Proposed Housing-Related Code Amendments
Draft Environmental Impact Report

COUNTY OF PLACER

SCH# 2019080460

Prepared by ICF

DECEMBER 2020

Proposed Housing-Related Code Amendments Draft Environmental Impact Report

Prepared for:

County of Placer
3091 County Center Drive, Suite 280
Auburn, CA 95603
Contact: Shawna Purvines
530-754-3031

Prepared by:

ICF
980 9th Street
Sacramento, CA 95814
Contact: Sally Zeff
916-231-9543

December 2020

Table of Contents

Tables

Figures

Follows Page

Acronyms and Abbreviations

-AG	Agriculture
-AO	Aircraft Overflight
-B	Building Site
-Dc	Design Scenic Corridor
-Dh	Design Historical
-DL	Density Limitation
-Dr	Development Reserve
-Ds	Design Sierra
-PD	Planned Residential Development
-TC	Town Center Commercial
-UP	Use Permit Required
AB	Assembly Bill
ADMP	Asbestos Dust Mitigation Plan
Alquist-Priolo Act	Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act of 1972
amsl	above mean sea level
AR4	IPCC Fourth Assessment Report
BMP	best management practice
BP	before present
BTU	British thermal unit
C1	Neighborhood Commercial
C2	General Commercial
C3	Heavy Commercial
CAA	federal Clean Air Act
CAAQS	California ambient air quality standards
CAFE	Corporate Average Fuel Economy Standards
CAL FIRE	California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection
Cal-EPA	California Environmental Protection Agency
Cal/OSHA	California Division of Occupational Safety and Health
CalARP	California Accidental Release Prevention
CalEEMod	California Emissions Estimator Model
CALGreen	California Green Building Standards Code
California Register	California Register of Historical Resources
CalRecycle	California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery
Caltrans	California Department of Transportation
CARB	California Air Resources Board
CBSC	California Building Standards Code
CCAA	California Clean Air Act
CCR	California Code of Regulations
CDFW	California Department of Fish and Wildlife
Central Valley Water Board	Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board

CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act
CERCLA	Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act of 1980
CESA	California Endangered Species Act
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
CH_4	methane
CMP	congestion management program
CNDDB	California Natural Diversity Database
CNEL	community noise equivalent level
CNPS	California Native Plant Society
CO	carbon monoxide
CO_2	carbon dioxide
CO_2e	carbon dioxide equivalent
County	Placer County
CPD	Commercial Planned Development
CTC	California Transportation Commission
CTP	*California Transportation Plan*
CUPA	Certified Unified Program Agency
CWA	Clean Water Act
dB	decibel
dBA	A-weighted decibel
dbh	diameter at breast height
DPM	diesel particulate matter
DTSC	California Department of Toxic Substances Control
DWR	California Department of Water Resources
EFH	essential fish habitat
EIR	environmental impact report
EO	Executive Order
EOP	emergency operations plan
ESA	federal Endangered Species Act
F	Farm
FAR	Floor Area Ratio
Fed. Reg.	*Federal Register*
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FIRM	Flood Insurance Rate Map
FMMP	Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program
FPPA	Farmland Protection Policy Act
GC	General Commercial
General Plan	Placer County General Plan
GHG	greenhouse gas
GIS	geographic information system
GSP	groundwater sustainability plan
GWP	global warming potential
HCD	California Department of Housing and Community Development
HCP	habitat conservation plan

HDR	Higher Density Residential
HFC	hydrofluorocarbon
“Hot Spots” Act	Air Toxics “Hot Spots” Information and Assessment Act of 1987
HS	Highway Services
HSWA	Hazardous and Solid Waste Amendments of 1984
HWCA	Hazardous Waste Control Act
I-	Interstate
in/sec	inches per second
IPaC	Information for Planning and Consultation
km^2	square kilometer
Lahontan Water Board	Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board
L_{dn}	day-night sound level
LDR	Low Density Residential
L_{eq}	equivalent sound level
LID	low-impact development
L_{max}	maximum sound level
L_{min}	minimum sound level
LOS	level of service
LRA	local responsibility area
LSAA	lake and streambed alteration agreement
LUST	leaking underground storage tank
L_{XX}	percentile-exceeded sound level
Magnuson-Stevens Act	Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act
MBTA	Migratory Bird Treaty Act
MCAB	Mountain Counties Air Basin
MDR	Medium Density Residential
MF	Multifamily
MMRP	mitigation monitoring and reporting program
MPO	metropolitan planning organization
MRDS	Mineral Resources Data System
MRZ	Mineral Resource Zone
MS4	municipal separate storm sewer system
MT	metric ton
MTP	metropolitan transportation plan
MU	Mixed Use
N_2O	nitrous oxide
NAAQS	national ambient air quality standards
NAHC	Native American Heritage Commission
National Register	National Register of Historic Places
NCCP	natural community conservation plan
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NHPA	National Historic Preservation Act
NHTSA	National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

NMFS	National Marine Fisheries Service
NO	nitric oxide
NO_2	nitrogen dioxide
NOA	naturally occurring asbestos
NOP	notice of preparation
NO_X	nitrogen oxide
NPDES	National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System
NPL	National Priorities List
NPPA	Native Plant Protection Act of 1977
NRCS	Natural Resources Conservation Service
O_3	ozone
OES	Placer County Office of Emergency Services
OP	Office and Professional
OPR	Office of Planning and Research
OSHA	Occupational Safety and Health Administration
PCAPCD	Placer County Air Pollution Control District
PCCP	Placer County Conservation Program
PCPD	Placer County Parks Division
PCSO	Placer County Sheriff's Office
PCSP	*Placer County Sustainability Plan: A Greenhouse Gas Emission Reduction Plan and Adaptation Strategy*
PCWA	Placer County Water Agency
PFC	perfluorocarbon
PG&E	Pacific Gas and Electric Company
Placer Legacy	Placer Legacy Open Space and Agricultural Conservation Program
PM	particulate matter
PM2.5	particulate matter 2.5 micrometers or less in diameter
PM10	particulate matter 10 micrometers or less in diameter
Porter-Cologne Act	Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act
PPV	peak particle velocity
PRC	California Public Resources Code
Procedures	*Standard Procedures for the Assessment and Mitigation of Adverse Impacts to Paleontological Resources*
project	Proposed Housing-Related Code Amendments
RA	Residential-Agricultural
RCRA	Resource Conservation and Recovery Act of 1976
Regional Water Board	Regional Water Quality Control Board
RES	Resort
RF	Residential-Forest
RHNA	regional housing needs allocation
RM	Residential Multi-Family
RMP	risk management plan
ROG	reactive organic gases
RPS	Renewables Portfolio Standard
RR	Rural Residential

RS	Residential Single-Family
RTP	regional transportation plan
SACOG	Sacramento Area Council of Governments
SAFE	Safer Affordable Fuel-Efficient
SB	Senate Bill
SCS	sustainable communities strategy
sf	square feet
SF_6	sulfur hexafluoride
SFNA	Sacramento Federal Nonattainment Area
SGMA	Sustainable Groundwater Management Act of 2014
SIP	State Implementation Plan
SMAQMD	Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District
SMARA	Surface Mining and Reclamation Act of 1975
SO_2	sulfur dioxide
SR	State Route
SRA	state responsibility area
State Water Board	State Water Resources Control Board
STIP	State Transportation Improvement Program
SVAB	Sacramento Valley Air Basin
SWMM	stormwater management manual
SWPPP	stormwater pollution prevention plan
TAAS	traffic accident analysis system
TAC	toxic air contaminant
Tanner Act	Toxic Air Contaminant Identification and Control Act
TART	Tahoe Truckee Area Regional Transit
TCR	tribal cultural resource
TMDL	total maximum daily load
TPZ	timberland production zone
UPRR	Union Pacific Railroad
USACE	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
USEPA	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
USFWS	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
UWMP	urban water management plan
VMT	vehicle miles traveled
VOC	volatile organic compound
WPGSA	West Placer Groundwater Sustainability Agency
Williamson Act	California Land Conservation Act
WPWMA	Western Placer Waste Management Authority
WSA	water supply assessment
WWTP	wastewater treatment plant
Zoning Ordinance	Placer County Zoning Ordinance

Executive Summary

ES.1 Project Overview

The proposed project consists of targeted amendments to the Placer County General Plan (General Plan), Placer County Zoning Ordinance (Zoning Ordinance), Zoning Maps, and Community Design Guidelines Manual, which would provide a framework for future housing development in Placer County (County) that takes into account population growth, economic factors, demographics, and community needs and wants. The updates to the General Plan, Zoning Ordinance, and Community Design Guidelines Manual considered together constitute the proposed project (project) being analyzed in this Draft Environmental Impact Report (Draft EIR) pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Placer County is illustrated in Figure ES-1. The project applies to those areas that are under County jurisdiction.

Unincorporated Placer County currently has sufficient area to meet its housing demand, as described in great detail in *Chapter 2, Project Description*; however, housing development in unincorporated Placer County has been slow and difficult for multiple reasons, including market conditions, infrastructure constraints, and regulatory/environmental barriers. Through its updates to the General Plan, Zoning Ordinance, and the adoption of a Design Manual for multi-family and mixed-use development. The project proposes to facilitate and accelerate housing development by allowing for more variation of development in areas where infrastructure and development already exists.

ES.2 Project Objectives

ES.2.1 Placer County Housing Strategy and Development Plan

The proposed Project represents a component of a larger effort to implement elements of the Placer County Housing Strategy and Development Plan. This proposed Project is intended to implement the following primary objectives:

- Increase the availability of a mix of housing types in the county for existing and future residents, students, and employees whose income cannot support the cost of housing in the county
- Improve the County's overall employment growth by assisting County employers in reducing critical shortages of skilled workers in part driven by a lack of available housing
- Reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT) per capita by shortening commute distances for those who commute within Placer County for education or work, or other metric for VMT as determined appropriate by the County under Senate Bill 743 legislation
- Bring County housing policies, ordinances, standards, and guidelines into conformance with recent changes in State law

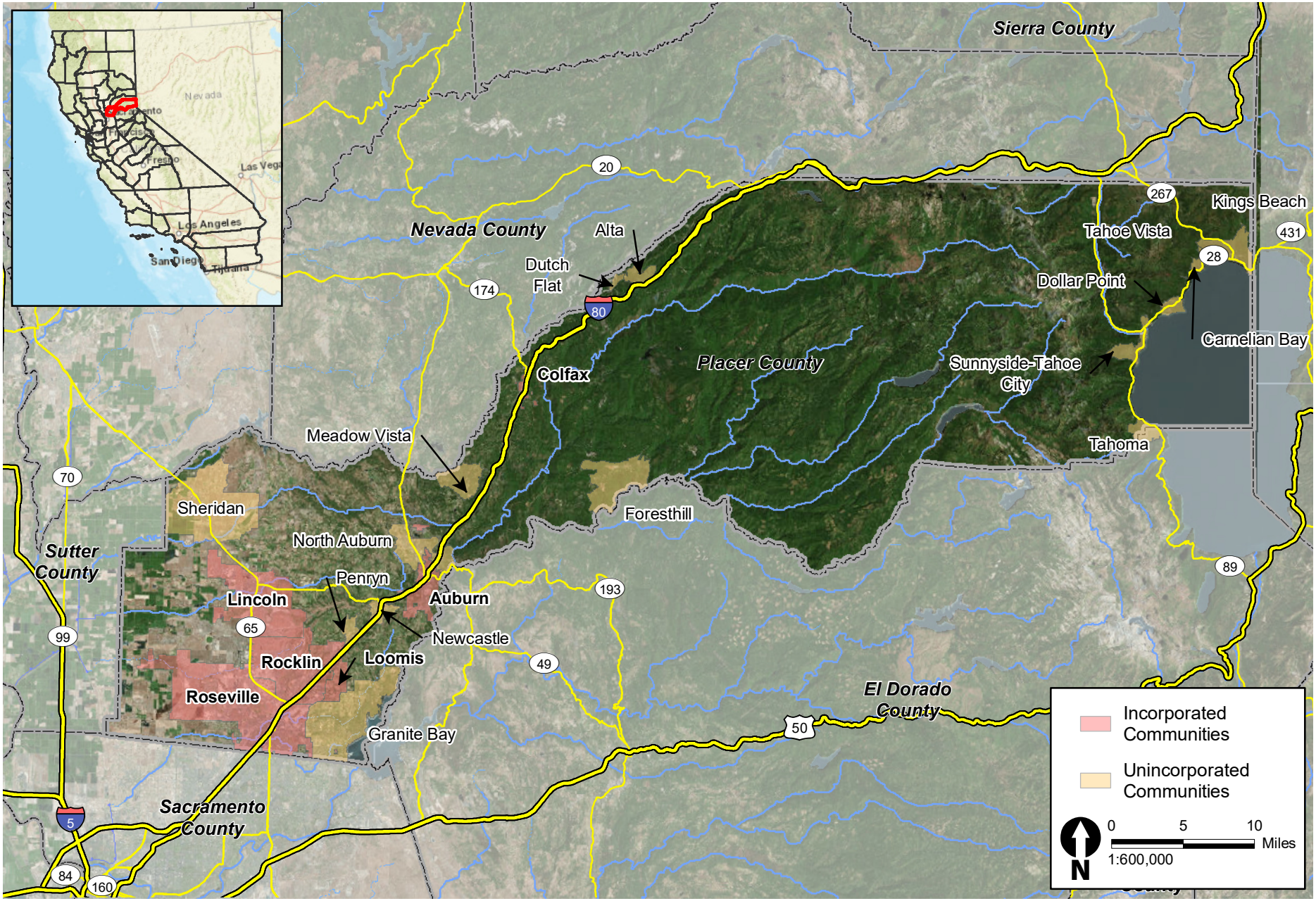


Figure ES-1
Regional Location Map

- Implement adopted General Plan, community plan and area plan policies that support efficient, resilient and sustainable housing development patterns that can be achieved through higher density, mixed use, transit oriented and infill development projects
- Align Placer County General Plan and Zoning Ordinance housing-related land uses, development standards and implementation methods with recently adopted specific plans, community plans, and area plans
- Implement County-adopted Strategic Plan (November 20, 2018), which supports new housing construction that provides a mix of housing types for existing and future residents at all income ranges.

ES.3 Project Impacts and Mitigation Measures

This programmatic Draft EIR examines the potential impacts of the project, discloses the significance level of those impacts, and identifies mitigation measures that will reduce or avoid the significant impacts. Unlike a development project, this project consists of targeted amendments to the Placer County General Plan, Zoning Ordinance, Zoning Combining Districts, and Community Design Manual for Multi-Family and Mixed-Use Development.

The project involves targeted amendments to the General Plan, not a wholesale revision or update of the Plan. Accordingly, the amended Plan would clarify land use designations to allow for Mixed-Use/Multi-Family uses in High Density Residential and General Commercial land use designations. These land use modifications would not substantially increase the residential development potential that presently exists under the General Plan. Similarly, the policy amendments would not substantially change how future development under the General Plan would proceed. The analysis focuses on the proposed changes to the General Plan, differentiating them to the extent possible from impacts that are attributable to the General Plan as a whole.

The project would also involve amending the Zoning Ordinance to allow for more variation of development within the existing zoning districts. Overall, the amendments to the Zoning Ordinance would result in the addition of a new zone district (Mixed Use), including new standards and guidelines; an increase in the allowable density of mobile home parks; the additional allowance of construction workforce housing; updates to the development standards, including standards for parking, building heights, and lot coverage standards; updates to the review for by-right development; updates to the Density Bonus Ordinance; and allow for cluster housing.

ES.3.1 Summary of Project Impacts

Table ES-1 summarizes the impacts associated with the project, the significance of those impacts, mitigation measures identified to reduce or avoid significant impacts, and the level of significance after mitigation. CEQA is primarily concerned with significant impacts. Where the project's impacts are less than significant or the project would have no impact, no mitigation is necessary and none is identified.

Table ES-1. Impacts and Mitigation

Impact	Level of Significance[a]	Mitigation Measures[b]	Level of Significance after Mitigation[c]
3.1 Aesthetics			
Impact AES-1: Potential to have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista	LTS		LTS
Impact AES-2: Potential to substantially damage scenic resources along a scenic highway	LTS		LTS
Impact AES-3: In non-urbanized areas, degradation of the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings; in urbanized areas, conflict with zoning or other regulations governing scenic quality	LTS		LTS
Impact AES-4: Introduction of a new source of substantial light or glare that would adversely affect daytime or nighttime views in the area	S	**Mitigation Measure AES-2: Implement Lighting Plan** A lighting plan will be developed for individual projects that are located on underdeveloped parcels in areas that are surrounded by limited urban development. The lighting plan will be submitted to the Development Review Committee for review and approval. The lighting plan will include a detailed lighting and photometric plan that: • Demonstrates compliance with the lighting requirements outlined in the Design Manual. This includes minimizing impacts on adjoining and nearby land uses. • Streetlights will not exceed the minimum number required by the County unless otherwise approved by the DRC. Parking lots would be lit, but would allow gaps in lighting. • Includes the type of lighting fixtures proposed in parking areas (as needed for additional housing developments), including pole height. All site lighting in parking lots will be full cut-off design. The metal pole	LTS

Impact	Level of Significance[a]	Mitigation Measures[b]	Level of Significance after Mitigation[c]
		color will be such that the pole blends into the landscape (i.e., black, bronze, or dark bronze). • Includes building lighting that is shielded and directed downward, such that the bulb or ballast is not visible. Lighting fixture design will complement the building colors and materials and will be used to light entries, soffits, covered walkways and pedestrian areas such as plazas. Roof and wall pack lighting will not be used. Lighting intensity will be of a level that only highlights the adjacent building area and ground area and will not impose glare on any pedestrian or vehicular traffic. • Includes landscape lighting that will not impose glare on any pedestrian or vehicular traffic.	
3.2 Agricultural and Forestry Resources			
Impact AG-1: Conversion of Important Farmland to nonagricultural use; conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use or with a Williamson Act contract; conflict with existing zoning of forest land, timberland, or timberland zoned Timberland Production; loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use	NI		NI
Impact AG-2: Potential to cause changes in the existing environment that could result in conversion of Farmland to nonagricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use	LTS		LTS

Impact	Level of Significance[a]	Mitigation Measures[b]	Level of Significance after Mitigation[c]
3.3 Air Quality			
Impact AQ-1: Conflict with or obstruction of implementation of the applicable air quality plan	LTS		LTS
Impact AQ-2: Cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is a nonattainment area for an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard	S	**Mitigation Measure AQ-2: Installation of Electric Appliances in New Construction** Require the installation of only electric appliances in future residential construction associated with the proposed project. Future residential units will have no wood-burning or natural gas fireplaces or stoves.	LTS
Impact AQ-3: Exposure of sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations	S	**Mitigation Measure AQ-3a: Compliance with PCAPCD Recommended Construction Mitigation Measures** To control emissions of criteria air pollutants during construction, the project proponent/operator and/or its contractor(s) will implement the following measures during construction of the proposed residential units, subject to verification by the County: • Maintain all construction equipment properly according to manufacturer's specifications. • Fuel all off-road and portable diesel-powered equipment with CARB certified motor vehicle diesel fuel (non-taxed version suitable for use off-road). • Comply with the State Off-Road Regulation by using diesel construction equipment meeting CARB's Tier 2 certified engines or cleaner off-road heavy-duty diesel engines. • Comply with the State On-Road Regulation by using on-road heavy-duty trucks that meet the CARB's Tier 3 standard for on-road heavy-duty diesel engines. • All on and off-road diesel equipment shall not idle for more than 5 minutes. Signs shall be posted in the designated queuing areas and/or job sites to remind drivers and operators of the 5-minute idling limit. • Diesel idling within 1,000 feet of sensitive receptors is not permitted. • Staging and queuing areas shall not be located within 1,000 feet of sensitive receptors.	LTS

Impact	Level of Significance[a]	Mitigation Measures[b]	Level of Significance after Mitigation[c]
		• Use Electrified equipment when feasible. • Substitute gasoline-powered in place of diesel-powered equipment, where feasible. • Use alternatively fueled construction equipment on-site where feasible, such as compressed natural gas (CNG), liquefied natural gas (LNG), propane or biodiesel. • Require contractors to repower equipment with the cleanest engines available. • Require construction equipment use installed California Verified Diesel Emission Control Strategies. These strategies are listed at: http://www.arb.ca.gov/diesel/verdev/vt/cvt.htm • Require the contractor to prepare a dust control plan when the disturbed area is more than one (1) acre. • Reduce the amount of the disturbed area where possible. • Use water trucks or sprinkler systems in sufficient quantities to prevent airborne dust from leaving the site. Increased watering frequency is required whenever wind speeds exceed 15 mph. Reclaimed (non-potable) water should be used whenever possible. • All dirt stock-pile areas should be sprayed daily as needed. • All roadways, driveways, sidewalks, etc. to be paved should be completed as soon as possible, with building pads laid as soon as possible after grading unless seeding or soil binders are used. **Mitigation Measure AQ-3b: Discovery of Naturally Occurring Asbestos during Construction** During construction activity, if NOA, serpentine, or ultramafic rock is discovered by the owner/operator and an ADMP has not been submitted, the following measures shall be implemented. For additional information, visit the PCAPCD's website at https://www.placer.ca.gov/1621/NOA-Construction-Grading. • When the construction area is equal to or greater than 1 acre, the applicant will prepare an ADMP and obtain approval by the PCAPCD within 14 days of the discovery of NOA, serpentine, or ultramafic rock. The applicant will contact the PCAPCD before retaining a qualified state	

Impact	Level of Significance[a]	Mitigation Measures[b]	Level of Significance after Mitigation[c]
		registered geologist to conduct initial geologic evaluations as part of the ADMP application process • Maintain the dust mitigation measures until the provisions of the PCAPCD-approved ADMP plan are implemented • Implement the provisions of the PCAPCD-approved ADMP within 14 days of its approval • Maintain the provisions of the PCAPCD-approved ADMP throughout the remainder of the construction or grading activity • Each subsequent individual lot developer will prepare an ADMP when the construction area is equal to or greater than 1 acre • The project developer and each subsequent lot seller must disclose the presence of ultramafic rock, serpentine, or NOA during any subsequent real estate transaction processes. The disclosure must include a copy of the CARB pamphlet entitled "Asbestos-Containing Rock and Soil—What California Homeowners and Renters Need to Know," or other similar fact sheets which may be found on the PCAPCD's website (Placer County Air Pollution Control District 2020c).	
Impact AQ-4: Other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people	LTS		LTS
3.4 Biological Resources			
Impact BIO-1: Potential disturbance or loss of special-status plant populations as a result of construction made possible by proposed General Plan and Zoning Ordinance updates	S	**Mitigation Measure BIO-1a: Identify and Document Special-Status Plant Populations** For proposed development in previously undeveloped areas, prior to design or construction, the County will require documentation of the presence or absence of special-status plant populations. A qualified botanist will be retained to survey the affected area before project design and construction. To document special-status plant populations, the following steps will be undertaken before construction. At any point during implementation of this mitigation measure, a proposed project may be re-designed or modified to avoid direct and indirect impacts on special-	LTS

status plants, and will not need to complete the remaining steps identified in this mitigation measure.

