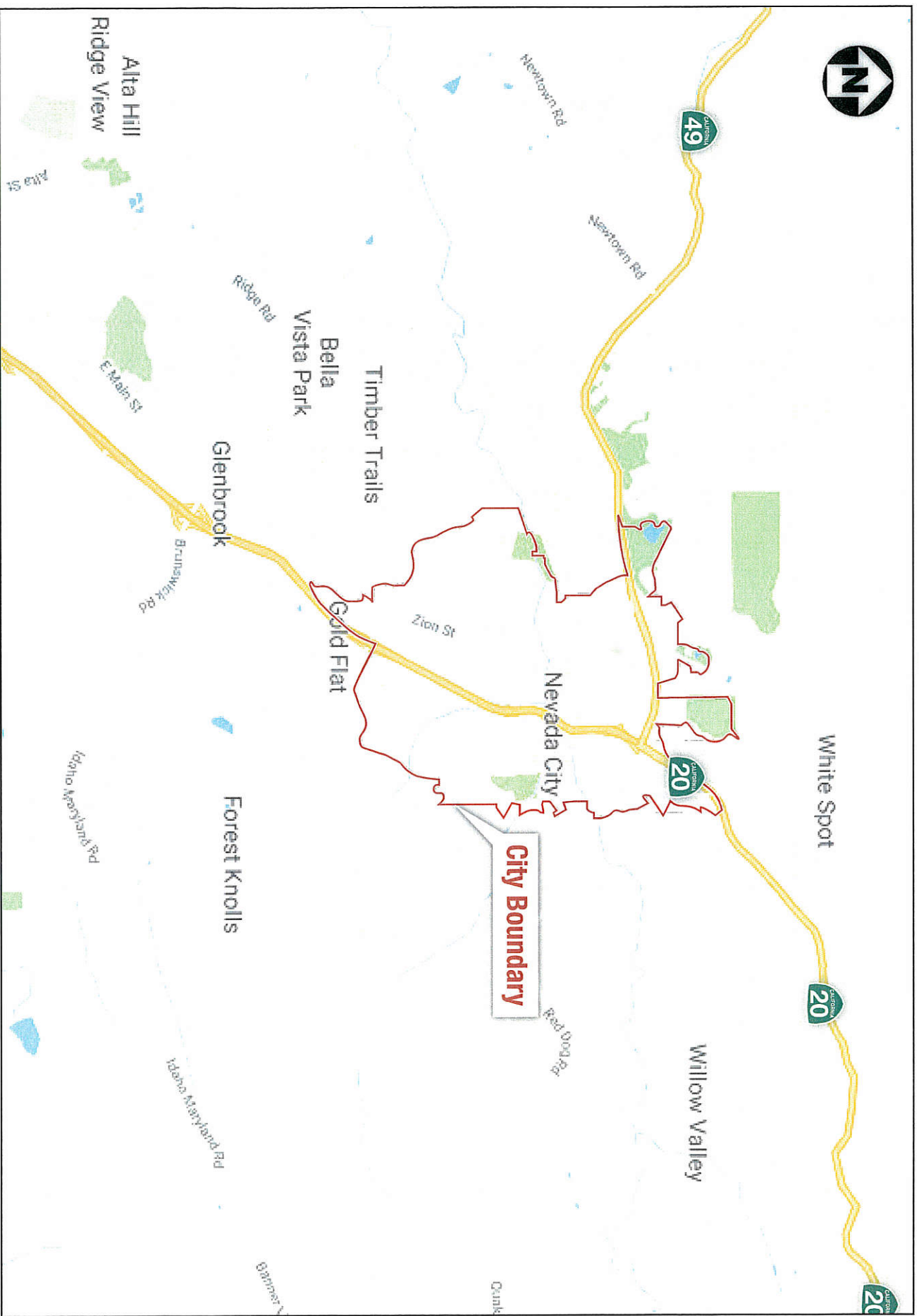


FIGURE 2: Vicinity Map

Nevada City Sphere of Influence Update



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A SOI is defined as a plan for the probable physical boundary and service area of a local agency, as determined by the Local Agency Formation Commission. The Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act of 2000 defines the purpose and intent of a SOI as an important tool for "planning and shaping the logical and orderly development and coordination of local agencies so as to advantageously provide for the present and future needs of the county and its communities." Annexations and extensions of service are only allowed within the SOI

The MSR and SOI plan guide LAFCo's determinations with respect to annexations to a city or district. Annexations cannot be approved by LAFCo unless they are consistent with the agency's SOI. Therefore, including property within the city's sphere normally implies annexation within the timeframe of the SOI plan, which Nevada County LAFCo has established as a 20 year timeframe.

Project Background

LAFCo is required to adopt a sphere of influence for each city and district in its jurisdiction, and to review each sphere plan and update as necessary every five years.

The current City SOI was initially approved in 1983 and was reaffirmed in 2008 without change. **Figure 3: Nevada City Boundary and Current Sphere of Influence**, shows the current boundary of the City, which is approximately 1,470 acres, as well as the City SOI, which presently includes approximately 2,702 acres.

In February 2017, LAFCo proposed an update to the SOI that would have reduced the acreage within the sphere boundary by nearly 50%. This was proposed because the history of very limited annexations by the City indicated that it was unlikely that much of land in the existing Sphere would be annexed within the 20 year sphere planning horizon.

The City was strongly opposed to the reduction in its sphere. In March 2017, in response to the LAFCo proposal, the City began preparing an Annexation Plan and Strategy to justify retention of the City's existing sphere. The City's document was completed in September of 2017. It addressed provision of sewer service and other public services including police, and fire protection, and street improvement and maintenance to lands within the city's SOI, including several areas with significant growth potential. It further proposed a more aggressive approach by the City to annexation of lands around the City.