- Review Existing Information. The botanist will review existing information to develop a list of special-status plants that could grow within the affected area. Sources of information consulted will include the CNDDB; USFWS list of endangered, threatened, and proposed species for the project region; previously prepared environmental documents; City and County general plans; HCPs; and the CNPS inventory.
- Conduct Field Surveys. The botanist will evaluate existing habitat conditions in each affected area and determine what level of botanical surveys may be required. The type of botanical survey will depend on species richness, habitat type and quality, and the probability of special-status species occurring in a particular habitat type. Depending on these factors and the proposed extent of construction, one or both of the following levels of survey will be required:
  - Habitat Assessment. A habitat assessment determines whether suitable habitat is present. This type of assessment can be conducted at any time of year and is used to assess and characterize habitat conditions and determine whether return surveys are necessary. If no suitable habitat is present, no additional surveys will be required.
  - Floristic Protocol-Level Surveys. Floristic surveys that follow the CDFW protocols for surveying native plant species (California Department of Fish and Wildlife 2018) will be conducted in areas that are relatively undisturbed or have moderate to high potential to support multiple special-status plants. The CDFW Survey Guidelines require that all species be identified to the level necessary to determine whether they qualify as special-status plants. The guidelines also require that field surveys be conducted when special-status plants that could occur in the area are evident and identifiable. To account for different special-status plant identification periods, one or more series of field surveys may be required in spring and summer.
- Document Survey Results. If special-status plants are found during the field survey, they will be mapped and documented, Mitigation Measure BIO-1b will be implemented in conjunction with this mitigation measure to avoid or minimize significant impacts on special-status plants.

Impact	Level of Significance[a]	Mitigation Measures[b]	Level of Significance after Mitigation[c]
		Mitigation Measure BIO-1b: Avoid or Minimize Impacts on Special-Status Plant Populations Where development in an affected area would have potential to result in direct loss or indirect disturbance to special-status plants, the following measures to avoid or minimize impacts on special-status plants will be implemented: • Redesign or modify the proposed development during future site design to avoid direct and indirect impacts on special-status plants, if feasible. • During construction, protect special-status plants by installing environmentally sensitive area fencing (orange construction barrier fencing) around special-status plant populations. The environmentally sensitive area fencing will be installed at least 20 feet from the edge of the population. The location of the fencing will be marked in the field with stakes and flagging and shown on the construction drawings. The construction specifications will contain clear language that prohibits construction related activities, vehicle operation, material and equipment storage, and other surface-disturbing activities within the fenced environmentally sensitive area. • If population avoidance is not possible, coordinate with the appropriate resource agencies and local experts to determine whether transplantation is feasible. If the agencies concur that transplantation is a feasible mitigation measure, the botanist will develop and implement a transplantation plan through coordination with the appropriate agencies. The special-status plant transplantation plan will involve identifying a suitable transplant site; moving the plant material and seed bank to the transplant site; collecting seed material and propagating it in a nursery; and monitoring the transplant sites to document recruitment and survival rates. • If transplantation of special-status plants is not feasible, the effects of the project on special-status plants will be compensated for by offsite preservation at a ratio to be negotiated with the resource agencies. Suitable habitat for affected special status–plant species will be purchased in a conservation area, preserved, and managed in perpetuity. Detailed information will be provided to the agencies on the location and quality of the preservation area, the feasibility of protecting	

Impact	Level of Significance[a]	Mitigation Measures[b]	Level of Significance after Mitigation[c]
		and managing the area in perpetuity, and the responsible parties. Other pertinent information also will be provided, to be determined through future coordination with the resource agencies.	
Impact BIO-2: Potential disturbance or loss of special-status wildlife species and their habitat as a result of construction made possible by proposed General Plan and Zoning Ordinance updates	S	**Mitigation Measure BIO-2a: Document Special-Status Wildlife Species and Their Habitats** Prior to design or construction for future development in previously undeveloped areas, the County will require documentation of the presence or absence of special-status wildlife populations or suitable habitat for these species. A qualified wildlife biologist will be retained to survey the affected area before project design and construction. To document special-status wildlife and habitats, the following steps will be undertaken before construction. At any point during implementation of this mitigation measure, a proposed project may be re-designed or modified to avoid direct and indirect impacts on special-status wildlife, and will not need to complete the remaining steps identified in this mitigation measure. • Review Existing Information. The wildlife biologist will review existing information to develop a list of special-status wildlife species that could occur in the affected area. The following information will be reviewed as part of this process: the USFWS IPaC species list for the affected area, CNDDB occurrences within the vicinity of the affected area, NMFS species lists, previously prepared environmental documents, City and County general plans, PCCP, and USFWS-issued biological opinions for previous projects in the vicinity of the affected area. • Coordinate with State and Federal Agencies, as Necessary. The wildlife biologist will coordinate with the County and appropriate agencies (CDFW, USFWS, NMFS), as necessary, to discuss wildlife resource issues in the region and determine the appropriate level of surveys necessary to document special-status wildlife and their habitats. • Conduct Field Studies. The wildlife biologist will evaluate existing habitat conditions and determine what level of biological surveys may be required. The type of survey required will depend on species richness, habitat type and quality, and the probability of special-status species occurring in habitat types present in the affected area. Depending on the existing conditions in the area and the proposed	LTS

Impact	Level of Significance[a]	Mitigation Measures[b]	Level of Significance after Mitigation[c]
		construction activity, one or more of the following levels of survey may be required: ○ Habitat Assessment. A habitat assessment determines whether suitable habitat is present. This type of assessment can be conducted at any time of year and is used to assess and characterize habitat conditions and to determine whether return surveys are necessary. If no suitable habitat is present, no additional surveys will be required. ○ Species-Focused Surveys. Species-focused surveys (or target species surveys) will be conducted if suitable habitat is present for special-status wildlife and if it is necessary to determine the presence or absence of the species in the affected area or immediate vicinity. The surveys will focus on special-status wildlife species that have the potential to occur in the affected area (Table 3.4-3). The surveys will be conducted during a period when the target species are present and/or active. ○ Protocol-Level Wildlife Surveys. The County will require compliance with protocols and guidelines issued by responsible agencies for certain special-status species. USFWS and CDFW have issued survey protocols and guidelines for several special-status wildlife species that could occur in the affected areas, including valley elderberry longhorn beetle, California red-legged frog, foothill yellow-legged frog, Sierra Nevada yellow-legged frog, California spotted owl, northern goshawk, and great grey owl. In some cases, the County may choose to require the assumption of the presence of a species rather than conduct a protocol-level survey. The protocols and guidelines may require that surveys be conducted during a particular time of year or time of day when the species is present and active. Many survey protocols require that only a USFWS- or CDFW-approved biologist perform the surveys. Because some species can be difficult to detect or observe, multiple field techniques may be used during a survey period and additional surveys may be required in subsequent seasons or years as outlined in the protocol or guidelines for each species. Special-status wildlife or suitable habitat identified during the field surveys will be mapped and documented. If surveys determine that special-status wildlife species are present or assumed to be present in or near the affected area, the County will require implementation of	

Impact	Level of Significance[a]	Mitigation Measures[b]	Level of Significance after Mitigation[c]
		Mitigation Measure BIO-2b to avoid or minimize significant impacts on special-status wildlife. **Mitigation Measure BIO-2b: Avoid and Minimize Impacts on Special-Status Wildlife Species through Redesign, Protection, or Monitoring** Where development in an affected area would have potential to result in direct or indirect loss or disturbance to special-status wildlife, the County will implement the following measures to avoid or minimize impacts on special-status wildlife: • Redesign or modify program elements to avoid direct and indirect impacts on special-status wildlife or their habitats, if feasible. • During ground-disturbing construction activities, protect special-status wildlife and their habitats by installing environmentally sensitive area fencing or staking around habitat features, such as wetlands, streams, burrows, and/or active nests. The environmentally sensitive area fencing or staking will be installed at a minimum distance from the edge of the resource as determined by a qualified biologists and through coordination with state and federal agency biologists (USFWS and CDFW), as applicable. The location of the fencing will be marked in the field with stakes and flagging and shown on the construction drawings. The construction specifications will contain clear language that prohibits construction-related activities, vehicle operation, material and equipment storage, and other surface-disturbing activities within the fenced environmentally sensitive area. • Restrict construction-related activities to the non-breeding season for special-status wildlife species that could occur in the affected area. Timing restrictions may vary depending on the species and could occur during any time of the year. • Coordinate with the appropriate resource agencies to determine whether a monitoring plan for special-status wildlife is necessary during construction. If a monitoring plan is required, it will be developed and implemented in coordination with appropriate agencies and will include: ○ A description of each of the wildlife species and suitable habitat for species that could occur in the affected area	

Impact	Level of Significance[a]	Mitigation Measures[b]	Level of Significance after Mitigation[c]
		○ The location and size of no-disturbance zones in and adjacent to environmentally sensitive areas for wildlife ○ Directions on the handling and relocating of special-status wildlife species found on the site that are in immediate danger of being injured or killed ○ Notification and reporting requirements for special-status species that are identified in the affected area **Mitigation Measure BIO-2c: Coordinate with Resource Agencies and Develop Appropriate Compensation Plans** In the event that, despite implementation of Mitigation Measure BIO-2b: Avoid and Minimize Impacts on Special-Status Wildlife Species through Redesign, Protection, or Monitoring, construction activities would result in significant impacts on state- or federally listed wildlife species, the County will require development of a compensation plan in coordination with the appropriate resource agency (CDFW, USFWS, NMFS), and/or their compensation guidelines followed, to reduce the impact to a less-than-significant level. The amount of compensation will vary depending on the amount of habitat loss or degree of habitat disturbance anticipated. The compensation plan will be developed and implemented in coordination with the appropriate state or federal agency and compensatory mitigation would be accomplished through one or a combination of the following options. • Purchase the appropriate number and type of habitat credits at a USFWS and/or CDFW-approved mitigation bank or conservation area. • Establish a conservation easement on a parcel(s) containing a sufficient amount of preserved or restored habitat and adaptively mange the mitigation lands consistent with the most current information on the species habitat requirements. • Mitigate through an approved habitat conservation plan (i.e., PCCP) by contributing applicable mitigation fees based on the special-status wildlife habitat type that is affected by the project. If the PCCP is the permitting mechanism used to address impacts associated with listed species and their habitats, waters of the State, and waters of the U.S., the PCCP's mitigation fees and conditions on covered	

Impact	Level of Significance[a]	Mitigation Measures[b]	Level of Significance after Mitigation[c]
		activities may be used to address this resource impact and avoidance minimization measures as set forth in the PCCP implementation document to the extent compliance with the PCCP provides equal or greater mitigation or reduction in the significance of impacts. If PCCP enrollment is chosen and/or required by the State and federal agencies as mitigation for one or more biological resource area impacts, then the PCCP avoidance, minimization, and mitigation measures shall apply to those species, habitat types, and waters that are covered by the PCCP. As applicable, compensatory mitigation for special-status wildlife species would be coordinated with compensatory mitigation for other local, state and federally regulated habitats, such as waters of the United States, riparian, and oak woodlands.	
Impact BIO-3: Potential loss or disturbance of riparian habitat as a result of construction of proposed General Plan and Zoning Ordinance updates	S	**Mitigation Measure BIO-3a: Avoid and minimize disturbance of riparian habitats** To the extent possible, the County will require avoidance of impacts on riparian habitats by implementing the following measures: • Redesign or modify the proposed development to avoid direct and indirect impacts on riparian habitats, if feasible. • Protect riparian habitats that occur near the project site by installing environmentally sensitive area fencing at least 20 feet from the edge of the riparian vegetation, if feasible. Depending on site-specific conditions, this buffer may be narrower or wider than 20 feet. The location of the fencing will be marked in the field with stakes and flagging and shown on the construction drawings. The construction specifications will contain clear language that prohibits construction-related activities, vehicle operation, material and equipment storage, and other surface-disturbing activities within the fenced environmentally sensitive area. • Minimize the potential for long-term loss of riparian vegetation by trimming vegetation, rather than removing the entire shrub. Shrub vegetation will be cut at least 1 foot above ground level to leave the root systems intact and allow for more-rapid regeneration of the species. Cutting will be limited to a minimum area necessary within the construction zone.	LTS

Impact	Level of Significance[a]	Mitigation Measures[b]	Level of Significance after Mitigation[c]
		Mitigation Measure BIO-3b: Compensate for the Loss of Riparian Habitat If riparian habitat is removed as part of future development associated with project implementation, the County will require compensation for the loss of riparian vegetation to ensure no net loss of habitat functions and values. Compensation ratios will be based on site-specific information and determined through coordination with state and federal agencies (including CDFW, USFWS, USACE, and NMFS). Compensation will be provided at a minimum 1:1 ratio (1 acre restored or created for every 1 acre removed) and may be a combination of onsite restoration/creation, offsite restoration, and mitigation credits. The County will require the development of a restoration and monitoring plan that describes how riparian habitat will be enhanced or recreated and monitored over a minimum period of time, as determined by the appropriate state and federal agencies. The County will require implementation the restoration and monitoring plan.	
Impact BIO-4: Potential loss or disturbance of oak woodlands as a result of construction of proposed General Plan and Zoning Ordinance updates	S	**Mitigation Measure BIO-4a: Avoid and Minimize Disturbance of Oak Woodlands** To the extent possible, the County will require avoidance of impacts on oak woodlands by implementing the following measures: • Redesign or modify the proposed development to avoid direct and indirect impacts on oak woodlands, if feasible. • Protect oak woodlands that occur near the project site by installing environmentally sensitive area fencing at least 20 feet from the edge of oak trees. Depending on site-specific conditions, this buffer may be narrower or wider than 20 feet. The location of the fencing will be marked in the field with stakes and flagging and shown on the construction drawings. The construction specifications will contain clear language that prohibits construction-related activities, vehicle operation, material and equipment storage, and other surface-disturbing activities within the fenced environmentally sensitive area. • Minimize the potential for long-term loss of woody vegetation by pruning vegetation rather than removing entire trees or shrubs in areas where complete removal is not required. Any trees or shrubs that need to be trimmed will be cut at least 1 foot above ground level to leave the	LTS

root systems intact and allow for more rapid regeneration. Cutting will be limited to the minimum area necessary within the construction zone. To protect nesting birds, no pruning or removal of woody vegetation will be performed between February 1 and August 31 without pre-construction bird surveys conducted in accordance with CDFW and/or USFWS requirements.

- Operation or parking of vehicles, digging, trenching, slope cuts, soil compaction, grading, paving, or placement of fill will be prohibited within at least 6 feet outside the driplines of retained trees.
- All construction, staging (including vehicle parking), and access areas will be restricted to the direct impact areas.
- Runoff from the development area will be directed in such a way as to prevent drainage into any adjacent open space area. Drainage systems will be designed to prevent runoff from flowing into oak woodlands and direct it into a storm drainage system, which will discharge runoff into existing drainages. Retaining walls will be installed at the edge of development areas where fill is placed to avoid ponding of water around adjacent retained oak trees.

Mitigation Measure BIO-4b: Compensate for the Loss of Oak Woodlands

Where future development associated with implementation of the project would have potential to result in the loss of oak woodland, the County will require compensation for the loss of oak woodland to ensure no net loss of habitat functions and values. Compensation ratios will be based on site-specific information and determined through coordination with CDFW. Compensation will be provided at a minimum 1:1 ratio (1 acre restored or created for every 1 acre removed). Compensation for loss of oak woodlands can be accomplished using one or more of the following options:

- Offsite deed restriction or conservation easement acquisition and/or acquisition in fee title by a land conservation organization for purposes of off-site oak woodland conservation
- In-lieu fee payment
- Replacement planting onsite within an area subject to deed restriction or conservation easement
- Replacement planting offsite within an area subject to a conservation easement

Impact	Level of Significance[a]	Mitigation Measures[b]	Level of Significance after Mitigation[c]
		• A combination of the options 1 through 4 In accordance with requirements of the California Public Resources Code Section 21083.4(b), replacement planting will not account for more than 50 percent of the oak woodland mitigation requirement. The replacement planting area must be suitable for tree planting, will not conflict with current or planned land uses, and will be large enough to accommodate replacement plantings at a density equal to the density of oak woodlands affected, up to a maximum density of 200 trees per acre. The County will require development a mitigation and monitoring plan that describes how replacement planting will be installed and monitored over a minimum period of time, as determined by CDFW. The County will require implementation of the restoration and monitoring plan. The remaining portion of the project's oak woodland impact mitigation requirement would be implemented in the form of an in-lieu fee payment to the County.	
Impact BIO-5: Disturbance or loss of waters of the United States and waters of the state	S	**Mitigation Measure BIO-5a: Identify and Delineate Waters of the United States and Waters of the State** Prior to design or construction of future projects resulting from implementation of the project, a qualified botanist will be retained to identify areas that could qualify as waters of the United States, including wetlands and non-wetland waters, and waters of the state, assuming such features exist in the affected area. Wetlands will be identified using both the current USACE and State Water Board definitions of wetlands and the current required methods, most likely the USACE Wetlands Delineation Manual (Environmental Laboratory 1987), Arid West or Western Mountains, Valleys, and Coast regional supplements (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers 2008, 2010). The jurisdictional boundary of non-wetland waters will be identified based on the ordinary high water mark (33 CFR § 328.3(e)) using current methods, most likely the Arid West and Western Mountains, Valleys, and Coast field guides (Lichvar and McColley 2008; Mersel and Lichvar 2014). This information will be mapped and documented as part of aquatic resources delineation reports according to current USACE minimum standards and mapping standards. Mitigation Measures BIO-5b and BIO-5c will be implemented as necessary to avoid, minimize, or compensate for impacts on waters of the United States and waters of the state.	LTS

Impact	Level of Significance[a]	Mitigation Measures[b]	Level of Significance after Mitigation[c]
		Mitigation Measure BIO-5b: Avoid and Minimize Disturbance of Waters of the United States and Waters of the State To the extent possible, the County will require avoidance and minimization of impacts on wetlands and non-wetland waters (creeks, streams, rivers, and canals) by implementing the following measures: • Redesign or modify the proposed development to avoid direct and indirect impacts on wetland habitats, if feasible. For underground components, this may be accomplished through the use of trenchless installation methods (e.g., jack and bore). • Protect wetland habitats that occur near the project site by installing environmentally sensitive area fencing at least 20 feet from the edge of the wetland. Depending on site-specific conditions and permit requirements, this buffer may be wider than 20 feet. The location of the fencing will be marked in the field with stakes and flagging and shown on the construction drawings. The construction specifications will contain clear language that prohibits construction-related activities, vehicle operation, material and equipment storage, and other surface-disturbing activities within the fenced environmentally sensitive area. • Avoid installation activities in saturated or ponded wetlands during the wet season (spring and winter) to the maximum extent possible. Where such activities are unavoidable, protective practices, such as use of padding or vehicles with balloon tires, will be used. • Where determined necessary by resource specialists, use geotextile cushions and other materials (e.g., timber pads, prefabricated equipment pads, or geotextile fabric) in saturated conditions to minimize damage to the substrate and vegetation. • Stabilize exposed slopes and streambanks immediately on completion of installation activities. Non-wetland waters will be restored in a manner that encourages vegetation to re establish to its pre-construction condition and that reduces the effects of erosion on the drainage system. • In highly erodible stream systems, stabilize banks using a non vegetative material that will bind the soil initially and break down within a few years. If the project engineers determine that more aggressive erosion	