Since that time, the City and LAFCo have developed the LAFCo/City Consensus Preferred Alternative as a compromise proposal. This Consensus Alternative has been designated the Preferred Project Alternative for the purposes of the EIR that will be prepared for this project. This alternative includes a reduction in the lands included in the sphere boundary and also includes expedited annexation of four priority annexation areas (Annexation Area #1, Annexation Area #2, Annexation area #3, and Annexation Area #4), which are shown graphically and discussed in detail further below. The program EIR will focus primarily on the update of the SOI as well as annexation of the lands within the sphere, including the four priority annexation areas.

Project Description

The Project which is the subject of this EIR is the update to the Nevada City SOI. Four project alternatives are being considered for the update and each is proposed to be reviewed as part of the preparation of the Draft EIR. These alternatives, including a Preferred Alternative, are described in greater detail below. All the alternatives are shown graphically in **Figure 4: LAFCo/City Consensus Preferred Alternative**, **Figure 5:**

Original LAFCo Staff Recommendation Alternative, Figure 6: City Recommendation Alternative, and Figure 7: No Project Alternative – Coterminus Sphere of Influence further below where each alternative is discussed in additional detail. The following provides a brief description of the Alternatives:

- LAFCo/City Consensus Preferred Alternative (Preferred Alternative): Comprises the consensus boundary of the SOI and also includes the initiation of four specific annexations following the completion of the EIR.
- Original LAFCo Staff Recommendation Alternative: Consists of the original LAFCO recommended SOI boundary and includes approximately 1,650 acres.
- City Recommendation Alternative: Consists of the original City proposed SOI and would include the lands contained within the 2008 SOI; and
- No Project Alternative: This alternative includes adoption of a coterminous SOI, meaning the City's SOI would only include the existing territory within the City's jurisdictional boundary.

The SOI Update consists of an update to the Nevada City SOI. The existing SOI surrounds the City in a roughly spherical shape, and is shown in Figure 3. The current SOI surrounding the City boundary occupies approximately 2,702 acres (2018 Nevada County GIS data) and as discussed above, with the City occupying approximately 1,470 acres, the total area approximately 4,172 acres. The SOI Update would occur within the area defined by the existing SOI and does not include any lands within the existing City boundaries.

The annexation of areas by the City would allow for the extension of City services to the newly annexed areas but the SOI Update itself does not include any physical alterations or improvements to any area. Under the SOI Update, no other actions including associated infrastructure extensions and improvements, new residential, commercial, industrial or other developments are being sought. Additionally, the SOI Update does not include any changes to existing land uses, land use designations, or zoning. However; while the SOI Update would not directly result in any physical change in the environment, the annexation of these areas may indirectly facilitate development within these areas. Inclusion in the sphere is the first step towards annexation of the territory, and annexation allows access to municipal services that facilitate development within the context of the underlying General Plan land use designation. Consequently this EIR will examine at a general program level the indirect environmental impacts of the Project resulting from such potential development .

The portions of the sphere that are recommended for exclusion would be designated as an "Areas of Interest" in order to ensure the City is notified of development proposals and other projects that may have potential for impacting the City. The Commission's policies define an "Area of Interest" as a geographic area beyond the sphere of influence in which land use decisions or other governmental actions of one local agency may impact directly or indirectly on another local agency. LAFCo policy stipulates that the Commission will notify "interested agencies" of known proposals within the Area of Interest, and give great weight to the comments of the "interested agency

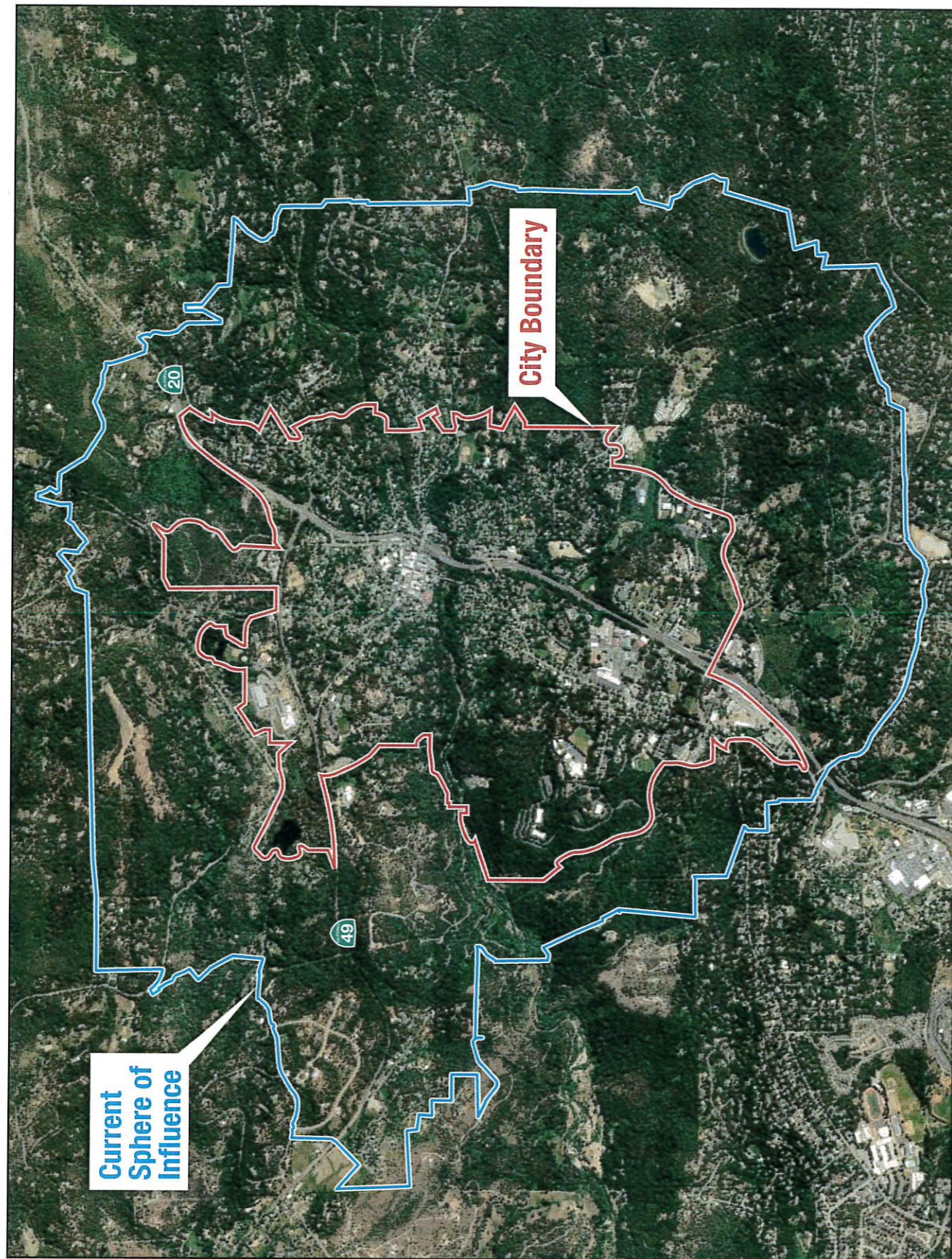


FIGURE 3: Nevada City Boundary and Current Sphere of Influence

Nevada City Sphere of Influence Update



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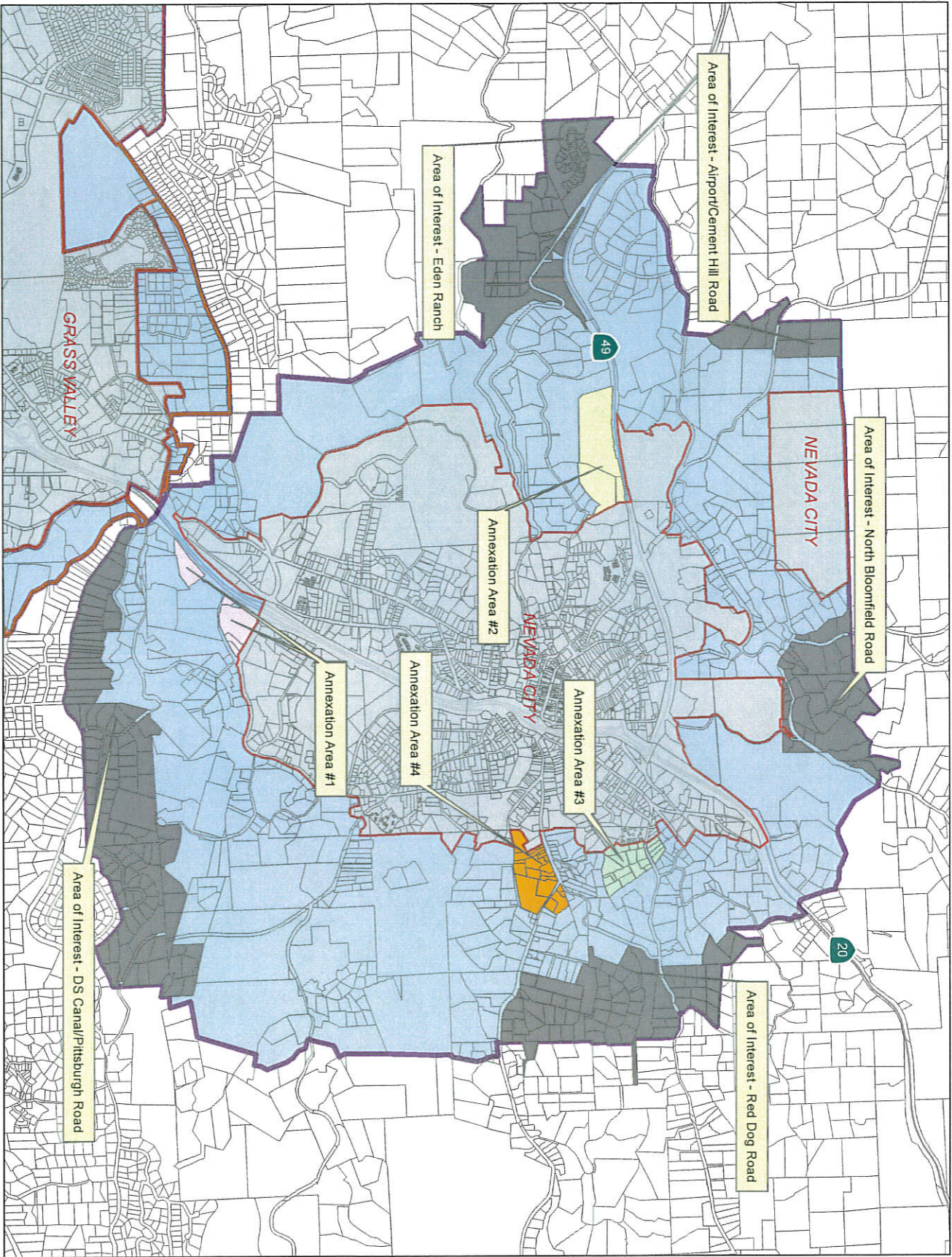


FIGURE 4: LAFCo/City Consensus - Preferred Alternative
Nevada City Sphere of Influence Update