Impact	Level of Significance[a]	Mitigation Measures[b]	Level of Significance after Mitigation[c]
		control treatments are needed, use geotextile mats, excelsior blankets, or other soil stabilization products. • During construction, remove trees, shrubs, debris, or soils that are inadvertently deposited below the ordinary high water mark of drainages in a manner that minimizes disturbance of the drainage bed and bank. These measures will be incorporated into contract specifications and implemented by the project contractor. In addition, the County will ensure that the contractor incorporates all permit conditions into construction specifications. **Mitigation Measure BIO-5c: Compensate for the Loss of Wetlands and Non-wetland Waters of the United States and Waters of the State** Where development associated with project implementation would have potential to result in the loss of wetlands or non-wetland waters of the United States or waters of the state, the County will require compensation for the loss of wetlands and/or non-wetland waters to ensure no net loss of habitat functions and values. Compensation ratios will be based on site-specific information and determined through coordination with state and federal agencies, including USACE and the Regional Water Board. The compensation will be at a minimum 1:1 ratio (1 acre restored or created for every 1 acre filled) and may be a combination of onsite restoration/creation, offsite restoration, and mitigation credits. A restoration and monitoring plan will be developed and implemented that describes how wetlands and non-wetland waters will be restored or created and monitored over a minimum period of time.	
Impact BIO-6: Potential introduction or spread of noxious weeds	S	**Mitigation Measure BIO-6: Avoid the Dispersal of Invasive Plants into Uninfested Areas** During the evaluation of biological resources on parcels prior to development, a qualified biologist will determine whether invasive plant species present a risk to native plants on the site and whether they could displace native plants. If invasive plant species are present, and to avoid the introduction or spread of invasive plants into uninfested areas, the	LTS

Impact	Level of Significance[a]	Mitigation Measures[b]	Level of Significance after Mitigation[c]
		County will require the incorporation of the following measures into construction project plans and specifications: • Use certified, weed-free, imported erosion-control materials (or rice straw in upland areas). • Educate construction supervisors and managers about weed identification and the importance of controlling and preventing the spread of invasive plants. • The invasive plant avoidance measures will be reflected in contract documents and implemented by the construction contractor.	
3.5 Cultural Resources			
Impact CUL-1: Potential to cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource	S	n/a	SU
Impact CUL-2: Potential to cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource	S	**Mitigation Measure CUL-2: Implement Avoidance Measures to Avoid Direct or Indirect Impacts on Archaeological Resources** If a previously unknown archaeological resource were encountered during construction activity, implementation of inadvertent discovery procedures, as are provided below will help minimize or eliminate direct or indirect impacts on archaeological resources. If cultural resources are discovered during project-related ground disturbance, all ground-disturbing activities will immediately stop within 100 feet (30 meters) of the discovery, the location of the discovery will be marked for avoidance, and efforts will be made to prevent inadvertent destruction of the find. The contractor must notify the County. The County will evaluate the resource to determine whether it is a historical resource or unique archaeological resource under CEQA. If the County determines that the discovery is not a historical resource, the discovery will be documented, and construction may proceed at the direction of the County. Treatment will be implemented where necessary to resolve significant effects on inadvertently discovered California Register–eligible cultural resources. The County will consider preservation in place as the preferred mitigation, as required under CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.4(b), for all California Register–eligible resources and non-eligible resources that	LTS

Impact	Level of Significance[a]	Mitigation Measures[b]	Level of Significance after Mitigation[c]
		would be subject to significant effects; the County will prepare a discussion that documents the basis for the selection of treatment consistent with this section.	
Impact CUL-3: Disturbance of any human remains, including those interred outside of dedicated cemeteries	S	**Mitigation Measure CUL-3: Implement Human Remains Discovery Procedures** If human remains are discovered during project implementation, work will cease in the immediate vicinity and within 100 feet of the find to avoid further disturbance. The County will coordinate with the Placer County Coroner to make determinations and perform the management steps prescribed in California Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 and PRC Section 5097.98. This coordination requires the following steps: • Once notified by the County, the coroner will determine if an investigation regarding the cause of death is required. • If the coroner determines that the remains are of prehistoric Native American origin, the coroner will then notify the NAHC. • The NAHC will designate and contact the most likely descendant, who must make recommendations for treatment of the remains within 48 hours from completion of the commission's examination of the finds. • If the NAHC fails to identify a most likely descendant or if the parties cannot reach agreement as to how to reinter the remains, as described in PRC Section 5097.98(e), the landowner will reinter the remains at a location not subject to further disturbance. • If the remains are found not to be Native American in origin and do not appear to be in an archaeological context, ground disturbance will proceed at the direction of the coroner and the County.	LTS
3.6 Energy			
Impact EN-1: Wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources during project construction or operation	S	**Mitigation Measure EN-1a: Construction Best Management Practices**	LTS

Impact	Level of Significance[a]	Mitigation Measures[b]	Level of Significance after Mitigation[c]

		During construction of the residential units, the County will require the contractor to incorporate BMPs to reduce the inefficient use of energy, as applicable. BMPs may include but are not limited to the following.
		• Use of local building materials.
		• Recycling construction waste.
		• Implementing employee carpool programs.
		• Maintaining all construction equipment in proper working condition according to manufacturer's specifications. The equipment must be checked by a certified mechanic and be determined to be running in proper condition before it is operated.
		
		Mitigation Measure EN-1b: Comply with Energy Efficiency Measures in the Placer County General Plan (2013) and Placer County Sustainability Plan (2020)
		Prior to approval of the final design plans for development under the proposed project, the County will require the contractor to list all the energy-efficiency measures that will be implemented and demonstrate in the plans where these measures will be located.
		The following is a list of proposed sustainability measures from the County's General Plan, and PCSP that will be required for project approval.
		• Reduce building energy consumption through one or more of the following methods, where feasible.
		  ○ Incorporate energy efficiency design features that exceed 2019 Title 24 California Energy Efficiency Standards by at least 15 percent.
		  ○ Prioritize use of electricity as the primary energy source in new developments.
		  ○ Implement CALGreen Tier 1 standards.
		  ○ Use of zero net energy design in new developments, where feasible.
		• Orient development for solar access, to the extent practicable.
		• Implement onsite renewable energy on new buildings, where feasible.
		• Prioritize development that is within proximity of non-auto public transit.
		• Use native, drought-tolerant plantings in landscaping.	

Impact	Level of Significance[a]	Mitigation Measures[b]	Level of Significance after Mitigation[c]
Impact EN-2: Conflict with or obstruction of a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency	S	**Mitigation Measure EN-1b: Comply with Energy Efficiency Measures in the Placer County General Plan (2013) and Placer County Sustainability Plan (2020)**	LTS
3.7 Geology, Soils, and Paleontological Resources			
Impact GEO-1: Potential substantial adverse effects involving rupture of a known earthquake fault, strong seismic ground shaking, seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction, or landslides	LTS		LTS
Impact GEO-2: Potential to result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil	S	**Mitigation Measures GEO-2: Obtain Approval from Engineering and Surveying Division** • The applicant will prepare and submit Improvement Plans, specifications and cost estimates (per the requirements of Section II of the Land Development Manual (LDM) that are in effect at the time of submittal) to the Engineering and Surveying Division (ESD) for review and approval. The plans will show all physical improvements as required by the conditions for the project as well as pertinent topographical features both on and off site. All existing and proposed utilities and easements, on site and adjacent to the project, which may be affected by planned construction, will be shown on the plans. All landscaping and irrigation facilities within the public right-of-way (or public easements), or landscaping within sight distance areas at intersections, will be included in the Improvement Plans. The applicant will pay plan check and inspection fees and, if applicable, Placer County Fire Department improvement plan review and inspection fees with the 1st Improvement Plan submittal. (NOTE: Prior to plan approval, all applicable recording and reproduction costs will be paid). The cost of the above-noted landscape and irrigation facilities will be included in the estimates used to determine these fees. It is the applicant's responsibility to obtain all required agency signatures on the plans and to secure department approvals. If the Design/Site Review process and/or Development Review Committee (DRC) review is required as a	LTS

condition of approval for the project, said review process will be completed prior to submittal of Improvement Plans.

Conceptual landscape plans submitted prior to project approval may require modification during the Improvement Plan process to resolve issues of drainage and traffic safety.

The Final Map(s) will not be submitted to the ESD until the Improvement Plans are submitted for the second review. Final technical review of the Final Subdivision Map(s) will not conclude until after the Improvement Plans are approved by the ESD.

Any Building Permits associated with this project will not be issued until, at a minimum, the Improvement Plans are approved by the Engineering and Surveying Division.

Prior to the County's final acceptance of the project's improvements, submit to the Engineering and Surveying Division one copy of the Record Drawings in digital format (on compact disc or other acceptable media) along with one blackline hardcopy (black print on bond paper) and one PDF copy. The digital format is to allow integration with Placer County's Geographic Information System (GIS). The final approved blackline hardcopy Record Drawings will be the official document of record.

- The Improvement Plans will show all proposed grading, drainage improvements, vegetation and tree removal and all work will conform to provisions of the County Grading Ordinance (Ref. Article 15.48, Placer County Code) and Stormwater Quality Ordinance (Ref. Article 8.28, Placer County Code) that are in effect at the time of submittal. No grading, clearing, or tree disturbance will occur until the Improvement Plans are approved and all temporary construction fencing has been installed and inspected by a member of the Development Review Committee (DRC). All cut/fill slopes will be at a maximum of 2:1 (horizontal: vertical) unless a soils report supports a steeper slope and the ESD concurs with said recommendation.

  The applicant will revegetate all disturbed areas. Revegetation, undertaken from April 1 to October 1, will include regular watering to ensure adequate growth. A winterization plan will be provided with project Improvement Plans. It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure proper installation and maintenance of erosion control/winterization before, during, and after project construction. Soil stockpiling or borrow areas, will have proper erosion control measures applied for the duration of the construction as specified in the Improvement Plans.

Impact	Level of Significance[a]	Mitigation Measures[b]	Level of Significance after Mitigation[c]
		Provide for erosion control where roadside drainage is off of the pavement, to the satisfaction of the ESD. The applicant will submit to the ESD a letter of credit or cash deposit in the amount of 110 percent of an approved engineer's estimate using the County's current Plan Check and Inspection Fee Spreadsheet for winterization and permanent erosion control work prior to Improvement Plan approval to guarantee protection against erosion and improper grading practices. For an improvement plan with a calculated security that exceeds $100,000, a minimum of $100,000 will be provided as letter of credit or cash security and the remainder can be bonded. One year after the County's acceptance of improvements as complete, if there are no erosion or runoff issues to be corrected, unused portions of said deposit will be refunded or released, as applicable, to the project applicant or authorized agent. If, at any time during construction, a field review by County personnel indicates a significant deviation from the proposed grading shown on the Improvement Plans, specifically with regard to slope heights, slope ratios, erosion control, winterization, tree disturbance, and/or pad elevations and configurations, the plans will be reviewed by the DRC/ESD for a determination of substantial conformance to the project approvals prior to any further work proceeding. Failure of the DRC/ESD to make a determination of substantial conformance may serve as grounds for the revocation/modification of the project approval by the appropriate hearing body. • If project ground disturbance exceeds one acre, prior to any construction commencing, the applicant will provide evidence to the Engineering and Surveying Division of a WDID number generated from the State Regional Water Quality Control Board's Stormwater Multiple Application & Reports Tracking System (SMARTS). This serves as the Regional Water Quality Control Board approval or permit under the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) construction storm water quality permit.	
Impact GEO-3: Placement of project-related facilities on a geologic unit or soil that is	S	**Mitigation Measures GEO-3: Submit Final Geotechnical Engineering Report for Approval**	LTS

Impact	Level of Significance[a]	Mitigation Measures[b]	Level of Significance after Mitigation[c]
unstable or that would become unstable as a result of the project and potentially result in an onsite or offsite landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse		The Improvement Plan submittal will include a final geotechnical engineering report produced by a California Registered Civil Engineer or Geotechnical Engineer for Engineering and Surveying Division review and approval. The report will address and make recommendations on the following: • Road, pavement, and parking area design; • Structural foundations, including retaining wall design (if applicable); • Grading practices; • Erosion/winterization; • Special problems discovered on-site, (i.e., groundwater, expansive/unstable soils, etc.) • Slope stability Once approved by ESD, two copies of the final report will be provided to the ESD and one copy to the Building Services Division for its use. It is the responsibility of the developer to provide for engineering inspection and certification that earthwork has been performed in conformity with recommendations contained in the report. If the geotechnical engineering report indicates the presence of critically expansive or other soil problems that, if not corrected, could lead to structural defects, a certification of completion of the requirements of the soils report will be required for subdivisions, prior to issuance of Building Permits. This certification may be completed on a lot-by-lot basis or on a Tract basis. This will be so noted on the Improvement Plans, in the Development Notebook (if required), in the Conditions, Covenants and Restrictions (CC&Rs), and on the Informational Sheet filed with the Final Subdivision Map(s).	
Impact GEO-4: Placement of project-related facilities on expansive soil, creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property	S	**Mitigation Measures GEO-3: Submit Final Geotechnical Engineering Report for Approval**	LTS
Impact GEO-5: Placement of facilities on soils incapable of adequately supporting the use	NI		NI

Impact	Level of Significance[a]	Mitigation Measures[b]	Level of Significance after Mitigation[c]
of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems in areas where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater			
Impact GEO-6: Direct or indirect destruction of a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature	S	**Mitigation Measure GEO-6: Halt Construction Activity, Evaluate Find, and Implement Mitigation for Paleontological Resources** In the event that previously unidentified paleontological resources are uncovered during site preparation, excavation, or other construction activity, all such activity within 25 feet of the discovery will cease until the resources have been evaluated by a qualified professional, and specific measures can be implemented to protect these resources in accordance with PRC Sections 21083.2 and 21084.1. If the find is significant, a qualified paleontologist will excavate the find in compliance with state law, keeping project delays to a minimum. Any significant finds will be curated and assessments will be incorporated into the countywide cultural resource database, maintained by the Division of Museums, consistent with General Plan policy. If the qualified paleontologist determines the find is not significant then proper recordation and identification will ensue and the project will continue without delay.	LTS
3.8 Greenhouse Gas Emissions			
Impact GHG-1: Generation of greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment	S	**Mitigation Measure AQ-2: Installation of Electric Appliances in New Construction**	LTS
Impact GHG-2: Conflict with an applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases	S	**Mitigation Measure AQ-2: Installation of Electric Appliances in New Construction** **Mitigation Measure GHG-2a: Installation of Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging Stations** In accordance with the Placer County Sustainability Plan, project applicants will be encouraged to install EV charging stations at new residential units associated with the proposed project.	LTS

Impact	Level of Significance[a]	Mitigation Measures[b]	Level of Significance after Mitigation[c]
		Mitigation Measure GHG-2b: Installation of Greywater and Rainwater Catchment Systems In accordance with the Placer County Sustainability Plan, installation of greywater systems, and rainwater catchment systems in new residential construction will be encouraged where feasible.	
3.9 Hazards and Hazardous Materials			
Impact HAZ-1: Creation of a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials	LTS		LTS
Impact HAZ-2: Creation of a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment	LTS		LTS
Impact HAZ-3: Emission of hazardous emissions or handling of hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within 0.25 mile of an existing or proposed school	LTS		LTS
Impact HAZ-4: Placement of project-related facilities on a site that is included on a list of hazardous materials sites, and resulting creation of a significant hazard to the public or the environment	LTS		LTS

Impact	Level of Significance[a]	Mitigation Measures[b]	Level of Significance after Mitigation[c]
Impact HAZ-5: Placement of project-related facilities within an airport land use plan area or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within 2 miles of a public airport or public use airport, resulting in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area	LTS		LTS
Impact HAZ-6: Impairment of implementation of or physical interference with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan	LTS		LTS
Impact HAZ-7: Exposure of people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk involving wildland fires	LTS		LTS
3.10 Hydrology and Water Quality			
Impact WQ-1: Violation of any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or other degradation of surface or groundwater quality	S	**Mitigation Measure WQ-1a: Submit a Drainage Report** A Drainage Report will be submitted in final format. The final Drainage Report will be reviewed in concert with the Improvement Plans to confirm conformity between the two. The report will be prepared by a Registered Civil Engineer and will, at a minimum, include: A written text addressing existing conditions, the effects of the proposed improvements, all appropriate calculations, watershed maps, changes in flows and patterns, and proposed on- and off-site improvements and drainage easements to accommodate flows from this project. The report will identify water quality protection features and methods to be used during construction, as well as long-term post-construction water quality measures. The final Drainage Report will be prepared in conformance with the requirements of Section 5 of the Land Development Manual and the Placer County	LTS

Impact	Level of Significance[a]	Mitigation Measures[b]	Level of Significance after Mitigation[c]
		Stormwater Management Manual that are in effect at the time of Improvement Plan submittal. **Mitigation Measure WQ-1b: Design Water Quality Treatment Facilities/Best Management Practices** Water quality treatment facilities/Best Management Practices (BMPs) will be designed according to the guidance of the California Stormwater Quality Association Stormwater Best Management Practice Handbooks for Construction, for New Development / Redevelopment, and for Industrial and Commercial (or other similar source as approved by the Engineering and Surveying Division (ESD)). Storm drainage from on- and off-site impervious surfaces (including roads) will be collected and routed through specially designed catch basins, vegetated swales, vaults, infiltration basins, water quality basins, filters, etc. for entrapment of sediment, debris and oils/greases or other identified pollutants, as approved by the Engineering and Surveying Division (ESD). BMPs will be designed in accordance with the West or East Placer Storm Water Quality Design Manual for sizing of permanent post-construction Best Management Practices for stormwater quality protection. No water quality facility construction will be permitted within any identified wetlands area, floodplain, or right-of-way, except as authorized by project approvals. All permanent BMPs will be maintained as required to ensure effectiveness. The applicant will provide for the establishment of vegetation, where specified, by means of proper irrigation. Proof of on-going maintenance, such as contractual evidence, will be provided to ESD upon request. The project owners/permittees will provide maintenance of these facilities and annually report a certification of completed maintenance to the County DPW Stormwater Coordinator, unless, and until, a County Service Area is created and said facilities are accepted by the County for maintenance. Contractual evidence of a monthly parking lot sweeping and vacuuming, and catch basin cleaning program will be provided to the ESD upon request. Failure to do so will be grounds for discretionary permit revocation. Prior to Improvement Plan or Final Map approval, easements will be created and offered for dedication to the	

Impact	Level of Significance[a]	Mitigation Measures[b]	Level of Significance after Mitigation[c]
		County for maintenance and access to these facilities in anticipation of possible County maintenance. **Mitigation Measure WQ-1c: Protect Storm Drain Inlets** The project will include the message details, placement, and locations showing that all storm drain inlets and catch basins within the project area will be permanently marked/embossed with prohibitive language such as "No Dumping! Flows to Creek." or other language /graphical icons to discourage illegal dumping as approved by the Engineering and Surveying Division (ESD). ESD-approved signs and prohibitive language and/or graphical icons, which prohibit illegal dumping, will be posted at public access points along channels and creeks within the project area. The Homeowners' / Property Owners' association and/or Property Owner is responsible for maintaining the legibility of stamped messages and signs. **Mitigation Measure WQ-1d: Compliance with National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Requirements** For projects within the East or West Phase II Permit Area, the following mitigation measure applies. If a project is located within the permit area covered by Placer County's Small Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) Permit (State Water Resources Control Board National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES)), project-related storm water discharges are subject to all applicable requirements of said permit. The project will implement permanent and operational source control measures as applicable. Source control measures will be designed for pollutant generating activities or sources consistent with recommendations from the California Stormwater Quality Association (CASQA) Stormwater BMP Handbook for New Development and Redevelopment, or equivalent manual, and will be shown on the Improvement Plans. The project is also required to implement Low Impact Development (LID) standards designed to reduce runoff, treat storm water, and provide baseline hydromodification management as outlined in the West OR East Placer Storm Water Quality Design Manual.	