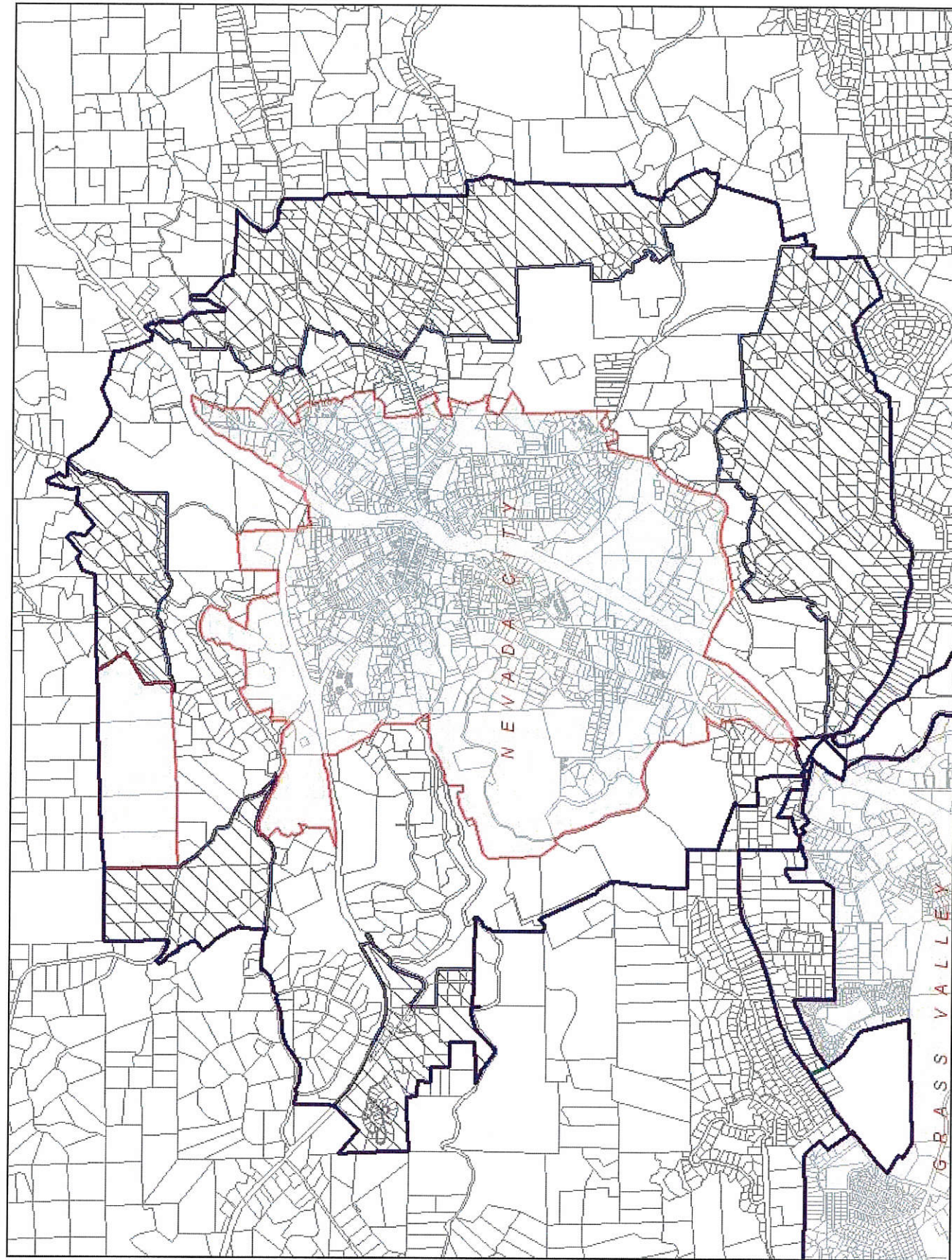


FIGURE 5: Original LAFCo Staff Recommendation Alternative

Nevada City Sphere of Influence Update



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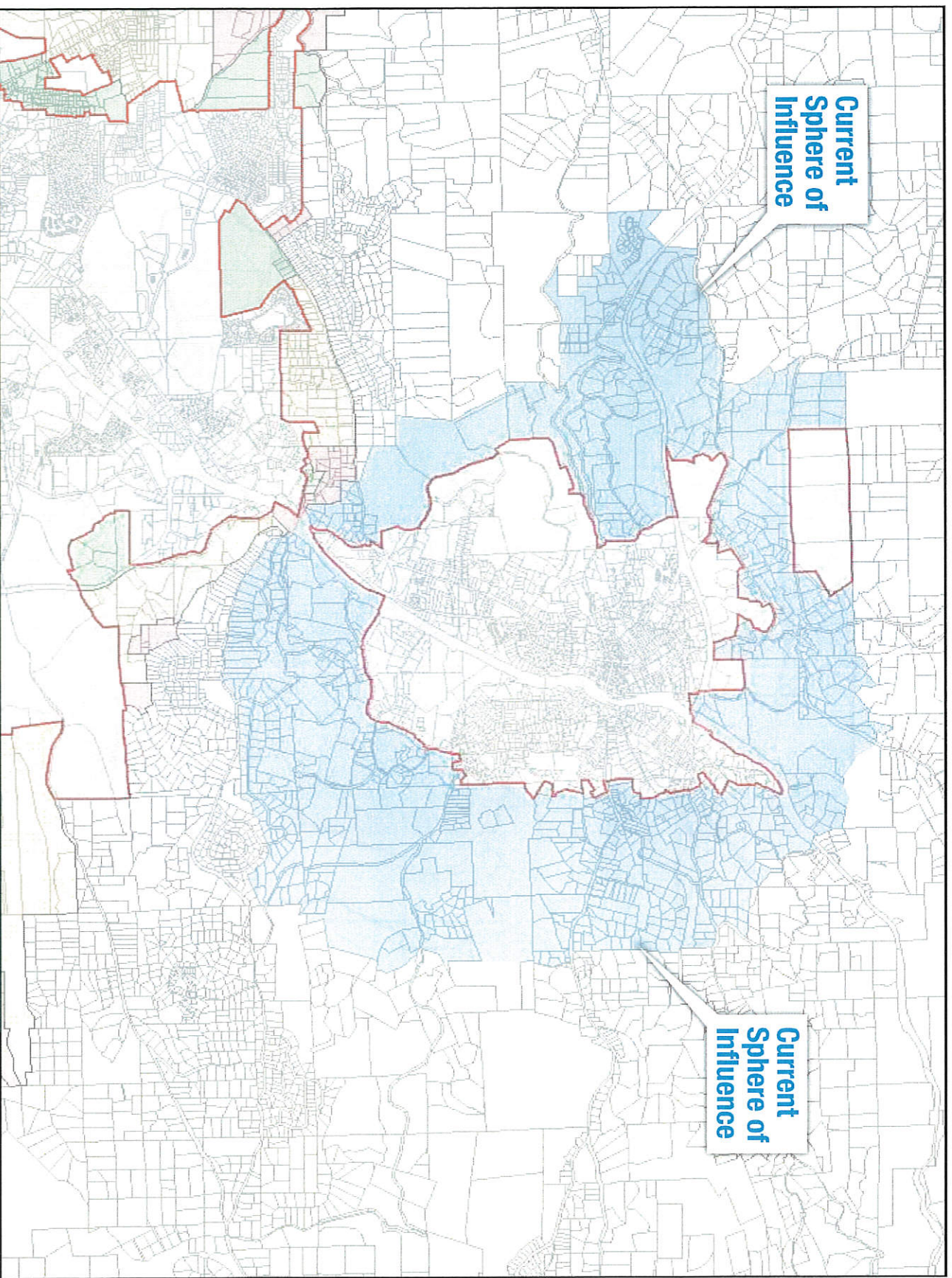


FIGURE 6: City Recommendation Alternative
Nevada City Sphere of Influence Update



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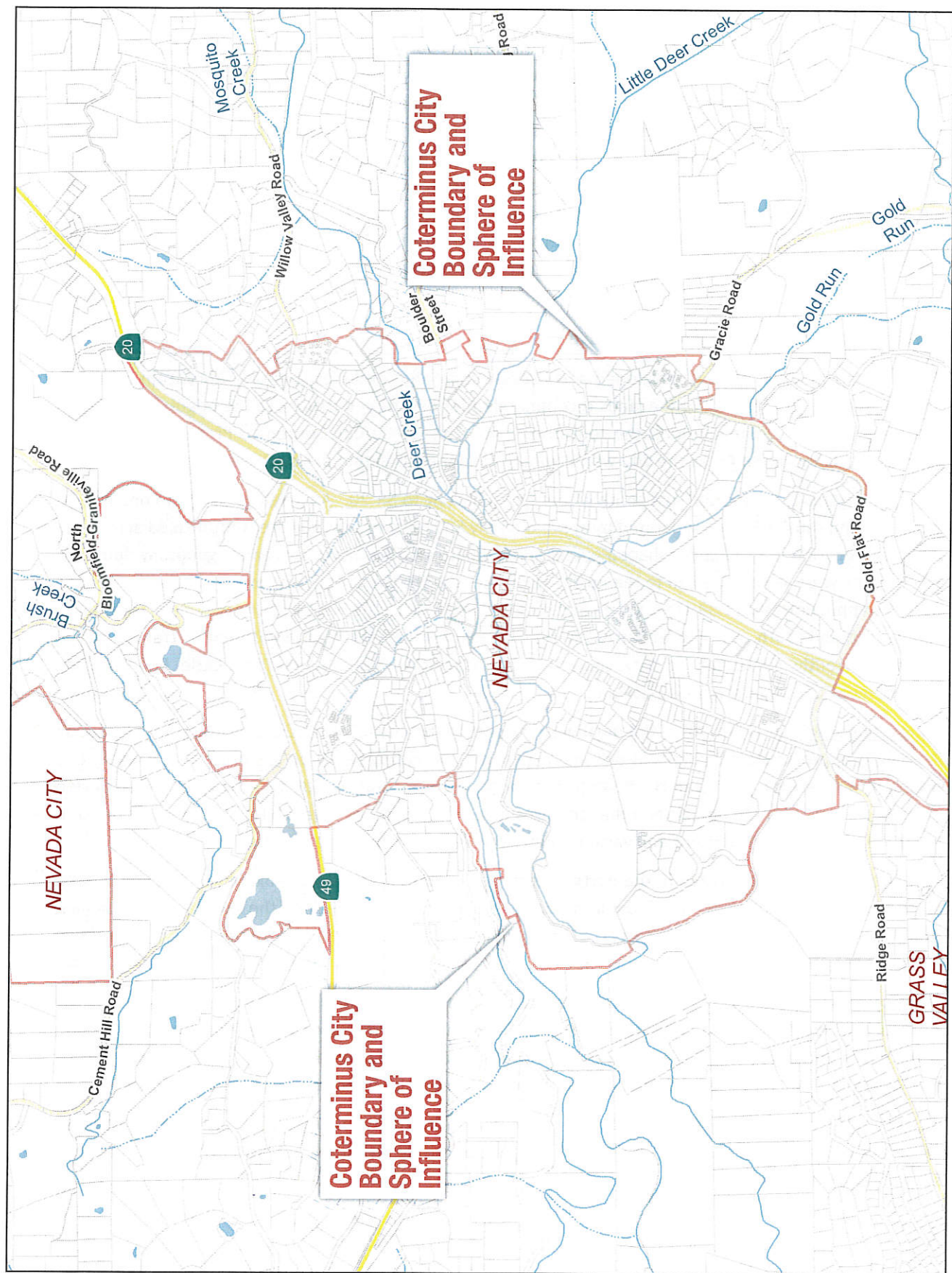