Impact	Level of Significance[a]	Mitigation Measures[b]	Level of Significance after Mitigation[c]
		Mitigation Measure WQ-1e: Compliance with Placer County Stormwater Quality Ordinance For projects outside the Phase II Permit Area, the following mitigation measure applies. The Improvement Plans will include BMPs designed to ensure that pollutants contained in project-related storm water discharges are reduced to the maximum extent practicable and that non-storm water discharges are prevented from leaving the site, both during and after construction, as required by Placer County's Stormwater Quality Ordinance (Placer County Code, Article 8.28). **Mitigation Measure WQ-1f: Storm Water Quality Report** For projects within East or West Phase II Permit Area, the following mitigation measure applies. Per the State of California NPDES Phase II MS4 Permit, this project is a Regulated Project that creates and/or replaces 5,000 square feet or more of impervious surface. A final Storm Water Quality Plan (SWQP) will be submitted, either within the final Drainage Report or as a separate document that identifies how this project will meet the Phase II MS4 permit obligations. Site design measures, source control measures, and Low Impact Development (LID) standards, as necessary, will be incorporated into the design and shown on the Improvement Plans. In addition, per the Phase II MS4 permit, projects creating and/or replacing one acre or more of impervious surface (excepting projects that do not increase impervious surface area over the pre-project condition) are also required to demonstrate hydromodification management of storm water such that post-project runoff is maintained to equal or below pre-project flow rates for the 2 year, 24-hour storm event, generally by way of infiltration, rooftop and impervious area disconnection, bioretention, and other LID measures that result in post-project flows that mimic pre-project conditions.	
Impact WQ-2: Substantial decrease of groundwater supplies or substantial interference with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable	LTS		LTS

Impact	Level of Significance[a]	Mitigation Measures[b]	Level of Significance after Mitigation[c]
groundwater management of the basin			
Impact WQ-3: Substantial alteration of existing drainage patterns in a manner that would result in substantial erosion or siltation onsite or offsite; Substantial increase in the amount of surface runoff in a manner that would result in flooding onsite or offsite; Creation of or contribution to runoff water that would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff; Alteration of the existing drainage pattern in a manner that would impede or redirect flood flows	S	**Mitigation Measures WQ-3a: Storm Water Requirements in Improvement Plan** The Improvement Plan submittal and final Drainage Report will provide details showing that storm water run-off peak flows and volumes will be reduced to at least pre-project conditions through the installation of detention/retention facilities. Detention/retention facilities will be designed in accordance with the requirements of the Placer County Stormwater Management Manual or other regulatory document that are in effect at the time of submittal, and to the satisfaction of the Engineering and Surveying Division (ESD) and will be shown on the Improvement Plans. The ESD may, after review of the project's final Drainage Report, delete this requirement if it is determined that drainage conditions do not warrant installation of this type of facility. Maintenance of detention/retention facilities by the homeowner's association, property owner's association, property owner, or entity responsible for project maintenance will be required. No detention/retention facility construction will be permitted within any identified wetlands area, floodplain, or right-of-way, except as authorized by project approvals. **Mitigation Measure WQ-3b: Flood Plain Requirements** On the Improvement Plans and Informational Sheet(s) filed with a Final Map(s), show the limits of the future, unmitigated, fully developed, 100-year flood plain (after grading) for any drainageway with a tributary area of 20 acres or more and designate same as a building setback line unless greater setbacks are required by other conditions contained herein. **Mitigation Measure WQ-3c: Building Elevation Reporting Requirements** On the Improvement Plans and Informational Sheet(s) filed with a Final Map(s), show that finished house pad elevations will be a minimum of two feet above the 100-year flood plain line (or finished floor -three feet above the 100-year floodplain line). The final pad elevation will be certified by a California registered civil engineer or licensed land surveyor and	LTS

Impact	Level of Significance[a]	Mitigation Measures[b]	Level of Significance after Mitigation[c]
		submitted to the Engineering and Surveying Division. This certification will be done prior to construction of the foundation or at the completion of final grading, whichever comes first. No building construction is allowed until the certification has been received by the Engineering and Surveying Division and approved by the floodplain manager. Benchmark elevation and location will be shown on the Improvement Plans and Informational Sheet (s) to the satisfaction of Development Review Committee.	
Impact WQ-4: In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk of release of pollutants as a result of project inundation	S	**Mitigation Measures WQ-1a: Submit a Drainage Report** **Mitigation Measure WQ-1b: Design Water Quality Treatment Facilities/Best Management Practices** **Mitigation Measure WQ-1f: Storm Water Quality Report**	LTS
Impact WQ-5: Conflict with or obstruction of implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan	NI		NI
3.11 Land Use and Planning			
Impact LU-1: Physical division of an established community	LTS		LTS
Impact LU-2: Conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect	LTS		LTS
Impact LU-3: The project, in combination with other foreseeable development in the SACOG region, would not be inconsistent with applicable land use plans, policies, and regulations	LTS		LTS

Impact	Level of Significance[a]	Mitigation Measures[b]	Level of Significance after Mitigation[c]
3.12 Mineral Resources			
Impact MIN-1: Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state	NI		NI
Impact MIN-2: Result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan, or other land use plan	NI		NI
3.13 Noise			
Impact NOI-1: Generation of increased ambient noise levels in the project vicinity in excess of applicable standards	LTS		LTS
Impact NOI-2: Generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels	LTS		LTS
Impact NOI-3: Placement of project-related activities in the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport land use plan or within 2 miles of a public airport or public use airport, resulting in exposure of people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels	LTS		LTS

Impact	Level of Significance[a]	Mitigation Measures[b]	Level of Significance after Mitigation[c]
3.14 Population and Housing			
Impact POP-1: Creation of substantial population growth either directly or indirectly	LTS		LTS
Impact POP-2: Displacement of a substantial number of existing housing or people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere	NI		NI
3.15 Public Services, Recreation, and Utilities and Service Systems			
Impact PS-1: Creation of a need for new or physically altered governmental facilities to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives for fire protection, police protection, schools, or other public facilities	LTS		LTS
Impact PS-2: Increased use of existing recreational facilities resulting in substantial physical deterioration; construction or expansion of recreational facilities, resulting in adverse effect on the environment	LTS		LTS
Impact PS-3: Relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment, stormwater drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, with the potential to cause	LTS		LTS

Impact	Level of Significance[a]	Mitigation Measures[b]	Level of Significance after Mitigation[c]
significant environmental effects			
Impact PS-4: Creation of a need for new or expanded entitlements or resources for sufficient water supply to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry, and multiple dry years	LTS		LTS
Impact PS-5: Project-related exceedance of state or local solid waste standards or of the capacity of local infrastructure, or other impediments to attaining solid waste reduction goals, or failure to comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste	LTS		LTS
3.16 Transportation			
Impact TRA-1: Conflict with a program, plan, ordinance, or policy, except LOS, addressing the circulation system including transit, roadway, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities	LTS		LTS
Impact TRA-2: Result in VMT which exceeds an applicable threshold of significance, except as provided in CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3 subdivision (b).	LTS		LTS

Impact	Level of Significance[a]	Mitigation Measures[b]	Level of Significance after Mitigation[c]
Impact TRA-3: Substantial increase in hazards because of a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves, dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)	NI		NI
Impact TRA-4: Potential to cause inadequate emergency access	LTS		LTS
Impact TRA-5: Result in insufficient parking capacity on-site or off-site	LTS		LTS
3.17 Tribal Cultural Resources			
Impact TCR-1: Potential to cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource with cultural value to a California Native American tribe and that is listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code Section 5020.1(k)	S	**Mitigation Measure CUL-2: Implement Avoidance Measures to Avoid Direct or Indirect Impacts on Archaeological Resources**	LTS
Impact TCR-2: Potential to cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource with cultural value to a California Native American tribe and that is a resource determined by the lead agency to be significant	S	**Mitigation Measure CUL-2: Implement Avoidance Measures to Avoid Direct or Indirect Impacts on Archaeological Resources**	LTS

Impact	Level of Significance[a]	Mitigation Measures[b]	Level of Significance after Mitigation[c]
pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1			
3.18 Wildfire			
Impact WF-1: Substantial impairment of an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan	LTS		LTS
Impact WF-2: Exacerbation of wildfire risks associated with pollutant concentrations or uncontrolled spread of wildfire	LTS		LTS
Impact WF-3: Project-related installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure that may exacerbate fire risk or result in temporary or ongoing environmental impacts	LTS		LTS
Impact WF-4: Exposure of people or structures to significant risks such as downslope or downstream flooding or landslide as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes	LTS		LTS
5.0 Cumulative Impacts			
Aesthetics	S	AES-2	LTS
Agricultural and Forestry Resources	LTS	n/a	LTS
Air Quality	S	MM-AQ-2, AQ-3a, AQ-3b	LTS
Biological Resources	S	MM-BIO-1a, BIO-1b, BIO-2a, BIO-2b, BIO-2c, BIO-4a, BIO-4b, BIO-5a, BIO-5b, BIO-5c, BIO-6	LTS
Cultural Resources	S	MM-CUL-2 and CUL-3	SU

Impact	Level of Significance[a]	Mitigation Measures[b]	Level of Significance after Mitigation[c]
Energy	S	MM-EN-1a and EN-1b	LTS
Geology, Soils, and Paleontological Resources	S	MM-GEO-2, GEO-3, GEO-6	LTS
Greenhouse Gas and Emissions	S	MM-AQ-2, GHG-2a, and GHG-2b	LTS
Hazards and Hazardous Waste	LTS		LTS
Hydrology and Water Quality	LTS	MM-WQ-1a, WQ-1b, WQ-1c, WQ-1d, WQ-1e, WQ-1f, WQ-3a, WQ-3b, WQ-3c	LTS
Land Use and Planning	LTS		LTS
Minerals	NI		NI
Noise	LTS		LTS
Population and Housing	LTS		LTS
Public Services, Recreation, and Utilities and Service Systems	LTS		LTS
Transportation	LTS		LTS
Tribal Cultural Resources	S	MM-CUL-2	LTS
Wildfire	LTS		LTS

[a] S = significant; SU = significant and unavoidable; LTS = less than significant; NI = no impact

[b] The full texts of the mitigation measures are found in the respective impact sections in Chapters 3 and 5.

[c] Mitigation measures identified for impacts of the project would reduce the project's contribution to cumulative impacts, but not to a less than considerable level.

ES.3.2 Significant and Unavoidable Impacts

Cultural Resources

Impact CUL-1: Potential to cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource

Cumulative

There are significant and unavoidable cumulative impacts associated with the project related Cultural Resources

ES.4 Project Alternatives

CEQA requires an EIR to consider a range of reasonable alternatives to the project that meet most or all of its objectives and that would reduce one or more of its impacts. The Draft EIR examined the alternatives shown in Table ES-2. The alternatives and their impacts are described in Chapter 4, Alternatives.

Table ES-2. Project Alternatives

	Impact Category and Significance[1]		
	Air Quality	**Cultural Resources**	**Greenhouse Gas Emissions**
Project	LTS/M	SU	LTS/M
1. No Project	LTS	LTS	LTS
2. No Workforce Housing	LTS/M	SU	LTS/M
3. Reduced Intensity	LTS/M	SU	LTS/M

[1] LTS = less than significant; LTS/M = less than significant with mitigation

ES.5 Potential Areas of Controversy/Issues to be Resolved

Pursuant to Section 15123 of the State CEQA Guidelines, the summary identifies areas of controversy known to the Lead Agency, including issues raised by agencies and the public. In addition, the summary section also identifies issues to be resolved. Each of these issues is discussed below.

A Notice of Preparation (NOP) for the EIR was distributed to the State Clearinghouse, responsible agencies, and other interested parties for a 30-day public review period from August 29, 2019 through September 27, 2019. In addition, a public scoping meeting was held at the Community Development Resource Center, 3091 County Center Drive, Auburn (Planning Commission Hearing Room) on Wednesday, September 18, 2019, at 10:00am. The following concerns were raised regarding the project:

- The proposed Tiny House Zoning Text Amendments would result in significant and unaccounted-for impacts throughout unincorporated Placer County
- The EIR should contain proper change control mechanisms
- Ordinance, zoning, and development in unincorporated and incorporated areas should be analyzed together and take a holistic view of Placer County
- Tiny houses on wheels should not be considered in the EIR and are problematic
- Tiny Houses on Wheels versus a Tiny House need to be clearly defined
- Lack of affordable housing.
- Urban sprawl proposed in the General Plan
- Should utilize "Smart Growth Plans"
- More senior housing in Auburn
- The change of the term from "affordable" to "achievable" housing
- Traffic impacts
- Public safety from wildfire
- Consider Tiny House Villages
- Availability of future parkland
- Provide full analysis of the impacts on the City of Roseville
- Identify assumptions for transit ridership
- Aesthetics
- Parking impacts
- Impact of accessory dwelling units on historic properties and neighborhoods, neighboring properties' privacy, and on rural property
- The Project should mix residential housing with amenities and jobs at higher densities
- Single family sprawl zoning
- The EIR should evaluate and compare the Sunset Area and Placer Ranch Specific Plan
- Impacts of build-out of Community Plans
- Workforce housing

ES.6 How to Comment on this Draft EIR

This is the Draft EIR for the Proposed Housing Related Code Amendments project. It will be available for public review and comment for the 45-day period identified in the Notice of Availability. The written comments received during the review period will be responded to in writing in the Final EIR that will be considered by the County Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors prior to acting on the proposed project. Written comments received after the end of the review period will be

provided to and considered by the Commission and Board, but may not be responded to or included in the Final EIR.

Written comments on the Draft EIR may be submitted electronically to Shirlee Herrington, to cdraecs@placer.ca.gov or mailed to:

Shirlee Herrington
Environmental Coordination Services, Community Development Resource Agency
3091 County Center Drive, Suite 190
Auburn, CA 95603

Chapter 1

Introduction and Scope of Environmental Impact Report

1.1 The California Environmental Quality Act

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (California Public Resources Code § 21000 et seq.) requires public agencies to consider the potential adverse environmental impacts of projects under their consideration. This includes both direct impacts and reasonably foreseeable indirect impacts. No discretionary project that may have a significant adverse impact on the environment can be approved without the preparation of an environmental impact report (EIR). This includes Placer County's (County) proposed targeted General Plan amendment, Zoning Ordinance update, and the development of design standards and guidelines for mixed-use development (project).

According to Section 15002 of the CEQA Guidelines, the following are the basic purposes of CEQA.

- Inform government decision makers and the public about the potential significant environmental effects of proposed activities.
- Identify ways that environmental damage can be avoided or significantly reduced.
- Prevent significant, avoidable damage to the environment by requiring changes in projects through the use of alternatives or mitigation measures when the governing agency finds the changes to be feasible.
- Disclose to the public the reasons why a governmental agency approved the project in the manner the agency chose if significant environmental effects are involved.

The process of preparing an EIR involves the following steps.

- Issuing a notice of preparation (NOP) soliciting the comments of public agencies and interested organizations and individuals regarding the scope and content of the EIR. The County issued an NOP of an EIR for the project in August 2019. A copy of the NOP is in Appendix A. The comments received from agencies and the public in response to the NOP are included in Appendix B of this Draft EIR.
- Conducting a scoping meeting for projects of statewide, regional or area-wide significance. A scoping meeting was held in Auburn on September 18, 2019 to offer additional opportunity for input prior to preparation of the Draft EIR.
- Preparing a Draft EIR and releasing it for public review and comment. The Draft EIR for the project will be available for at least 45 days for public agencies and interested organizations and individuals to review. The County will respond to all pertinent comments in the Final EIR.
- Preparing the Final EIR. This document will contain the Draft EIR, the comments received and a list of commenters, written responses to comments, and any revisions that are made to the Draft EIR in response to the comments. The County Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors will consider the Final EIR prior to taking action on the project.
- Adopting findings and a statement of overriding considerations. The County Board of Supervisors will adopt a set of findings that describe how each significant impact identified in the Final EIR would be addressed (i.e., whether it would be mitigated, would be mitigated by

another agency, or is significant and unavoidable). If the County chooses not to approve any of the alternatives analyzed in the EIR, then the findings will also explain why those alternatives are infeasible. Because the project is expected to result in significant and unavoidable impacts, in accordance with Section 15093(b) of the CEQA Guidelines, the County will also adopt a statement of overriding considerations that explains the specific benefits of adopting the project.

CEQA establishes a process for analyzing a project's potential impacts. It is not a permit and does not regulate the project. CEQA also does not require that a proposed project be approved or denied. CEQA's essential purposes are to ensure that public agencies make a good faith effort at disclosing the potential impacts of projects to decision makers, the public, and other agencies, and implement actions that would reduce or avoid potential significant impacts (i.e., mitigation), when feasible.

The County Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors will use the Draft EIR to inform themselves of the project's impacts before taking action. They will also consider other information and testimony that arise during deliberations on the project before making their decision.

1.1.1 The Purpose of this Environmental Impact Report

This programmatic Draft EIR (State Clearinghouse No. 2019080460) has been prepared according to CEQA and the CEQA Guidelines (California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Division 6, Chapter 3) to evaluate the potential environmental impacts associated with implementation of the County's project. The project would implement housing-related code amendments to the Placer County General Plan and Zoning Ordinance making the County's zoning regulations and General Plan more flexible for additional development (see Chapter 2, *Project Description*). The County may adopt all or portions of the project. This EIR provides a program-level review of the housing-related code amendments.

The project would apply to unincorporated areas under the jurisdiction of the County—that is, county lands that are not under the jurisdiction of federal or state agencies or tribal lands. Because the project would have indirect impacts on surrounding areas, the Draft EIR's analysis reaches beyond the unincorporated areas of the county.

CEQA Guidelines section 15168 establishes the use of program EIRs for later activities. As defined therein, a program EIR is an EIR prepared on a series of related actions that can be characterized as one large project. Feasible mitigation measures and alternatives developed in the program EIR must be incorporated into later activities in the program to the extent applicable to the individual later activity. Later activities must be evaluated to determine whether additional environmental review is needed. If a later activity is determined to be "within the scope" of the project covered by the program EIR, the lead agency can make a finding of consistency and approve the activity without having to prepare a new environmental document. The lead agency should use a written checklist or similar device to determine whether the environmental effects of the later action are within the scope of the program EIR.

If the lead agency determines that the later activity would have effects that were not examined in the program EIR, subsequent environmental review would be required. Conditions triggering subsequent environmental review are set forth in CEQA Guidelines sections 15162-15163 (Public Resources Code section 21166) and include:

- Substantial changes are proposed in the project which require major revisions of the EIR to address new or substantially increased significant effects.
- Substantial changes occur with respect to the circumstances under which the project is being undertaken which require major revisions in the EIR to address new or substantially increased significant effects.
- New information, which was not known and could not have been known at the time the EIR was certified as complete, becomes available that shows new or substantially increased significant effects or suggests changes to mitigation measures are needed.

A subsequent or supplemental document focuses on the newly proposed action. It upgrades the prior EIR as needed to disclose the new or more severe impacts that could result from the later action. Depending on circumstances, it may be a new subsequent EIR, a less extensive supplemental EIR, or a subsequent mitigated negative declaration. It does not re-open the analyses in the program EIR that are not related to the new or more severe impact implicated in the action. As such, a program EIR can be used to simplify the task of preparing environmental documents on later parts of the program by serving as a "tiering" document that focuses future analyses. Alternatively, an addendum under CEQA Guidelines section 15164 may be prepared if only minor technical changes or additions are necessary and none of the conditions described in CEQA Guidelines section 15162 calling for subsequent environmental review have occurred.

1.1.2 General Plan and Zoning

California Planning Law requires each county and city to adopt "a comprehensive, long-term general plan for the physical development of the county or city, and of any land outside its boundaries which in the planning agency's judgment bears relation to its planning" (Government Code Section 65300). Under the law, a general plan must address the essential issues of land use, traffic circulation, housing, resource conservation, open space, noise, and safety. Because it is to "consist of a statement of development policies and shall include a diagram or diagrams and text setting forth objectives, principles, standards, and plan proposals," the general plan establishes the framework for the county's future development pattern (Government Code Section 65302). The general plan's land use map illustrates the adopted development pattern. When applied to individual properties throughout the county, in some cases the general plan reflects current land use, and in others it describes the prospective use of the land.

As a policy document, the general plan sets out the county's course, much like a constitution or charter. The general plan's objectives and policies are implemented through specific plans, zoning, and other ordinances. Specific plans, zoning, and subdivision actions must be consistent with the policies of the general plan.

The County Zoning Ordinance regulates land uses. In contrast to the general plan, which represents long-term policies, the Zoning Ordinance's regulations establish the specific standards under which current development may proceed. The zoning map assigns a specific zoning classification to each property under the county's control. Zoning classifications, such as RM (multifamily residential) and RS (single-family residential), establish the range of allowable uses for a specific property. Each zone includes development standards such as maximum building height, parking requirements, and building setbacks from roads and property lines. The Zoning Ordinance also contains general development standards and methods that allow some flexibility in applying its requirements, such as conditional use permits and variances.

For a more detailed discussion of planning and zoning written for the general public, please refer to the *California Planning Guide: An Introduction to Planning in California*, published by the Governor's Office of Planning and Research (2005). This document is available online at: https://sandimasca.gov/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/california-planning-guide.pdf.

1.1.3 Level of Detail in this Environmental Impact Report

This EIR analyzes proposed changes to policies and regulations, not a site-specific development project. This document is a new, stand-alone EIR, which examines the project in light of the reasonably foreseeable changes from existing conditions that would result from project implementation.

CEQA applies to many types of projects, large and small. In most cases, CEQA is triggered by site-specific development projects such as subdivisions or use permits. However, it also applies to broad projects such as amending the County General Plan and adopting an updated Zoning Ordinance. The level of detail in an EIR for a broad project is not as fine-grained as in a project-specific EIR.

The CEQA Guidelines state that "[t]he degree of specificity in an EIR will correspond to the degree of specificity involved in the underlying activity which is described in the EIR" (CEQA Guidelines § 15146). Adoption of amendments to a general plan or zoning ordinance does not, in itself, result in direct impacts on the environment. The Draft EIR for the project addresses the secondary effects that can be expected to follow from the amendments. However, it is not as detailed as an EIR for a construction project would be. For example, the traffic analysis in Section 3.3, *Air Quality*, determines on a gross level whether development pursuant to the project would result in construction-related air quality effects. The analysis cannot, however, determine the construction emissions that individual development projects may cause.