FIGURE 7: No Project Alternative - Coterminus Sphere of Influence

Nevada City Sphere of Influence Update



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For those areas that remain within the SOI and outside the boundaries of the City, jurisdiction for land use matters for all of the land areas would remain with the County. However, the Land Use Element of the County's General Plan under Goal 1.8 on coordinating with cities in land use planning and development within their spheres provides that within a City's sphere of influence, the County General Plan use Maps will generally reflect the City's land use mapping, sometimes less intense, but never significantly more intense (Policy 1.8.3) and provides that for all discretionary projects the County shall first request that the City determine whether it desires to annex the project and, if it does, the applicant will be directed to the City and, if it doesn't the application will be referred to the city for review and comment. The four SOI Alternatives are discussed in additional detail immediately below.

LAFCo/City Consensus Preferred Alternative

The City and LAFCo staff have developed a 'consensus map' that excludes some territory from the City's sphere while retaining some of the lands recommended for exclusion pursuant to the original LAFCo Staff recommendation. Figure 4 depicts the consensus map. This LAFCo/City Consensus Preferred Alternative four Priority Annexation Areas the City would initiate for annexation that are discussed in detail as follows:

Annexation Area 1 - is located just south of the City adjacent to SR 20. Annexation Area #1 consists of a northerly and southerly area separated by approximately 500 feet. In sum, the areas total 16.63 acres. The northerly location is a triangular shaped parcel approximately 5.29 acres in size and is generally bound by SR 20 to the west, Gold Flat Road to the north, and is accessed by Granholm Lane to the south. The second parcel is approximately 11.34 acres in size and is bound by SR 20 to the west and undeveloped lands to the north, east, and south. Existing land uses on this site includes the California Department of Transportation facility (currently connected to City sewer), the Prospector's Nursery, and the Little Friends Child Development Center, along Gold Flat Road.

Annexation Area #2 - is located in the northwestern part of the City adjacent California SR 49. Annexation Area #2 is approximately 86 acres in size and is generally bound by SR 49 on the north, the existing City Boundary to the east, American Hill Road to the south, and Constitution Court to the west. Annexation Area #2 consists of three parcels and the land uses includes the County Juvenile Hall (currently connected to City sewer), and two adjacent and vacant County-owned properties, located south of SR 49.

Annexation Area #3 - is located in the northeastern part of the City and is approximately 17 acres in size. Annexation Area #3 includes parcels on both sides of Willow Valley Road east of the existing City Boundary. Annexation Area #3 consists of 19 parcels. Three parcels are connected to the City sewer system, and two are undeveloped.

Annexation Area #4 - is located in the northeastern part of the City and is approximately 23 areas in size. Annexation Area #4 is generally bound by Red Dog Road on the north, Park Avenue on the east and south, and the City boundary to the west. Annexation Area #4 contains 22 parcels and land uses include a cemetery that fronts on Boulder Street and Park Avenue Extension and 18 intervening privately owned properties.

As discussed above, the LAFCo/City Consensus Preferred Alternative would also exclude some areas, as described below, and as depicted on Figure 4. In general the exclusion areas would occur in five pockets surrounding the city:

<i>Area</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Parcels</i>	<i>Characteristics</i>
Airport/Cement Hill Road	West of the Airport property (a non-contiguous portion of the City). These parcels are located off Cement Hill Road	7	All parcels are designated Estate. Four are developed.
N. Bloomfield Road	Intersection of N. Bloomfield and Lake Vera Roads	34	All parcels are designated Estate. Only one is undeveloped.
Red Dog Road	East of current City boundary, including lands north and south of Willow Valley Road and north of Red Dog Road	63	All parcels designated for residential use, including Estate and Residential General Plan designations. 56 parcels are developed and 7 are undeveloped.
DS Canal/Pittsburgh Road	South of the current City boundary. These parcels are located south of the DS Canal and north of Pittsburgh Road.	111	Most parcels designated Residential, several are designated Estate and 2 are designated for open space. 87 parcels are developed and the remaining 24 are unimproved. At least 3 are owned by the federal government (including the two Open Space properties).
Eden Ranch	West of current city boundaries and south of State Route 49 near Old Downieville Road.	80	Most parcels designated for residential use (one is designated O.S.). Includes a small residential development project with public sewer service provided by the County Sanitation District. 58 parcels are developed, and the remaining 22 are undeveloped.

Original LAFCo Staff Recommendation Alternative

The Original LAFCo Staff recommendation was prepared by LAFCo staff as an update to the City SOI Plan and is shown on Figure 5. This plan included the exclusion of five areas from within the SOI. These have been proposed for exclusion because the areas are either already developed and unlikely to require the City's

services within the timeframe of the sphere plan, or the provision of City services to the area is likely to be infeasible.

The exclusion areas under this alternative also include the same five pockets surrounding the City discussed in the Preferred Consensus Alternative. This Alternative simply proposes larger areas for exclusion from the sphere. The southeastern exclusion area is generally delineated by Banner Lava Cap Road on the south and Pittsburg Road on the north. The eastern exclusion area is bisected by Red Dog Road. The southern half extends south just past Banner Lava Cap Road and the northern half extends to Highway 49. The remaining three exclusion areas are approximately 30% the size of the above listed areas. The northern exclusion area is generally bound by North Bloomfield Road on the east and the existing city island on the east; the northwestern exclusion area is generally bound by Indian Flat Road on the south and is bisected by Cement Hill Road; the western exclusion area is irregularly shaped, and is partially bound by Champion Mine Road as well as existing residential parcels on the south, east, and west. The northern boundary is delineated by SR 49. Figure 5 shows the specific location of original areas proposed by LAFCo to be removed from the City SOI.