This Draft EIR describes the proposed General Plan, Zoning Ordinance, Zoning Maps, and Community Design Guidelines amendments in general terms. The full texts of these amendments are available at the County Planning Department on the County's website: https://ca-placercounty.civicplus.com/5925/Housing-Related-Code-Amendments.

1.1.4 Document Format

The format of this Draft EIR is outlined below to assist the reader's review of the document.

- **Executive Summary.** This section summarizes the contents and findings contained in this Draft EIR. It also contains a brief description of the project, areas of controversy, public review procedures, and a summary table listing all project impacts, mitigation measures that have been recommended to reduce any significant impacts, and the level of significance of each impact following mitigation. The Executive Summary also briefly describes the alternatives.
- **Chapter 1** is this introduction to the Draft EIR.
- **Chapter 2** contains the project description. It summarizes the proposed General Plan, Zoning Ordinance, Zoning Maps, and Community Design Guidelines amendments. Full copies of these amendments are available for public review at the County Development Resource Agency, 3091 County Center Drive, Suite 280, Auburn and at all Placer County Public Libraries. Complete versions of the amendments are also available on the County's website at https://caplacercounty.civicplus.com/5925/Housing-Related-Code-Amendments.

- **Chapter 3, *Impact Analysis*,** consists of sections containing the environmental analysis for each environmental topic (e.g., aesthetics, air quality, noise). Each section is organized according to the following framework.
  - Existing Conditions
    - Regulatory Setting
    - Environmental Setting
  - Environmental Impacts
    - Methods of Analysis
    - Thresholds of Significance
    - Impacts and Mitigation Measures
- **Chapter 4, *Alternatives Analysis*,** contains discussion of the project alternatives. As allowed by CEQA, most of the impacts of these alternatives are evaluated at a more general level than the analyses in Chapter 3.
- **Chapter 5, *Other CEQA Considerations*,** contains discussions of additional topics required by CEQA, including growth inducing impacts, cumulative impacts, unavoidable impacts, and significant irreversible environmental changes.
- **Chapter 6, *Report Preparers*,** lists the organizations and persons consulted in preparation of the Draft EIR and the Draft EIR preparers.
- **Appendices A through C** contain copies of the NOP, comment letters on the NOP and Air Quality Criteria Pollutant and GHG Modeling Results.

1.2 Intended Use of this Environmental Impact Report

This Draft EIR will examines the potential impacts of the project. The Final EIR will be considered by the County Planning Commission and the Board of Supervisors prior to taking their final action on the project.

The agencies expected to use the Final EIR include those listed below.

- Placer County Planning Commission
- Placer County Board of Supervisors

1.3 Public Review Process

1.3.1 Making Effective Comments

The CEQA process encourages public involvement. Comments on a project can be submitted verbally or in writing, including as an email. Written comments can be submitted during the Draft EIR review

period, as discussed in Section 1.3.2, *Submitting Comments*. Oral comments may be made at the County Planning Commission meeting held for the purpose of soliciting comments on the Draft EIR.

Written comments are often the most effective method of commenting. They accurately describe the commenter's concerns and can be accompanied by specific references. While the opportunity for verbal comments may be limited to a few minutes at a public hearing, a written comment can be more extensive.

The Final EIR will include written responses to all comments received during the Draft EIR's public review period. Written comments can also be submitted after the end of the Draft EIR review period, but they may not be responded to in writing. Although a written response is not required, the County Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors are required to consider any late comments prior to acting on the project.

The Draft EIR differs from the proposed General Plan amendment, Zoning Ordinance update, and the development of design standards and guidelines for mixed-use development in that the Draft EIR analyzes the potential impacts of those proposals.

- The EIR is an informational document.
- It does not enact the proposed amendments.
- It does not establish any new or amended land use policies or regulations; those would be established by the proposed project.

Comments or opinions about the content of the amendments should be clearly distinguished from comments on the Draft EIR's adequacy. In commenting on the Draft EIR, commenters should address whether it adequately identifies and analyzes significant environmental impacts and how those impacts may be avoided or reduced. Comments are most helpful when they specifically address impact conclusions, alternatives, or mitigation measures, or the methods of analysis used by the lead agency to evaluate these issues. Commenters should explain the basis for their comments and include supporting evidence such as data, expert opinion, or other facts. This includes providing the County with copies of any references used as the basis for the comments. If the reference is available on a website, commenters should provide the County with the specific web address where the reference can be accessed.

Commenters are free to express their opinions about the proposed project, but these are not necessarily helpful to the County in preparing an adequate EIR. Effective CEQA-related comments focus on the EIR and its adequacy as an informational document. Commenters should be aware that the adequacy of an EIR is determined in terms of what is reasonably feasible. CEQA does not require a lead agency to conduct every test or perform all research, study, and experimentation recommended by commenters. Disagreement among experts does not make an EIR inadequate, but the EIR should summarize the main points of disagreement among the experts.

1.3.2 Submitting Comments

This Draft EIR will be available for public review and comment for the 45-day period identified in the Notice of Availability.

Written comments on the Draft EIR may be submitted electronically to Shirlee Herrington, to cdraecs@placer.ca.gov or mailed to:

Shirlee Herrington
Environmental Coordination Services, Community Development Resource Agency
3091 County Center Drive, Suite 190
Auburn, CA 95603

Comments may also be submitted after the end of the formal review period; however, it is possible that they may not be responded to in writing and included in the Final EIR. No comments on the Draft EIR will be responded to outside of the CEQA process, and commenters will not be sent individual responses to their comments. The responses will be contained in the Final EIR. Comments that are received too late for inclusion in the Final EIR will nonetheless be made available to the County Planning Commission and the Board of Supervisors during their deliberations on the project.

1.4 Final Environmental Impact Report

After the close of the Draft EIR's review period, the County will prepare the Final EIR. The Final EIR will consist of the Draft EIR and the Final EIR and will include: the comments received during the formal review period of the Draft EIR; good faith, well-reasoned responses to the comments received that relate to environmental issues; and any revisions made to the Draft EIR in response to the comments.

The Final EIR and accompanying Draft EIR will be available to the County Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors for consideration during their decision-making process to approve or deny the project.

Chapter 2
Project Description

2.1 Project Overview

The proposed project consists of targeted amendments to the Placer County General Plan (General Plan), Placer County Zoning Ordinance (Zoning Ordinance), Zoning Combining Districts, and Community Design Manual for Multi-Family and Mixed-Use Development, which would provide a framework for future housing development in Placer County (County) that takes into account population growth, economic factors, demographics, and community needs and wants. The updates to the General Plan, Zoning Ordinance, the rezoning of parcels' combining zone, and the adoption of a Design Manual for multi-family and mixed-use development constitute the project being analyzed in this Draft Environmental Impact Report (Draft EIR) pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Placer County is illustrated in Figure 2-1. The project applies to those areas that are under County jurisdiction (Figure 2-2).

Unincorporated Placer County currently has sufficient area to meet its housing demand, as described in Section 2.2.2, *Existing Conditions and Land Uses*; however, housing development in unincorporated Placer County has been slow and difficult for multiple reasons, including market conditions, infrastructure constraints, and regulatory/environmental barriers. Through its updates to the General Plan, Zoning Ordinance, Zoning Map, and the Design Manual for Multi-Family and Mixed-Use Development, the project proposes to facilitate housing development by allowing for more variation of development in areas where infrastructure and development already exists and has capacity to accommodate further development. The project is geared towards implementing the County's existing General Plan policies and current State housing regulations.

2.2 Project Setting

2.2.1 Location

Placer County encompasses approximately 1,500 square miles in northeastern California. The western part of Placer County, which is part of the Sacramento Valley, contains the cities of Roseville, Rocklin, Lincoln, and Loomis, as well as the unincorporated communities of Sheridan and Granite Bay. The central part of Placer County consists of the foothill region, which includes the cities of Auburn and Colfax, and the unincorporated communities of Foresthill, Penryn, North Auburn, Newcastle, Applegate, Weimar, Gold Run, Meadow Vista, Dutch Flat, Alta, and Baxter. The eastern part of Placer County is the High Sierra region, which includes the resort communities and ski areas around Lake Tahoe. The unincorporated communities in this area include Tahoe City, Tahoe Vista, Carnelian Bay, Homewood, Kings Beach, Tahoma, Emigrant Gap, Soda Springs, and Squaw Valley.

This project is limited to the unincorporated portions of the county. The areas within the county boundaries that are not under County jurisdiction and therefore not subject to regulation by the

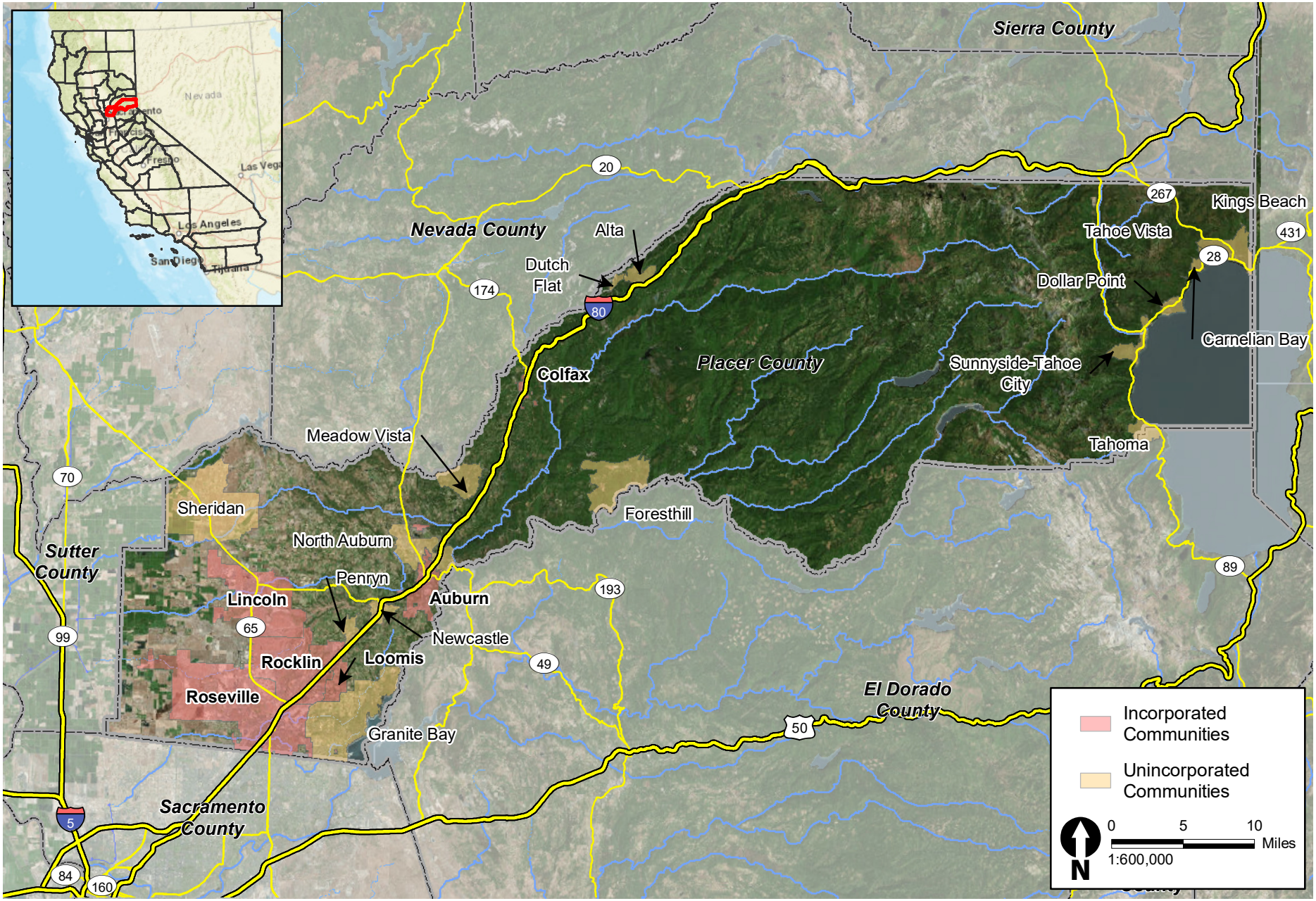
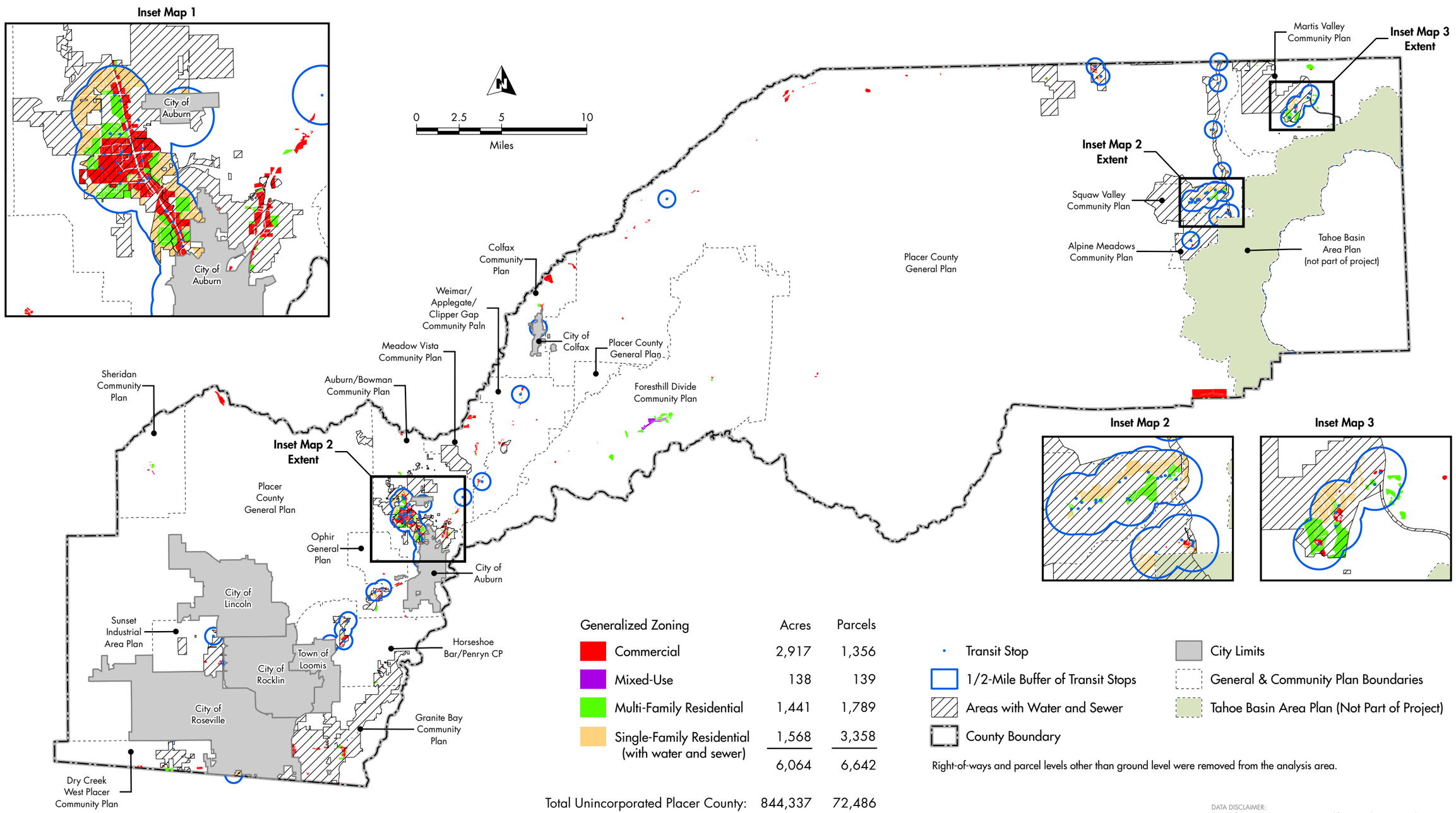


Figure 2-1
Regional Location Map



Generalized Zoning	Acres	Parcels
Commercial	2,917	1,356
Mixed-Use	138	139
Multi-Family Residential	1,441	1,789
Single-Family Residential (with water and sewer)	1,568	3,358
	6,064	6,642
Total Unincorporated Placer County:	844,337	72,486

Right-of-ways and parcel levels other than ground level were removed from the analysis area.

DATA DISCLAIMER:
The features on this map were prepared for geographic purposes only and are not intended to illustrate legal boundaries or supercede local ordinances. Official information concerning the features depicted on this map should be obtained from recorded documents and local governing agencies.

Source: Placer County Development Resource Agency 2019.

Graphics ... 00299.19 Placer County (5-12-2020) tag

ICF

Figure 2-2
Project Areas under County Jurisdiction

County through the General Plan and Zoning Ordinance include federal lands such as National Forest lands (Eldorado National Forest, Tahoe National Forest, Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit), Bureau of Land Management lands; lands that fall under the regional jurisdiction of the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (TRPA); state lands at the Folsom Lake State Recreation Area, Auburn State Recreation Area, Donner Memorial State Park, and state parks along the Lake Tahoe shore; tribal lands such as the Auburn Rancheria; and land within the incorporated cities of Roseville, Rocklin, Lincoln, Loomis, Auburn, and Colfax (Figure 2-2). Approximately 53 percent of the land area of the County falls under the jurisdiction of such entities (Placer County 2020).

A number of the unincorporated communities within the county are covered by the adopted community plans listed below, in addition to the County General Plan. None of these plans are proposed for amendment as part of the project.

- Alpine Meadows General Plan
- Auburn/Bowman Community Plan
- Colfax General Plan
- Dry Creek/West Placer Community Plan
- Foresthill Divide Community Plan
- Granite Bay Community Plan
- Horseshoe Bar/Penryn Community Plan
- Martis Valley Community Plan
- Meadow Vista Community Plan
- Newcastle/Ophir Area General Plan
- Ophir General Plan
- Sheridan Community Plan
- Squaw Valley Area General Plan
- Sunset Area Plan
- Tahoe Basin Area Plan
- Weimar/Applegate/Clipper Gap General Plan

In general, the project would help implement the various goals included in the County's community plans, particularly those related to encouraging density and housing in appropriate areas.

2.2.2 Existing Conditions and Land Uses

The population of the unincorporated area of the county was estimated to be 115,247 on January 1, 2020. The County seat is in the incorporated city of Auburn, approximately 30 miles northeast of Sacramento. The city of Auburn's population was estimated by the U.S. Census to be 14,392 in 2019. The city of Roseville, with an estimated population of 139,643 in 2019, is the largest city in the county (California Department of Finance 2019).

The western part of Placer County, which is part of the Sacramento Valley, is generally flat and ranges in elevation from 45 to 1,000 feet. This part of the county, called South Placer, contains the

cities of Roseville, Rocklin, Lincoln, and Loomis, as well as the unincorporated communities of Sheridan and Granite Bay. The South Placer area has experienced the county's most significant growth in recent years, in terms of both new housing and commercial and industrial development. Most of the county's major manufacturing facilities are located in this part of the county. South Placer County also supports the bulk of the county's agricultural activities, including over 86,000 acres of land enrolled in the California Land Conservation Act (Williamson Act) contracts (Placer County 1994).

The central part of Placer County consists of the foothills region, which includes the cities of Auburn and Colfax, and the unincorporated communities of Foresthill, Penryn, Newcastle, Applegate, Weimar, Gold Run, Meadow Vista, Dutch Flat, Alta, and Baxter. The foothills region is the heart of what constituted Gold Rush County in the 19th century. As in South Placer, many residents of the foothills area commute to work in the Sacramento area (Placer County 1994).

The eastern part of Placer County is the High Sierra region. The High Sierra area includes resort communities and ski areas around Lake Tahoe. This area is an internationally known resort area with visitors coming to hike, fish, golf, enjoy the outdoors, visit nearby Nevada casinos, and ski. Tourism and recreation are the dominant industries in the region, providing jobs for the residents of the unincorporated communities of Tahoe City, Tahoe Vista, Carnelian Bay, Homewood, Kings Beach, Tahoma, Emigrant Gap, Soda Springs, and Squaw Valley (Placer County 1994).

Housing

The Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG) adopted its final Plan for Allocation of Regional Housing Needs Allocations (RHNA) in September 2012. SACOG has allocated 5,031 new housing units to unincorporated Placer County for the January 1, 2013 to October 31, 2021 planning period. Of these 5,031 units, 3,258 units are to be affordable to moderate-income households and below, including 1,365 very-low-income units, 957 low-income units, and 936 moderate-income units (Placer County 2013). Table 2-1 illustrates the County's RHNA between January 1, 2013 and October 31, 2021.

Table 2-1. Regional Housing Needs Allocations January 1, 2013 through October 31, 2021

	Very-Low-Income Units	Low-Income Units	Moderate-Income Units	Above-Moderate-Income Units	Total Units
RHNA	1,365	957	936	1,773	**5,031**
Percent of Total	27.1%	19.0%	18.6%	35.2%	**100.0%**

Source: Placer County 2013

SACOG adopted the 2021-2029 RHRA Plan in March 2020 and the County's RHNA has increased from the previous cycle, as indicated in Table 2-2.

Table 2-2. Regional Housing Needs Allocations January 1, 2021 through October 31, 2029

	Very-Low-Income Units	Low-Income Units	Moderate-Income Units	Above-Moderate-Income Units	Total Units
RHNA	2,017	1,215	1,242	2,945	**7,419**
Percent of Total	27.2%	16.4%	16.7%	39.7%	**100.0%**

Source: SACOG 2020

In 2018, Placer County prepared the Existing Conditions and Land Supply Assessment to support the larger 2018 Placer County Housing Strategy Development Plan (Placer County 2018). This assessment outlines a housing demand and supply assessment to document anticipated future demand for housing in unincorporated Placer County. The assessment identifies that unincorporated areas of Placer County may experience demand through 2040 of between 10,358 and 23,857 new housing units. This includes between 7,251 and 16,700 units in the western county, 2,072 to 7,771 units in the Auburn area, and 1,036 and 2,386 units in the eastern county. According to the assessment, housing demand in the eastern county is heavily skewed toward multifamily housing (72 percent), while housing demand in the western and central portions of the county is more heavily skewed toward more traditional detached single-family housings (88 percent).

Table 2-3 summarizes the potential buildout capacity of land in unincorporated Placer County. The General Plan, Specific Plans, planned projects, and vacant sites provide enough capacity to accommodate roughly 79,648 units, as detailed in the table.

Table 2-3. Estimated Maximum Development Capacity in Unincorporated Placer County

	Unit Housing Capacity				
	Single Family	**Multifamily**	**Secondary Units (a)**	**Other/Unknown**	**All Units**
Specific Plans	28,150	10,184	0	3,874	42,208
Subdivisions	4,759	0	0	0	4,759
Permitted Projects	1,324	0	0	97	1,421
Vacant Sites Inventory (b)	9,922	13,346	6,174	1,818	31,260
All Units	**44,155**	**23,530**	**6,174**	**5,789**	**79,648**

Source: Placer County 2018.

Notes:

(a) Assumes development of secondary units on all vacant sites where second units are allowed.

(b) Assumes the maximum allowable units on each site.

2.3 Proposed Project Objectives

2.3.1 Placer County Housing Strategy and Development Plan

The project represents a component of a larger effort to implement elements of the Placer County Housing Strategy and Development Plan. This project is intended to implement the following primary objectives:

- Increase the availability of a mix of housing types in the county for existing and future residents, students, and employees whose income cannot support the cost of housing in the county
- Improve the County's overall employment growth by assisting County employers in reducing critical shortages of skilled workers in part driven by a lack of available housing
- Reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT) per capita by shortening commute distances for those who commute within Placer County for education or work, or other metric for VMT as determined appropriate by the County under Senate Bill 743 legislation

- Bring County housing policies, ordinances, standards, and guidelines into conformance with recent changes in State law
- Implement adopted General Plan, community plan and area plan policies that support efficient, resilient and sustainable housing development patterns that can be achieved through higher density, mixed use, transit oriented and infill development projects
- Align Placer County General Plan and Zoning Ordinance housing-related land uses, development standards and implementation methods with recently adopted specific plans, community plans, and area plans
- Implement County-adopted Strategic Plan (November 20, 2018), which supports new housing construction that provides a mix of housing types for existing and future residents at all income ranges.

2.4 Proposed Project

Table 2-4 includes a summary of the changes that would be made to the General Plan, Zoning Ordinance, Zoning Map, and Community Design Guidelines Manual.

Table 2-4. Project Components

Sections	Project Component	Objective ID	Objective Summary
General Plan Amendments	Mixed Use and Multifamily	GP-1	Allow residential densities when part of a mixed-use project or within a mixed-use zone to be measured using Floor Area Ratio (FAR) in General Commercial (GC) and Higher Density Residential (HDR) Land Use Designations by amending General Plan Table 1-2 to: Increase HDR Land Use Designation FAR to 2.0 to be consistent with GC Land Use Designation FAR Add note to table to acknowledge the allowance of smaller lot size than shown in table when project is consistent with mixed-use projects and cluster housing project standards. Allow up to 30 units per acre when calculating density for an entire mixed use project using FAR as the measurement for both commercial and residential.
		GP-2	Amend General Plan Table 1-3 (General Plan Land Use Designations and Consistent Zoning Districts) to: Allow General Commercial (C-2), Commercial Planned Development (CPD) or Mixed-Use (MU) zone districts within the HDR Land Use Designation Allow Residential Multifamily (RM) zoning in the General Commercial Land Use Designation Add note to table to acknowledge the allowance of smaller lot size then shown in table when project is consistent with cluster housing project standards.
Zoning Map Amendments	Mixed-Use Zone District	ZM-1	Create a new mixed-use zone district
		ZM-2	Revise -B, -UP and -DL combining zone district on all Commercial and Multifamily zones where adequate infrastructure and public services are available and replace with –DC, DS and DH.
Zoning Text Amendments	Mixed-Use and Multifamily Zone and Standards	MU-1	Create a mixed-use zone district
		MU-2	Establish Standards and Guidelines for Multifamily and Mixed Use Development
		MU-3	Create a mixed-use development land use
	Residential Density	RD-1	Revise density allowed in Mobile Home Parks to allow for 12 units per acre with improved design standards
	Workforce Housing	WF-1	Where currently permissible, allow with zoning clearance the construction of mobile homes, recreational homes or tiny houses when they are for caretaker or employee housing, with the exception of FOR and TPZ zones.
		WF-2	Define Tiny Houses on Wheels and allow for use as a single-family and secondary dwelling

Sections	Project Component	Objective ID	Objective Summary
Zoning Text Amendments (Continued)	Development Standards	DS-1	Include flexible parking standards
		DS-2	Include flexible building heights
		DS-3	Reduce or remove lot coverage standards in commercial and higher-density residential zones including when part of a mixed-use project or areas where adequate infrastructure and public services are available
		DS-4	Update development standards for Multifamily Residential Zone District
	By-Right Development and Revisions to Permitting	BR-1	Increase by-right development and administrative level review subject to zoning compliance through: Design review Development and design standards for mixed use and multifamily Add infill definition
	Density Bonus	DB-1	Bring Density Bonus Ordinance into compliance with new State Density Bonus law; include adoption of procedures and timelines for review
		DB-2	Further expand Density Bonus provisions beyond state requirements to all for up to 100% Density Bonus for mixed-use projects and residential zoned areas where adequate infrastructure and public services are available
		DB-3	Establish dwelling unit equivalence standards
		DB-4	Establish density bonus code to allow duplexes, triplexes and fourplexes on Single-Family (RS) and Residential Multifamily (RM) residential zones where adequate infrastructure and public services are available
Zoning Text Amendments (Continued)	Cluster Housing	CH-1	Allow for different types of cluster housing, including tiny house communities; agriculture-, conservation-, and open space–oriented communities; cottage housing; and cohousing
		CH-2	Revise Combining Zone Planned Development (-PD) and related ordinance and process to streamline the review and approval process
	Design Standards Manual	DG-1	Prepare a standalone Design Manual for Mixed-Use and Multifamily Development that updates adopted Community Design Guidelines for these development types, and develop a clear design review process for mixed-use and multifamily projects
		DG-2	Develop a clear process and forms for CEQA streamlining including the development of a design review checklist.

2.4.1 General Plan

Under the project, amendments are proposed for Table 2-4 of the Land Use Element in the General Plan. Overall, updates to Table 2-4 for areas that have Higher Density Residential (HDR) and General Commercial (GC) land use designations clarify the allowance for the Mixed-Use/Multifamily uses in HDR and GC land use designations, in part, by updating FAR guidelines.

2.4.2 Zoning Ordinance

Under the project, the Zoning Ordinance would be amended to allow for more variation of development within the existing zone districts. Overall, the Zoning Ordinance amendments would allow Multifamily development by right in a number of commercial zones and the new Mixed-Use zone, subject to conformance with the new Mixed-Use and Multifamily Design Standards and Guidelines Manual. This also includes new standards and guidelines; an increase in the allowable density of mobile home parks; the additional allowance of workforce housing; updates to the development standards, including standards for parking, building heights, and lot coverage standards; updates to the review for by-right development; updates to the Density Bonus Ordinance; and allowance for cluster housing. These changes are summarized in Table 2-4 in this chapter.

2.4.3 Community Design Guidelines Manual

The County has prepared the *Design Manual: Development Standards and Design Guidelines for Multifamily and Mixed-Use Development* (Placer County 2019) to provide guidelines for achieving high-quality design for relevant housing types in unincorporated Placer County. The manual implements various General Plan policies that address the county's lack of available housing and supports the County's efforts to have higher-density, mixed-use, transit-oriented, and infill development at locations identified in the General Plan, specific special plans, and zoning. The manual is also intended to streamline the project approval process for multifamily and mixed-use projects, making it easier to obtain approvals for projects that include an affordable housing component as well as market rate housing.

2.4.4 Zoning Map Amendments

Under the project, amendments are proposed for the zoning map, as indicated in Table 2-4. These include creating a new mixed-use zone district (ZM-1) and revising -B, -UP, and -DL on all commercial and multifamily zones where adequate infrastructure and public services are available and replace with -DC, DS, and DH.

2.4.5 Relationship to Senate Bill (SB) 35

Implementation of the proposed project would bring the County into compliance with SB 35 through the changes indicated in Table 2-4. A brief summary of SB 35 follows.

In 2018, Senate Bill 35 (Chapter 366, Statutes of 2017) added Government Code Section 65913.4, establishing a "streamlined, ministerial approval process" when a proponent submits an application for the development of multifamily housing containing two or more residential units located within a legal parcel or parcels wholly within the boundaries of an urbanized area or urban cluster, as designated by the United States Census Bureau; or a site in which at least 75 percent of the

perimeter of the site adjoins parcels that are developed with urban uses (as defined by Public Resources Code Section 21061.3). The county is limited to applying objective zoning standards and objective design review standards that are in effect at the time that the development is submitted to the county. No discretionary process, such as a conditional use permit, is allowed for qualifying projects.

A qualifying project must be zoned for residential use or residential mixed-use development, or have a general plan designation that allows residential use or a mix of residential and nonresidential uses, with at least two-thirds of the square footage designated for residential use. Where the project site's zoning and general plan designation are not consistent with one another, the general plan designation prevails.

Other qualifiers include:

- being located in a county that has not approved the number of low- or moderate-income housing units set out in its regional housing needs assessment and its housing element
- consistency with objective zoning and design review standards
- avoiding various sensitive or hazardous areas, including prime farmland or farmland of statewide importance, sites subject to a Natural Communities Conservation Plan or Habitat Conservation Plan, specified wetlands, a very high fire hazard severity zone, a hazardous waste site, earthquake or flood zone, and special status species habitat
- avoiding demolition of price-restricted affordable housing or a historic structure
- avoiding land that is a mobile home or recreational vehicle park
- certifying that the proposed development is either a "public work" for purposes of the labor code or subject to "enforceable wage requirements."

The statute prohibits the county from imposing parking standards for a streamlined development in any of the certain instances further defined in the statute.

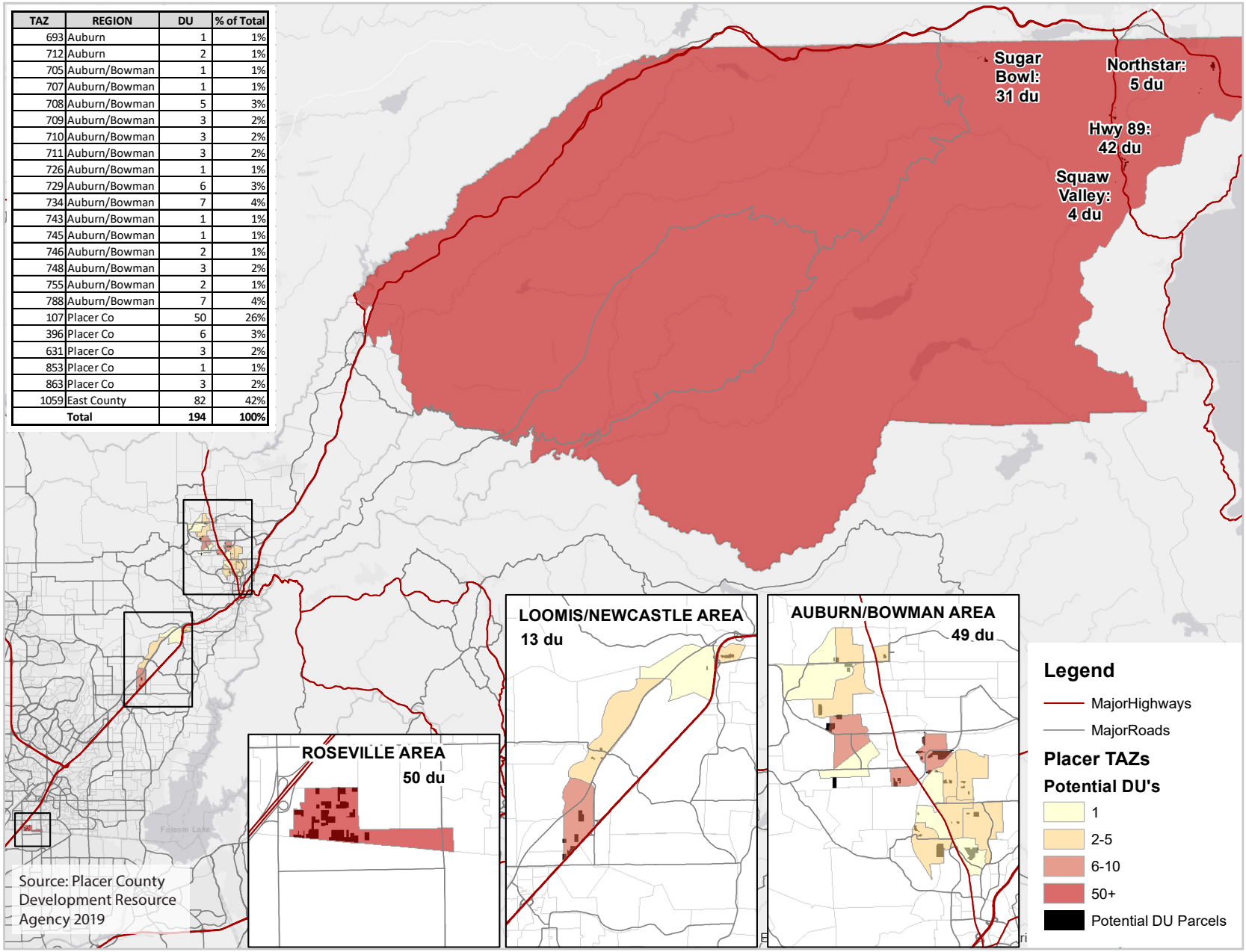
The statute establishes timelines for local government action on qualifying projects. It also provides that if the project includes public investment in housing affordability, beyond tax credits, where the majority of the units are affordable to households making below 80 percent of the area median income, then the approval will not expire. If the project does not include a majority of the units affordable to households making below 80 percent of the area median income, then the approval will automatically expire after three years except that a project may receive a one-time, one-year extension if the project proponent can provide documentation that there has been significant progress toward getting the development construction ready.

2.4.6 Projected Development

As a result of the changes to the Zoning Ordinance, a total of 194 additional units could be developed in areas throughout the county. The locations of these units are illustrated in Figure 2-3. As indicated in Figure 2-3, the 194 units are distributed throughout the county as follows:

- 50 units in the Roseville area
- 13 units in the Loomis/Newcastle area
- 49 units in the Auburn/Bowman area

TAZ	REGION	DU	% of Total
693	Auburn	1	1%
712	Auburn	2	1%
705	Auburn/Bowman	1	1%
707	Auburn/Bowman	1	1%
708	Auburn/Bowman	5	3%
709	Auburn/Bowman	3	2%
710	Auburn/Bowman	3	2%
711	Auburn/Bowman	3	2%
726	Auburn/Bowman	1	1%
729	Auburn/Bowman	6	3%
734	Auburn/Bowman	7	4%
743	Auburn/Bowman	1	1%
745	Auburn/Bowman	1	1%
746	Auburn/Bowman	2	1%
748	Auburn/Bowman	3	2%
755	Auburn/Bowman	2	1%
788	Auburn/Bowman	7	4%
107	Placer Co	50	26%
396	Placer Co	6	3%
631	Placer Co	3	2%
853	Placer Co	1	1%
863	Placer Co	3	2%
1059	East County	82	42%
	Total	**194**	**100%**



Graphics ... 00299.19 Placer County (5-12-2020) tag

Figure 2-3
Potential DU Parcels

- 82 units in the eastern county, including:
  - 31 units near Sugar Bowl
  - 4 units near Squaw Valley
  - 42 units near State Route 89
  - 5 units near Northstar

These changes are not expected to result in a substantial increase in the overall number of residences allowed under the General Plan. Additionally, implementation of the project would not directly result in development of these units. Rather, the changes to the zoning affordable housing density bonus provision would implement the regulatory framework for these units to be developed. Specifically, these units represent in very limited areas of the county the addition of a fourth unit on a property that is already developed when a certain affordability level of the unit is met. Affected parcels have between one and three existing units. Regardless of the amount of existing development (i.e., between one and three existing units) on an affected parcel, the project itself is the inclusion of the fourth unit that must still meet design limits of the zone.

2.5 Required Approvals

The project requires the following approvals in order to be implemented:

- Adoption of the General Plan amendments by resolution of the County Board of Supervisors.
- Adoption of the Zoning Ordinance amendments by the County Board of Supervisors.
- Adoption of the Zoning Combining District Map amendments by the County Board of Supervisors.
- Adoption of proposed new Community Design Guidelines Manual by the County Board of Supervisors.

2.6 References Cited

California Department of Finance. 2019. E-1 Population Estimates for Cities, Counties, and the State – January 2018 and 2019. http://www.dof.ca.gov/Forecasting/Demographics/Estimates/e-1/. Accessed April 20, 2020.

Placer County. 1994. Countywide General Plan Final EIR. https://www.placer.ca.gov/2977/Placer-County-General-Plan. Accessed April 20, 2020.

Placer County. 2013. *2013–2021 Housing Element*. Part I: Policy Document. https://www.placer.ca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/9439/Housing-Element-Policy-Document-PDF. Accessed April 20, 2020.

Placer County. 2018. *Placer County Housing Strategy and Development Plan. Existing Conditions and Land Supply Assessment*. May 2018. https://www.placer.ca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/37642/Housing-Strategy-and-Development-Plan-PDF?bidId. Accessed April 20, 2020.

Placer County. 2019. D*esign Manual: Development Standards and Design Guidelines for Multi-Family and Mixed-Use Development*. Public Review Draft. September 30, 2019.

Placer County. 2020. "Government Jurisdictions – Placer County", GIS map. May 7, 2020.

Sacramento Area Council of Governments. 2020. SACOG Regional Housing Needs Plan. Cycle 6 (2021-2029). https://www.sacog.org/sites/main/files/file-attachments/proposed_rhna_plan_2020-1-27_0.pdf?1588205260. Accessed July 27, 2020.

Chapter 3
Impact Analysis

Overview

The primary purpose of this Draft environmental impact report (EIR) is to analyze the potential significant impacts of the Proposed Housing-Related Code Amendments (project). The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines define a significant environmental impact as "a substantial, or potentially substantial, adverse change in any of the physical conditions within the area affected by the project" (CEQA Guidelines § 15382). The CEQA Guidelines encourage EIRs to "focus on the significant effects on the environment" (CEQA Guidelines § 15143). Impacts that have been considered and dismissed in an Initial Study as clearly less than significant and unlikely to occur do not need to be included in the EIR "unless the Lead Agency subsequently receives information inconsistent with the finding in the Initial Study" (CEQA Guidelines § 15143). There was no Initial Study conducted for this project, so all topic areas are covered in the Draft EIR.

The analyses in this Draft EIR address the project's short- and long-term adverse impacts on the physical (i.e., natural and built) environment, under the assumption the project will be built out. Existing conditions are the baseline against which the significance of the project's potential impacts are evaluated. Therefore, the reasonably foreseeable impacts of the proposed project, which consists of targeted amendments to the General Plan, Zoning Ordinance, Zoning Maps, and Community Design Guidelines Manual, are compared to the existing environment and not to the provisions of the existing General Plan, Zoning Ordinance, Zoning Maps, and Community Design Guidelines Manual.

Placer County adopted the General Plan in 1994 and certified an EIR for the General Plan at that time. There was an update to the General Plan released in 2013 intended to revise out-of-date language throughout the document and included ministerial changes and incorporation of Board of Supervisors–adopted resolutions. Although this Draft EIR does not tier upon the 2004 General Plan EIR, the impact analyses in this document reference the 2004 General Plan EIR's findings where relevant.

Environmental Issues Addressed in this Draft EIR

This section lists the environmental issues that are analyzed in this Draft EIR. Each section of Chapter 3 describes the environmental setting for the subject resource, describes the methods used for the analysis, identifies the significance thresholds or criteria used to determine whether the project would have a significant effect, describes the significant environmental impacts of the project, and identifies mitigation measures for each significant effect, when feasible mitigation exists. Impacts are numbered consecutively for each resource area, and mitigation measure numbering corresponds to impact numbering.