City Recommendation Alternative

The City has indicated it would prefer to retain all territory included in its current SOI (as initially adopted in 1983 and updated in 2008). This Alternative includes an area of approximately 1,650 acres surrounding the City and is shown in Figure 6. This Alternative would maintain the SOI boundary which roughly extends east approximately 0.75 miles from the current City on the east. On the west, the SOI would extend to as much as one mile and as little as approximately 0.33 miles beyond the existing City limits. To the south, the SOI would extend southerly approximately 0.6 miles to Banner Lava Cap Road, and on the north, the SOI would extend approximately 0.5 miles and connect with the existing island of City land generally. In some areas the SOI would not be delineated by a particular physical landmark, most notably the eastern and northern boundaries, though the northern boundary loosely follows the ridgelines of Cement Hill and Sugarloaf Mountain. In these areas the SOI would trend north to south, and east to west, respectively, and cross through mostly undeveloped and rural residential areas. As discussed, the western boundary would be irregularly shaped and also not delineated by a particular physical landmark. The southern boundary would largely be delineated by Banner Lava Cap Road east of SR 20. West of SR 20 the boundary begins to trend in a northwesterly direction trends through undeveloped and rural residential areas

No Project Alternative

The No Project Alternative includes adoption of a coterminous SOI. Under this alternative, the City's SOI includes only the territory within the City's jurisdictional boundary, as depicted in Figure 7. CEQA requires that environmental analysis use as its baseline for analysis the existing physical conditions on the ground, rather than what is proposed in existing planning documents. This alternative of a Coterminous Sphere provides the public and decisionmakers with a baseline analysis, assuming no additional expansion of the City so they may better understand the comparative environmental impacts of the other alternatives that propose various levels of city expansion.

Required Approvals

LAFCo is considered the Lead Agency under CEQA, and is responsible for reviewing and certifying the adequacy of the EIR to be prepared for the SOI Update. Prior adoption of the SOI changes proposed under this project, a number of discretionary approvals must be obtained from LAFCo and the City, as listed below. It is expected that these two agencies would consider the data and analyses contained in this EIR when making the determinations.

LAFCo

- Certification by LAFCo that the Final EIR has been completed in compliance with CEQA, and has been reviewed and considered by the decision makers.
- Adoption by LAFCo of the findings regarding any significant impacts and appropriate mitigation.
- Adoption by LAFCo of a statement of overriding considerations for significant and unavoidable impacts, if applicable.
- Adoption by the LAFCo of a mitigation monitoring and reporting program (MMRP).
- Adoption of the Updated Nevada City Sphere of Influence Plan, as well as the required written determinations

Nevada City (assuming the City proceeds as planned with the Priority Annexation Areas)

- Approval by Nevada City of pre-zoning for the priority annexation areas.
- Approval by Nevada City of a zoning map amendment, if necessary.
- Approval by Nevada City of a General Plan map amendment, if necessary.
- Adoption of Resolutions of Application for annexation of the priority annexations with appropriate environmental documentation

Future required approvals and possible permitting requirements from other public agencies may be required.

Potential Environmental Effects

The LAFCo has completed a preliminary review, as described in Section 15060 of the State CEQA Guidelines, of the SOI Update, and determined an EIR should be prepared for this project. No Initial Study was prepared, consistent with Section 15063 (a) of the CEQA Guidelines, as LAFCo determined an EIR was required based on preliminary review. The proposed scope of work for the EIR will involve research, analysis, and study of the following environmental topics:

- Aesthetics
- Air Quality

- Biological Resources
- Cultural/Tribal Cultural Resources
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Hydrology/Water Quality
- Land Use/Planning
- Public Services
- Transportation/Traffic
- Utilities

Level of Environmental Review

The EIR is intended to be for the most part a program level EIR rather than a project level environmental analysis. As such it will look at the broad impacts likely to result from the development of the SOI. It will not examine site specific impacts. However, with respect to the proposed Priority Annexation Areas, the level of analysis will be greater. It is intended to be sufficient to support annexation of these areas with no or limited additional environmental review needed.

The EIR will describe the existing baseline environmental conditions within the areas of the proposed Sphere Alternatives. It will identify the significant environmental effects reasonably anticipated to result from the future annexation of the areas within the SOI into the City. Mitigation measures will be identified for potentially significant environmental impacts, as warranted. The analysis in the EIR will include the following specific categories of environmental impacts and concerns for each of the Four Alternatives, but with a greater depth of analysis for the Preferred Consensus Alternative and its Priority Annexation Areas. Additional subjects may be added at a later date, if new information becomes available.

Aesthetics & Visual Resources

Land uses within and surrounding the SOI consist primarily of rural residential, commercial, undeveloped land, and public use areas. Residential areas largely consist of single family homes, a variety of commercial uses exist including, a day care facility, nursery, Nevada County Juvenile Hall, Elks Lodge, and cemetery. Analysis of this topic will address the potential change in the visual character resulting from development of the SOI with a more detailed analysis for the Priority Annexation Areas and development that may occur outside the SOI, but still within the City's viewshed. The analysis will assume that vacant parcels and parcels with existing development may be developed and redeveloped over time with new buildings and uses permitted under the City's General Plan.