- Section 3.1, Aesthetics
- Section 3.2, Agricultural and Forestry Resources

- Section 3.3, Air Quality
- Section 3.4, Biological Resources
- Section 3.5, Cultural Resources
- Section 3.6, Energy
- Section 3.7, Geology, Soils, and Paleontological Resources
- Section 3.8, Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Section 3.9, Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Section 3.10, Hydrology and Water Quality
- Section 3.11, Land Use and Planning
- Section 3.12, Mineral Resources
- Section 3.13, Noise
- Section 3.14, Population and Housing
- Section 3.15, Public Services, Recreation, and Utilities and Service Systems
- Section 3.16, Transportation
- Section 3.17, Tribal Cultural Resources
- Section 3.18, Wildfire

This Draft EIR is consistent with Appendix G of the 2020 CEQA Guidelines. Following the initiation of this Draft EIR, Placer County presented a county-specific Initial Study Checklist document which slightly modifies the Appendix G checklist. The county-specific checklist does not introduce new environmental topics not covered by Appendix G, rather it slightly modifies the Appendix G checklist to focus the environmental topics more specifically to those topics germane to the County. While this EIR follows the Appendix G checklist, the environmental topics covered in this EIR, nevertheless, cover the breadth of environmental topics required to fully evaluate the potential effects of the project. One environmental topic, Transportation, follows the Placer County-specific checklist to ensure the new requirement to use Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) to evaluate transportation impacts reflects the characteristics of Placer County's transportation network.

3.1 Aesthetics

This section addresses the potential impacts of Placer County's (County) proposed General Plan amendments, Zoning Ordinance update, and the development of design standards and guidelines for mixed-use development (project) on aesthetics and visual resources. It describes the existing visual character of the project area and identifies the applicable federal and state plans, policies, and laws and local plans, policies, and regulations. The analysis identifies the potential impacts of the project, including cumulative impacts, on aesthetics and visual resources and identifies mitigation measures to reduce the level of impacts to less than significant.

Comments received on the Notice of Preparation included aesthetic concerns over code requirements for tiny houses and concern regarding the aesthetic impacts of increased density.

3.1.1 Existing Conditions

Regulatory Setting

The regulatory setting focuses on the regulations that apply to those portions of the county that are subject to the jurisdiction of Placer County. While large portions of the county are under the jurisdiction of other agencies (e.g., U.S. Forest Service, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, State of California, local agencies), those agencies' regulations typically do not apply to development and land uses that are under the County's jurisdiction. Accordingly, in general, federal and state regulations (with the exception listed below) are not pertinent to a discussion of existing regulatory conditions that relate to the proposed project and its visual impacts.

State of California

The State Scenic Highway Program (Streets and Highways Code §§ 260–263) was established in 1963 for the purpose of protecting and enhancing the natural scenic beauty of selected California highways and adjacent corridors through special conservation treatment. The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) may officially designate a highway segment as a Scenic Highway when the local governing body applies to Caltrans for scenic highway approval and adopts a Corridor Protection Program. A Scenic Highway designation does not preclude or otherwise directly regulate development along the highway. However, the local Corridor Protection Program is expected to ensure that activities within the scenic corridor are compatible with scenic resource protection and consistent with community values.

There are no officially designated scenic routes in Placer County. However, eligible routes are listed below (California Department of Transportation 2020):

- State Route (SR) 89 in Tahoe City/Nevada State Line (Post Mile 0.0 to 11.0)
- SR 20 near Emigrant Gap, starting in Placer County (Post Mile R59.5) to Sierra County (Post Mile 1.6)
- SR 120/SR 20 near Grass Valley, starting in Tuolumne County (Post Mile R8.8) to Nevada County (Post Mile R14.5) (traveling through Tuolumne County, Calaveras County, Amador County, El Dorado County, Placer County, and Nevada County)

Appendix G of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines suggests that substantial damage to scenic resources along a designated Scenic Highway may result in a significant environmental impact.

Local

Placer County General Plan

The Visual and Scenic Resources Element of the Placer County General Plan includes a number of goals and policies intended to protect visual and scenic resources as quality-of-life amenities for residents and as a principle asset for the promotion of tourism and recreation. Specific policies require the County to ensure that new development is designed to protect the quality of scenic areas, utilize natural landscape features and vegetation, minimize land alterations, and otherwise minimize visual impacts of development. The Placer County General Plan also requires the protection of the scenic resources visible from the scenic routes. Applicable goals and policies of the General Plan include the following:

Goal 1.K: To protect the visual and scenic resources of Placer County as important quality-of-life amenities for county residents and a principal asset in the promotion of recreation and tourism.

Policy 1.K.1. The county shall require that new development in scenic areas (e.g., river canyons, lake watersheds, scenic highway corridors, ridgelines and steep slopes) is planned and designed in a manner which employs design, construction, and maintenance techniques that:

a. Avoids locating structures along ridgelines and steep slopes;

b. Incorporates design and screening measures to minimize the visibility of structures and graded areas;

c. Maintains the character and visual quality of the area.

Policy 1.K.2. The county shall require that new development in scenic areas be designed to utilize natural landforms and vegetation for screening structures, access roads, building foundations, and cut and fill slopes.

Policy 1.K.3. The county shall require that new development in rural areas incorporates landscaping that provides a transition between the vegetation in developed areas and adjacent open space or undeveloped areas.

Policy 1.K.4. The county shall require that new development incorporates sound soil conservation practices and minimizes land alterations. Land alterations should comply with the following guidelines:

a. Limit cuts and fills;

b. Limit grading to the smallest practical area of land;

c. Limit land exposure to the shortest practical amount of time;

d. Replant graded areas to ensure establishment of plant cover before the next rainy season;

e. Create grading contours that blend with the natural contours on site or with contours on property immediately adjacent to the area of development; and,

f. Provide and maintain site-specific construction Best Management Practices (BMPs).

Policy 1.K.5. The county shall require that new roads, parking, and utilities be designed to minimize visual impacts. Unless limited by geological or engineering constraints, utilities should be installed underground and roadways and parking areas should be designed to conform to the natural terrain.

Policy 1.K.6. The county shall require that new development on hillsides employ design, construction, and maintenance techniques that:

a. Ensure that development near or on portions of hillsides do not cause or worsen natural hazards such as erosion, sedimentation, fire, or water quality concerns;

b. Include erosion and sediment control measures including temporary vegetation sufficient to stabilize disturbed areas;

c. Minimize risk to life and property from slope failure, landslides, and flooding; and,

d. Maintain the character and visual quality of the hillside.

Goal 1.L: To develop a system of scenic routes serving the needs of residents and visitors to Placer County and to preserve, enhance, and protect the scenic resources visible from these scenic routes.

Goal 1.O: To promote and enhance the quality and aesthetics of development in Placer County.

Policy 1.O.1*:* Except as otherwise provided in the Design Guidelines of an approved Specific Plan, the County shall require all new development to be designed in compliance with applicable provisions of the Placer County Design Guidelines Manual.

Policy 1.O.2: The County shall require that specific plans include design guidelines for all types of development within the area covered by the plan.

Policy 1.O.3: The County shall require that all new development be designed to be compatible with the scale and character of the area. Structures, especially those outside of village, urban, and commercial centers, should be designed and located so that:

a. they do not silhouette against the sky above ridgelines or hilltops;

b. roof lines and vertical architectural features blend with and do not detract from the natural background or ridge outline;

c. they fit the natural terrain; and

d. they utilize building materials, colors, and textures that blend with the natural landscape (e.g., avoid high contrasts).

Policy 1.O.4: The County shall require that new rural and suburban development be designed to preserve and maintain the rural character and quality of the County.

Policy 1.O.9: The County shall discourage the use of outdoor lighting that shines unnecessarily onto adjacent properties or into the night sky.

Policy 1.O.10: The County shall require that in downtowns/village centers the tallest buildings be clustered in the core area and that building heights transition down to the scale of buildings in the surrounding area.

Placer County Design Guidelines

Placer County has adopted design guidelines, and procedures are established under the County Zoning Ordinance for the performance of design review (Section 17.54.100 of the Placer County Code). The design guidelines are applicable to all commercial, industrial, and multifamily development located in the -Dc (Design Scenic Corridor), -Ds (Design Sierra), and -Dh (Design

Historic) zoning districts. These zoning districts include special regulations to protect and enhance the aesthetic character of lands and buildings within public views and buildings and areas that have unique aesthetic characteristics. The County's design guidelines are applicable to all commercial, industrial, and multifamily development and identify principles related to the height, bulk, color, and scale of buildings. Other subjects covered include architectural design, site planning, parking and circulation, and signs. Specific site planning and design criteria are included for commercial, industrial, and multifamily development (Placer County 2003).

The County has prepared new design guidelines, which are not yet adopted. The *Design Manual: Development Standards and Design Guidelines for Multi-Family and Mixed-Use Development* (Design Manual) (Placer County 2019) provides guidelines for achieving high-quality design for relevant housing types in unincorporated Placer County. The Design Manual is part of the proposed project and its implementation is discussed further below. The policies in the Design Manual would help guide the design of the new units that could result as part of the General Plan and zoning changes proposed under the project. Conformance with the Placer County Code is required for any project approval; the Design Manual provides additional direction regarding building design and site planning. The Design Manual aims to be prescriptive enough to create a framework for designing individual buildings and to carry out the vision in the County's General Plan and applicable Specific Plans and Master Plans, but flexible enough to allow for creativity and innovation in design of individual projects. The Design Manual is intended as a regulatory tool rather than a set of policies, meaning development applications must be consistent with the Design Manual in order to be approved. The Design Manual does not modify or supersede other County documents, such as the Historic Design Guidelines, Landscape Design Guidelines, Rural Design Guidelines, Water Efficient Landscaping Requirements, the West and East Placer Storm Water Quality Design Manuals, and requirements for Low Impact Development.

Placer County Landscape Design Guidelines

Placer County also maintains landscape design guidelines applicable to the design review process. The landscape design guidelines contain a series of general requirements for landscaping, including the preservation of existing trees and shrubs where feasible; a 15 percent site coverage landscape requirement; requirements for consistency of landscape design and scale; requirements for water efficient landscaping; standards for size of planting areas; a requirement for landscaping along property borders; screening to minimize light, noise, and physical distractions; use of deciduous trees in the interior of parking lots; screening of parking, loading, and other similar areas; and a requirement for comprehensive master landscape plans for major developments. Other guidelines pertaining to size, installation, maintenance, and irrigation of plantings also are described in the landscape design guidelines (Placer County Planning Services Division 2013).

Environmental Setting

Concepts Related to Scenic Resources

Scenic or visual resources are generally defined as both the natural and built features of the landscape that contribute to the experience and appreciation of the environment by the general public. Depending on the extent to which a project would adversely alter the perceived visual character and quality of the environment, a visual or scenic impact may occur. Aesthetic values are highly subjective. Opinions as to what constitutes a degradation of visual character differ among individuals. However, as with all CEQA impacts, the effects of a project must be considered in the

physical context of the project site and they must be compared to the existing conditions, as discussed in this Environmental Setting. This environmental impact report uses certain terms and concepts to aid the reader in understanding the content of this section. These terms and definitions are general in nature but are described in more detail below.

Visual Resources and Scenic Views

Visual resources can be classified in two categories: scenic views and scenic resources. Scenic resources are specific features of a viewing area (or viewshed) such as trees, rock outcroppings, and historical buildings and are also referred to as scenic vistas. They are specific features that act as the focal point of a viewshed and are usually foreground elements. Scenic views are elements of the broader viewshed such as mountain ranges, valleys, and ridgelines. They are usually middleground or background elements of a viewshed that can be seen from a number of viewpoints, often along a roadway or other travel corridor. A scenic vista is generally considered to be a location from which the public can experience unique and exemplary high-quality views, including panoramic views of great breadth and depth, often from elevated vantage points. The County's General Plan describes scenic areas as including river canyons, lake watersheds, scenic highway corridors, ridgelines, and steep slopes.

The visual quality of an area is based on the physical appearance and characteristics of the built environment; the proximity and balance of human-made structures with open space or landscaping; and views of public open space or of more distant landscape features such as hills, water bodies, or built landmarks. These elements help define a sense of place and a physical orientation in a larger visual setting. The interplay of these elements of the visual setting varies, depending on viewer location.

Light and Glare

Light pollution refers to all forms of unwanted light in the night sky, including glare, light trespass, sky glow, and over-lighting. Views of the night sky can be an important part of the natural environment, particularly in communities surrounded by extensive open space, such as mountain communities in the High Sierra region. Excessive light and glare can also be visually disruptive to humans and nocturnal animal species. Electric lighting also increases night sky brightness and is the human-made source of sky glow. Sky glow is highly variable depending on immediate weather conditions, quantity of dust and gas in the atmosphere, amount of light directed skyward, and the direction from which it is viewed.

Viewer Groups and Sensitivity

Viewer groups are differentiated in large part by physical factors that modify perception (primarily the viewer exposure characteristics described below). For this project, viewer groups include residents of existing housing throughout the county, visitors, motorists on roadways, recreationists (e.g., golfers, hikers, skiers, bicyclists), and employees.

Viewer sensitivity is the overall measure of the variable receptivity of viewers to adverse visual changes in an existing landscape. People in different visual settings, typically characterized by different land uses in the vicinity of a project, have varying degrees of sensitivity to changes in visual conditions, often depending on the overall visual characteristics of the place. In areas of more distinctive visual quality, such as designated scenic highways, designated scenic roads, parks, and recreation and natural areas, viewer sensitivity is characteristically more pronounced. In areas of

more indistinctive visual quality or visual quality that is generally representative of the setting, sensitivity to change tends to be less pronounced. This analysis of viewer sensitivity is based on the combined factors of visual quality before and after project implementation, viewer types and numbers of viewers, and visual exposure to the project. Viewer sensitivity is described as high, moderate, or low, depending on these factors.

Regional Setting

Placer County encompasses approximately 1,500 square miles in northeastern California. The western part of Placer County (South Placer County), which is part of the Sacramento Valley, contains the cities of Roseville, Rocklin, Lincoln, and Loomis, as well as the unincorporated communities of Sheridan and Granite Bay. The central part of Placer County consists of the foothill region, which includes the cities of Auburn and Colfax, and the unincorporated communities of Foresthill, Penryn, Newcastle, Applegate, Weimar, Gold Run, Meadow Vista, Dutch Flat, Alta, and Baxter. The eastern part of Placer County is the High Sierra region, which includes the resort communities and ski areas around Lake Tahoe. The unincorporated communities in this area include Tahoe City, Tahoe Vista, Carnelian Bay, Homewood, Kings Beach, Tahoma, Emigrant Gap, Soda Springs, and Squaw Valley.

The county contains suburban, rural, agricultural, and forest landscapes, stretching from the Sacramento suburb of Roseville to the west to the Nevada border to the east. Interstate (I-) 80 bisects the county, connecting South Placer County and the foothills with the Sierra/Tahoe area. Placer County has a complex topography made of rolling hills, steep valleys, and mountainous terrain. From west to east across the county, the elevation steadily rises and the natural landscape transitions from oak woodlands to coniferous forest. Elevations range from 45 feet above mean sea level (amsl) in the western rolling foothills, adjacent to Sacramento County, to almost 9,000 feet amsl along the Sierra Nevada crest on the edge of the Lake Tahoe Basin.

Major waterways in Placer County include the north fork of the American River, Bunch Creek, and Lake Tahoe. Other significant landscape features in the county include Eldorado National Forest, Tahoe National Forest, Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit, Bureau of Land Management lands, Folsom Lake State Recreation Area, Auburn State Recreation Area, Donner Memorial State Park, state parks along the Lake Tahoe shore, and tribal lands such as the Auburn Rancheria.

For descriptive purposes in this section, the county is divided into three regions: South Placer County, foothill region, and High Sierra region. Each region is described in more detail below.

South Placer County Setting

Visual Character

The western part of Placer County, which is part of the Sacramento Valley, is generally flat but gradually ranges in elevation from 45 to 1,000 feet amsl. This part of the county, called South Placer, contains the cities of Roseville, Rocklin, Lincoln, and Loomis, as well as the unincorporated communities of Sheridan and Granite Bay. South Placer County also supports the bulk of the county's agricultural activities, along with suburban neighborhoods, commercial and industrial development, and manufacturing facilities. South Placer County includes open land containing grazing, field crops, and other agricultural uses. Residential neighborhoods are located in the cities and unincorporated communities listed above. After crossing under SR 65, the Union Pacific

Railroad (UPRR) corridor generally parallels Taylor Road/Pacific Street/Rippey Road in an east-west direction.

Vegetation varies from unmanicured, low-growing grasslands, to trees and shrubs growing naturally along waterways, to more manicured lawns and trees and shrubs planted for landscaping in association with residential and business areas. Ornamental plantings in the older neighborhoods are often introduced evergreen and deciduous trees that provide greenery year-round. These ornamental species range from approximately 20 to 50 feet high at maturity and are typically much smaller and younger than the occasional remnant oaks and pines in these neighborhoods. Suburban neighborhoods that were built in the last 40 or 50 years tend to have younger or smaller trees and less structural diversity than older neighborhoods.

Existing Views

Views are mostly limited by existing commercial and industrial development; soundwalls along roadway corridors that abut residential areas; trees and shrubs associated with residential, open space, and commercial areas; and gently rolling terrain. Various overcrossings throughout the area also limit views and often prevent views beyond the structures. The Sierra Nevada foothills and mountains of the Sierra Nevada can be visible facing east in this area, although the Sierra Nevada is not a dominant feature due to distance and atmospheric haze. The Sutter Buttes can be visible from portions of South Placer County facing northwest; however, like the Sierra Nevada, they are not a dominant feature due to distance and intervening landscaping and topographic features. In general, to the west, north, and south, no mountains are visible because the topography of the Central Valley in these directions is flat. Antelope Creek and Dry Creek are visible in some portions of the area.

Light and Glare

In the rural, agricultural, and undeveloped portions of South Placer County, there are limited light or glare sources. However, light and glare are prominent in developed portions such as industrial, business park, and commercial areas and residential neighborhoods. The developed areas have lighting consistent with these uses that generate nighttime lighting and the light pollution is typical of urban development. Light from vehicles on I-80 and SR 65 also generate nighttime glare in the area. Sources of daytime glare are limited primarily to light glancing off glass and reflective material, such as building windows and car windshields in parking lots and on local roadways.

Viewer Groups

The typical viewers in this area include rural residents and residents of the local cities, workers, consumers, and commuters driving through the area. Residents in the area tend to have high sensitivity to visual changes because they spend more time in the area and are accustomed to the existing views. Although those driving, working, and commuting in the area may look for local landmarks and scenery, they typically are less sensitive to visual changes than local residents because they are not focused on scenery. Because they spend less time in an area, nonresident motorists are of moderate sensitivity.

Foothill Region Setting

Visual Character

The center part of Placer County consists of the foothill region, which includes the cities of Auburn/Bowman and Colfax, and the unincorporated communities of Foresthill, Penryn, Newcastle,

Applegate, Weimar, Gold Run, Meadow Vista, Dutch Flat, Alta, and Baxter. The foothill region is the heart of what constituted Gold Rush County in the 19th century. Buildings, structures, sites and features are left from mining activities during the second half of the 19th century, along with resources reflecting quarrying, agriculture, timber harvest, water conveyance, hydroelectric utilities, and rail and road resources. The foothill region is a transitional area from the urbanized uses in South Placer County to the more rural and wild landscapes of the High Sierra region.

The foothill region is generally bisected by I-80 in an east-west direction and SR 49 in a north-south direction. The UPRR corridor also runs through this area in an east-west direction. While some parts of the area are developed with urban characteristics, cities in the foothill region generally have a small-town atmosphere and rural nature. The area has varied topography, scenic vistas, oak and pine woodlands, and existing agricultural, urban, and suburban land uses. Typical rural Sierra Nevada foothill landscapes include grazing lands, rural residential lands, commercial parcels along major roadways, and the North Fork and the Middle Fork of the American River.

In general, the prominent vegetation in this area are oak-foothill pine woodlands. Oak-foothill pine woodland intergrades with oak woodland or foothill chaparral. Oak-foothill pine woodlands occur as open park-like stands that are usually dominated by scattered blue oak or interior live oak, with foothill pine occurring sparsely on the more shallow and rocky soils. However, ornamental plantings in the older neighborhoods include evergreen and deciduous trees. In foothill suburban areas, mature native oaks and pines are also present between the buildings. Intensively developed areas with highly manicured yards typically have very low wildlife habitat values. Small lawns and mature hedges in urban and suburban areas include many introduced fruiting species.

Existing Views

Views are generally limited due to intervening structures, vegetation, and distance; however, mountainous canyons and the western slope of the Sierra Nevada are adjacent to the east and rolling foothills are to the west. Segments of the American River are visible from certain locations.

Light and Glare

In the undeveloped portions of the foothill region, there are limited light or glare sources, allowing for views of the night sky. Views of the night sky are an important part of the natural environment and excessive light and glare can be visually disruptive to people and nocturnal animal species. Sources of human-made light and glare exist in the developed areas of the foothill region, including streetlights, parking lot lights, security lights, vehicular headlights, internal building lights, and reflective building surfaces and windows. Light from vehicles on I-80 and SR 49 also generate nighttime glare in the area.

Viewer Groups

The typical viewers in this area include rural residents and residents of the local cities, workers, consumers, and motorists driving through the area. Residents in the area tend to have high sensitivity to visual changes because they spend more time in the area and are accustomed to the existing views. Although those driving, working, and commuting in the area may look for local landmarks and scenery, they typically are less sensitive to visual changes than local residents, resulting in moderate sensitivity.