Air Quality

The EIR will address the regional air quality conditions in the project area and discuss the SOI Update short term and long term impacts to local and regional air quality based on methodologies established by the Northern Sierra Air Quality Management District (NSAQMD). The EIR will discuss sensitive receptors, particularly in the Priority Annexation Areas and mitigation measures, if found to be required.

Biological Resources

The SOI contains a mix of uses including rural residential, commercial, and public use areas, as well as undeveloped lands. The potential for future development in the SOI to affect biological resources will be assessed. The California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDDB) along with any other readily available published reports will be reviewed to determine the sensitive plant and animal species known or likely to occur in the area, along with the habitats that support them. For the Priority Annexation Areas, if there is a reasonable potential that threatened or endangered species sites exist with an area, a biological field survey will not be done, but may be recommended prior to future projects.

Cultural and Historic Resources, including Tribal Cultural Resources

Analysis of this topic will address the potential for future ground disturbing activities in the annexation areas to damage or destroy archaeological, paleontological, historic, or tribal cultural resources. If significant archaeological, paleontological, historic, or tribal cultural resources have been identified in the literature and databases as being found in the SOI Update areas, mitigation measures will be identified. For the Priority Annexation Areas, if there is a reasonable potential that significant archaeological sites exist with an area, an archaeological field survey will not be done, but may be recommended prior to future projects.

Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Energy

The EIR will evaluate greenhouse gas emissions associated future development and increase in vehicle trips that would be permitted by the City's General Plan and zoning. The EIR will also assess the SOI Updates alignment with local and regional plans and policies pertaining to GHG emissions and climate change.

Hydrology and Water Quality

Based on Flood Insurance Rate Maps the Priority Annexation Areas #1, #2, and #4 are located in Zone X—an area of minimal flood hazard. The southerly and easterly portions of Annexation Area #3; however, appears to be in a Zone AE and A, a Special Flood Hazard Area, and an area with a 0.2% Annual Chance Flood Hazard, Area of 1% annual change flood with average depth of less than one foot or with drainage areas of less than one square mile. Analysis of this topic will address the possible flooding issues of the Priority Annexation Areas and SOI. It will also assess the capacity and effectiveness of the City's storm drainage system to handle the additional drainage from annexation of the SOI and consistency with the requirements of the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB). The EIR will also evaluate potential effects to groundwater conditions and sources, and mitigation measures, if found to be required, will be discussed.

Land Use

The proposed SOI contains and is surrounded by a mix of uses including rural residential, commercial, and public use areas, as well as undeveloped lands. Analysis of this topic will describe the existing land uses adjacent to and within the SOI and the reasonably foreseeable development of the SOI. The EIR will evaluate the likely development with respect to compatibility with existing and proposed land use planning and policy documents. The EIR will evaluate the proposed changes to the SOI with existing land use regulations including the City's and County's General Plan and zoning. Potential land use impacts as a result of the proposed priority annexation areas will be analyzed and mitigation measures will be identified for significant

impacts, if necessary. Recommendations may also be made for areas of the SOI that are not identified in the priority annexation areas for consideration by the City in a future General Plan update.

Noise and Vibration

The annexations areas are located in areas typified by low density development; however, Annexation Area #1 and Annexation Area #2 are located adjacent to SR 20, and SR 49, respectively, which area major transportation corridors within the City and County. Analysis of this topic will address impacts to annexation areas from existing off-site noise sources. The EIR will also discuss the increase in potential noise sources that could result from implementation of the SOI Update. Noise levels will be evaluated for consistency with applicable standards and guidelines from the City.

Public Services

The EIR will assess whether annexation of the into the City SOI will increase the demand on public services, including police, fire protection, emergency services, schools, and parks. The EIR will assess potential increases in demand for public services and the availability and capacity of public facilities to maintain acceptable levels of services.

Transportation and Circulation

The EIR will perform a consistency analysis in order to identify the transportation impacts of the SOI Update Alternatives on the existing local and regional transportation system and the planned long-range transportation network. For the Priority Annexation Areas, additional evaluation will be done of traffic and parking conditions in the immediate vicinity of the annexation areas

Utilities

The EIR will assess whether implementation of the SOI Update will result in an increased demand on utilities compared to existing conditions. The EIR will examine the impacts of the SOI Update on wastewater systems, storm drains, water supply, and solid waste management. The EIR will analyze applicable state, regional, and City plans and policies for consistency.

Cumulative Impacts

The EIR will include a cumulative impacts analysis that will address the potentially significant cumulative impacts of the SOI Update when considered with other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects in the region, including within the City sphere and service area, as well as within the service areas of agencies providing services to lands within the City and City sphere.

In conformance with the CEQA Guidelines, the EIR will also include the following sections: 1) consistency with local and regional plans and policies, 2) growth inducing impacts, 3) significant irreversible environmental changes, 4) areas of known controversy, 5) references, 6) organizations/ persons consulted, 6) EIR author and consultants, and 7) appendices.

Alternatives

In accordance with Section 15126.6 of the State CEQA Guidelines, an EIR must “describe a range of reasonable alternatives to the project, or to the location of the project, which would feasibly attain most of the basic objectives of the project but would avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the project and evaluate the comparative merits of the alternatives.” The LAFCo/City Consensus Preferred Alternative as identified in this NOP will be discussed as the Preferred Alternative in the Draft EIR. As discussed above, and as required by CEQA, the EIR also will evaluate other potential alternatives including the Original LAFCo Staff Recommendation Alternative, City Recommendation Alternative, and a No Project Alternative that may be capable of reducing or avoiding potential environmental effects. While, this NOP identifies three project alternatives to the Preferred Alternative, the listed alternatives may be added to, taken out, or modified based on comments received on this NOP. Once selected, the alternatives will be analyzed in the Draft EIR for comparison against the impacts identified for the Preferred Alternative, consistent with the requirements of CEQA.