High Sierra Region Setting

Visual Character

The eastern part of Placer County is the High Sierra region. The High Sierra region includes resort communities and ski areas around Lake Tahoe. This area is an internationally known resort area with visitors coming to hike, fish, golf, ski, enjoy the outdoors, and visit nearby Nevada casinos. Tourism and recreation are the dominant industries in the region, providing jobs for the residents of the unincorporated communities of Tahoe City, Tahoe Vista, Carnelian Bay, Homewood, Kings Beach, Tahoma, Emigrant Gap, Soda Springs, and Squaw Valley. This region's population is concentrated in towns and small communities, and the landscape character is defined by the dominant natural features made up of striking geologic formations, varied terrain, lakes, streams, forests, and meadows. Natural water features in the region include Donner Lake, located at the foot of Donner Pass and the Lower Truckee River, which drains from Lake Tahoe, flows north parallel to SR 89, then turns east at Truckee to flow toward Reno, Nevada.

The High Sierra region contains a mix of environments, including urban centers, residential neighborhoods, small commercial nodes that serve the residential neighborhoods, recreation areas, and undeveloped stretches of wild and rural landscapes. Urban areas are dominated by commercial uses, public service activities, and residential uses. Dominant human-made features in the region include regional and interregional transportation corridors (UPRR, I-80, and Donner Pass Road, which cross Donner Pass, SR 89, and SR 267), local roadways, ski resorts (e.g., Sugar Bowl, Squaw Valley, Northstar), and associated resort communities. Urban areas include Tahoe City, Kings Beach, and North Stateline.

Rural transition areas are a combination of human-made development and natural landscape features. In the High Sierra region, rural transitional areas include most areas along SR 28 and SR 89, including Tahoe Vista, Carnelian Bay, Sunnyside, Homewood, and other residential areas. SR 89 runs in a roughly north-south direction and serves as a major route to and from the Lake Tahoe region from I-80. SR 89 is listed as "Eligible for Listing" as an "Officially Designated State Scenic Highway" in the California Scenic Highway System, extending from Truckee south to Tahoe City and around the California perimeter of Lake Tahoe. Rural areas are dominated by natural elements and processes, including most of the backcountry areas and higher-elevation areas outside of residential neighborhoods.

Vegetation is characterized by plant communities dominated by Jeffrey pine, ponderosa pine, mixed conifer associations, and sagebrush at lower elevations, and white fir and red fir at higher elevations. Mountain meadows are interspersed within the forested areas, black cottonwoods are common in streamside areas, and aspen groves are scattered among the forests and woodlands. The mountains are thickly forested, predominantly by evergreen species, and many have rocky summits that maintain patches of snow for much of the year.

Existing Views

Due to the varied terrain, views and scenic vistas in the High Sierra region are of high visual quality. The terrain is generally defined by gently sloping to moderately steep plateaus and mountain valleys (e.g., Martis Valley, Squaw Valley) with some steep mountainous areas, allowing for expansive views. The plateaus, valleys, and mountains are dissected by streams in moderately steep-sided canyons, including the Truckee River Canyon and Shirley Canyon. Elevation ranges from about 5,000 feet amsl along the Truckee River to over 9,000 feet amsl on the crest of the Sierra Nevada Mountain

Range. The Sierra Nevada crest rises steeply to the west of the Truckee River canyon with numerous peaks between 8,000 feet and 9,000 feet amsl, including Granite Chief, Mount Lincoln, Mount Andersen, and Tinker Knob. Views from these peaks are extensive with large viewsheds.

The dominant natural features of the High Sierra region is Lake Tahoe, which is surrounded by rugged mountain peaks with thickly forested slopes. Lake Tahoe has a depth of 1,645 feet and a surface area of 192 square miles (U.S. Environmental Protection Agency 2020); the expansiveness of the lake allows for long-distance views throughout the area.

Light and Glare

Rural and rural transition areas have dark skies with little light pollution from urban areas, making these area ideal locations for astronomical viewing. Views from lakeside beaches and from watercraft on the lake are especially expansive and free of nighttime light interference. Lighting associated with urban development and human presence can result in light pollution and spillover, which can adversely affect the dark night skies that contribute to the natural scenic character of the area. Lighting is generally prevalent in the cities, communities, and resorts in the High Sierra region. Lighting is visible through windows of structures, exterior safety lighting, exterior decorative lighting, and vehicle headlights. Daytime glare is due primarily to light glancing off glass and reflective material, such as building windows and car windshields in parking lots and on local roadways.

Viewer Groups

Viewers in the High Sierra region generally include residents, employees, and tourists. Residents tend to have a high degree of sensitivity to the change in the visual environment in close proximity to their homes and the in the overall viewshed they experience in the area. Employees in resorts, ski areas, and other recreational facilities have a high degree of familiarity with the scenic environment. This group would be focused primarily on work tasks, but may pause to appreciate views. These groups are considered to have moderate sensitivity to visual change.

Tourists include visitors to the various resorts (e.g., Sugar Bowl, Squaw Valley, Northstar), ski areas, golf courses, and other recreational areas. Visitors to resorts arrive with certain expectations of experiencing scenic views and natural types of surroundings within the context of the resort setting. Because these visitors may visit the resort for the purpose of relaxation and enjoyment of the surrounding scenic setting, sensitivity to visual change is considered moderately high. However, recreational visitors, such as skiers and golfers, focus more in the immediate vicinity and middleground in relation to their activity. Regardless, surroundings are a factor in the satisfaction and enjoyment of the recreational activities. This viewing group, which is relatively small and limited to people who are using the ski resorts and golf courses, would have moderate to moderately high sensitivity to visual change. Bicyclists and pedestrians would have expectations of experiencing a recreational activity in scenic surroundings, but would also have expectations of some modification of the environment associated with the resort setting. Bicyclists and pedestrians would be focused on their physical activity, but would have the opportunity to stop to enjoy the views. Sensitivity would be moderately high. Hikers moving through the natural environment have high awareness of surroundings, with high sensitivity, and have expectations of experiencing a recreational activity in scenic surroundings.

3.1.2 Environmental Impacts

The environmental analysis in this section focuses on the two main components of the project: (1) amendments to the Land Use Element in the County's General Plan, Zoning Ordinance, and Community Design Manual, and (2) the potential locations for the new dwelling units that could be constructed as a result of changes to the Zoning Ordinance (a total of 194 units distributed throughout the county).

The general land use pattern allowed by the housing-related code amendments is evaluated in the following discussions for its potential to adversely affect existing scenic resources. An adverse effect would be assumed to occur if development would result in a substantial change to existing scenic views or resources.

The analysis in this section also considers the impacts from the potential development of dwelling units in targeted areas throughout the county. As a result of project implementation, a total of 194 additional units could be constructed, as noted below. While these units could be developed as a result of project implementation, the project itself does not propose any site-specific development.

- 50 units in the Roseville area (South Placer County)
- 13 units in the Loomis/Newcastle area (foothill region)
- 49 units in the Auburn/Bowman area (foothill region)
- 82 units in the eastern county (High Sierra region), including:
    - 31 units near Sugar Bowl
    - 4 units near Squaw Valley
    - 42 units near SR 89
    - 5 units near Northstar

Methods for Analysis

Generally, visual effects discussed in a CEQA document would be of two types: impacts from a project's appearance (including what a project would look like and what views, if any, it obscures) and the degree to which a project might allow visual intrusion, such as light spillage onto adjacent properties. As discussed above, aesthetic values are highly subjective. This visual impact analysis is based on field observations, a review of aerial photographs of the potential dwelling unit locations, and photographs of the area.

Analysis of the project's visual impacts is based on evaluation of the changes to the existing visual resources that would result from project implementation. In determining the extent and implications of the visual changes, consideration was given to:

- Existing visual qualities of the affected environment and specific changes in the visual character and qualities of the affected environment
- The visual context of the affected environment
- The extent to which the affected environment contains places or features that provide unique visual experiences or that have been designated in plans and policies for protection or special consideration

- The sensitivity of viewers, access of viewers, their activities, and the extent to which these activities are related to the aesthetic qualities affected by the project-related changes

A whole step down in visual quality is considered a substantial degradation in visual quality. For example, a reduction in visual quality from high to moderate or from moderately high to moderately low would be considered a significant impact on visual quality. A substantial degradation in visual character is, generally, considered to be a complete change in visual character or the introduction of elements that result in a view with multiple prominent visual characters. For example, a change from rural to suburban residential would be considered a substantial degradation in the rural visual character. Similarly, an introduction of substantial commercial development to an area that is completely rural in character would be considered a substantial degradation in the open space visual character.

Thresholds of Significance

In accordance with Appendix G of the State CEQA Guidelines, the proposed project would be considered to have a significant effect if it would result in any of the conditions listed below.

- A substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista.
- Substantial damage to scenic resources, including but not limited to trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings along a Scenic Highway.
- In non-urbanized areas, substantial degradation of the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings. In urbanized areas, conflict with applicable zoning or other regulations governing scenic quality.
- Introduction of a new source of substantial light or glare that would adversely affect daytime or nighttime views in the area.

Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Impact AES-1: Potential to have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista (less than significant)

Scenic vistas are defined as expansive views of highly valued landscapes from publicly accessible viewpoints. Future development under the project would have the potential to affect scenic vistas if new or intensified development blocked views of areas that provide or contribute to such vistas. Potential effects could include blocking views of a scenic vista from specific publicly accessible vantage points or the alteration of the overall scenic vista itself. Such alterations could be positive or negative, depending on the characteristics of individual future developments and the subjective perception of observers. The County's General Plan describes scenic areas as including river canyons, lake watersheds, scenic highway corridors, ridgelines, and steep slopes.

Construction

Construction activities on the various project sites throughout the county could be visible from adjacent roadways and development, depending on the location. Views of some of the project sites, particularly in South Placer County and the foothill region, are generally considered average within the context of the surrounding forested landscape and/or urban development. Many views in these locations do not present distinctive features that provide a scenic vista. Although construction schedules for each site are unknown at this time, construction activities would be temporary in

nature. Therefore, construction activities would not have an adverse effect on a scenic vista in this location and the impact here would be less than significant.

However, ongoing construction activities, partially constructed buildings, and equipment could detract from the scenic vistas in some portions of the county (particularly in the High Sierra region and within the ski resorts) by reducing intactness of views, introducing structural elements that detract from the alpine setting, and interrupting views of the surrounding slopes and peaks. The changes to the visual resources would result in a substantial adverse effect on the scenic vistas provided from various viewpoints. Taking into consideration that some scenic vistas in the vicinity of proposed project sites are readily accessible to the public, that the scenic vistas are observed by a large number of viewers, and that viewer sensitivity to alterations to the scenic vistas is considered high relative to permanent changes, long-term construction impacts could be considered significant. However, given the temporary nature of construction activities and the relatively small scale of construction that would result from implementation of the project, this impact is considered ***less than significant***.

Operation

Future development potential in the county would be concentrated on sites either already developed and/or underutilized. In addition, development could occur on sites that are in close proximity to existing development, where future development would have less impact on scenic vistas. Proposed changes and amendments to land use controls consist of increased development intensities and increases in height. Because of the more intense development and increases in proposed building heights, potential new development under the project could block views of the mountains, canyons, ridgelines, slopes, various water features, and other scenic resources from several vantage points. However, due to the natural topography and location of the proposed development, the far-field views of these scenic resources would not likely be affected by new development in the county and scenic vistas would be preserved. None of the project components in Table 2-3 in Chapter 2, *Project Description*, would result in the allowance of new development in previously undeveloped or sensitive areas. The proposed General Plan Amendments and zoning changes are primarily to facilitate new uses in certain areas in order to promote mixed-use development. Finally, the Design Manual would ensure that new development preserves the existing character and promotes livability in unincorporated Placer County. Future development would continue to be subject to design and development standards (including those proposed under the project), which establish basic building parameters. The Design Manual would allow for an additional discretionary design review process as criteria to be used in reviewing and approving future projects. The Design Manual addresses building elements that cannot be readily measured or quantified, such as proportion and massing, building form, architectural elements, materials, and overall design character. Adherence to the Design Manual would further ensure that new development would not adversely affect scenic vistas. This impact would be ***less than significant***.

South Placer County

New dwelling units in South Placer County would include 50 units in the unincorporated area of southern Roseville. This area generally consists of one- to two-story houses on large- to medium-sized lots, with ample street setbacks, partially landscaped front yards, and mature trees. Sidewalks and street lighting are typically not present. The area is surrounded by other residential neighborhoods and commercial buildings and surface parking lots to the north. Flexible building heights permitted as part of the revised zoning and development standards would allow for taller

buildings. Because the topography in the area is relatively flat, the views from street-level public viewing to the scenic resources are currently inhibited by existing conditions such as buildings, structures, and mature trees and vegetation. Therefore, existing conditions limit many existing opportunities for views of scenic vistas from these areas. Flexible height limits and increases in building intensity would likely not cause any further substantial obstruction between public viewpoints and any scenic resource. Furthermore, it is expected that future development would adhere to the proposed Design Manual. Therefore, impacts on scenic vistas as a result of new dwelling units proposed in South Placer County would be ***less than significant***.

Foothill Region

In the foothill region, new dwelling units would be located on large parcels of land in Loomis and Newcastle, in close proximity to I-80. In addition, housing would be developed on large parcels in Penryn and throughout unincorporated areas of North Auburn. Some of these parcels are currently developed, some are not. All are surrounded by rural residential lands or commercial parcels along major roadways. Many of the project sites are considered to have high visual quality due to their underdeveloped or rural character and the presence of scenic resources, such as dense trees, open grasslands, and creek features. Adjacent structures are generally one to two stories in height and vary in age and condition. Surrounding rural residential, commercial, and institutional uses may have views of surrounding scenic vistas toward the project sites. Upon construction of each individual project, these views may be altered due to an increase in height and density.

However, the majority of proposed development sites are located in areas where the surrounding natural environment has been disturbed from the construction of existing commercial, residential, and institutional developments, for major roadways such as I-80, or both. Therefore, many views to onsite natural features are obstructed due to existing surrounding land uses within the viewshed. In addition, while development intensity would increase as a result of the proposed project, the new buildings would be a minor feature compared to the expansive forested surroundings. Therefore, due to the existing developments surrounding the proposed project sites and the small addition of new buildings compared to the overall landscape, impacts on scenic vistas would be ***less than significant***.

High Sierra Region

In the High Sierra region, 82 new dwelling units would be located within the already developed ski resorts of Sugar Bowl, Squaw Valley, and Northstar and on parcels along the central segment of SR 89 between Truckee and Tahoe City. At the ski resorts, the project would add structures within areas that have mountain-village-type architecture and are largely paved and developed, adjacent to other resort buildings. The increase in the number and size of structures would increase the visibility of the built environment and, depending on height and location, could obscure surrounding views. SR 89 runs through a highly forested river valley floor, parallel to the Truckee River. Although the corridor offers a high-quality visual setting, there are no expansive scenic vistas in the areas of the proposed dwelling unit parcels due to relatively flat valley floor topography and the dense forest that lines both sides of SR 89.

The scenic vistas available in the High Sierra region are generally of high quality and are observed by a large number of viewers with high sensitivity to alterations to the existing landscape. However, in areas where there are major scenic vistas with the backdrop of mountain slopes and peaks, the proposed housing unit developments would be a small portion of the overall landscape, some of which is currently developed with similar structures. The increase in the number and size of

residential units would increase the visibility of the built environment and would likely obscure parts of the scenic views. However, the surrounding expansive landscape of mountain peaks, valleys, waterbodies, and forested slopes would remain the primary point of visual interest and would continue to dominate the views. Therefore, impacts on scenic vistas as a result of new dwelling units proposed in the High Sierra region would be ***less than significant***.

Impact AES-2: Potential to substantially damage scenic resources along a scenic highway (less than significant)

The project would not substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a State Scenic Highway. There are no officially designated scenic routes in Placer County. Eligible routes include SR 89 in Tahoe City/Nevada State Line, SR 20 near Emigrant Gap, and SR 120/SR 20 near Grass Valley. Although these county scenic corridors have been determined "Eligible for Listing" as an "Officially Designated State Scenic Highway" in California, these corridors are not officially designated as a State Scenic Highway. Except for the proposed dwelling units along SR 89, none of the other proposed units would be visible to or from the state scenic corridors in South Placer County, the foothill region, or the High Sierra region.

Along the SR 89 corridor in the High Sierra region, approximately 42 housing units could be developed, some of which would be on parcels directly adjacent to the roadway. However, there are existing dense trees and vegetation between SR 89 and the surrounding parcels and, under the project, it is expected that these features would remain and would shield potential views to and from the project site from this eligible scenic highway. Regardless, breaks in the trees would provide some direct and unobstructed view of the sites. Although portions of the new dwelling units could be visible from the highly traveled SR 89 corridor, the primary viewer groups are motorists traveling between Truckee and Tahoe City. Motorists would be travelling through the area with fleeting views due to the speeds permitted and the fact that motorists generally direct their attention to the road ahead rather than surrounding views. Therefore, the views of the 42 new housing units along the SR 89 corridor would not constitute sensitive views and motorists are not considered sensitive viewers. The project would result in ***less than significant*** impacts and not substantially damage scenic resources along a scenic highway given the lower viewer sensitivity of the corridor.

Impact AES-3: In non-urbanized areas, degradation of the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings; in urbanized areas, conflict with zoning or other regulations governing scenic quality (less than significant)

Construction

Construction of individual developments implemented under the project would involve clearing and grading in areas where new structures and other facilities (e.g., roadways, sidewalks, trails, stormwater facilities) would be built and trenching for placement of utility connections. Equipment and materials would be stored throughout the area during construction, with the location dependent on where construction is occurring. Construction activities and equipment would likely be visible to some motorists, residents, employees, tourists, and/or recreationists. Construction activities would add more unnatural elements to views that could contrast with and encroach on natural elements; however, these activities would occur in pockets throughout the county as individual projects are built and would be temporary. This would limit the number of viewers of any

particular active construction area. However, construction activities would also alter the existing visual character of areas that are considered average to moderately high visual character with high viewer sensitivity, particularly in the High Sierra region. In these areas, construction activities could result in potentially significant visual quality impacts if large-scale construction were to occur over long periods of time. The temporary and small-scale nature of construction that could result from implementation of the project would ensure that impacts during construction would be ***less than significant***.

Operation

Proposed Amendments

The project would include policies, development standards, and other provisions that could result in changes to the location, intensity, and form of the built environment within the county. These changes to the built environment could affect the existing visual character or quality of area. The provisions of General Plan amendments that could affect scenic or visual quality include policies and standards that address: building height, density and coverage, secondary residential units, cluster housing, and the creation of new zoning districts. Taller buildings in combination with increased density and additional cover on project sites would have a greater potential to block views of mountains, ridgelines, valleys, and other scenic resources, which could have an adverse effect on visual character and block or degrade existing views.

This section evaluates the general land use pattern allowed by the housing-related code amendments for its potential to adversely affect existing scenic resources. An adverse effect would be assumed to occur if development under the General Plan would result in a substantial change to existing scenic views or resources. The changes (Table 3.1-1) that would be made to the General Plan, Zoning Ordinance, and Community Design Guidelines Manual would apply to potential changes in visual character and aesthetic resources. Note that Table 3.1-1 focuses on only the proposed amendments that could affect visual resources and does not include all the proposed amendments.

Table 3.1-1. Proposed Amendments and Effects on Visual Resources

New Amendments	Amendment's Effect on Visual Resources
General Plan Amendments	
GP-1. Allow residential densities when part of a mixed-use project or within a mixed-use zone to be measured using Floor Area Ratio (FAR) in General Commercial (GC) and Higher Density Residential (HDR) Land Use Designations by amending General Plan Table 1-2 to: • Increase HDR Land Use Designation FAR to 2.0 to be consistent with GC Land Use Designation FAR • Add note to table to acknowledge the allowance of smaller lot size than shown in table when project is consistent with mixed-use projects and cluster housing project standards and allow up to 30 units per acre.	Increasing FAR and the amount of dwelling units per acre would increase development intensity in the area. An increase in permitted development intensity could change an area's visual character and views of surrounding areas. However, new design standards (discussed in more detail below) would ensure that new development would be compatible with the existing setting.
Zoning Map Amendments	

New Amendments	Amendment's Effect on Visual Resources
ZM-2. Revise –B, -UP and –DL combining zone district on all Commercial and Multifamily zones where adequate infrastructure and public services are available and replace with –DC, DS and DH.	Replacing the zoning would help to preserve the aesthetic value of the areas of proposed dwelling units. –Dc and -Ds zoning provides special regulations to protect and enhance the aesthetic character of lands and buildings within public view. –Dh zoning provides special regulations to protect historic buildings and areas that have unique aesthetic characteristics. Combining Zone Districts would be replaced with Design Review requirements tied to objective development standards/design guidelines being developed for multifamily and mixed-use projects.
Zoning Text Amendments	
MU-2. Establish standards and guidelines for multifamily and mixed-use development	The new Design Manual for multifamily and mixed-use development would include design standards to ensure that the new development would be compatible with the existing setting.
RD-1. Revise density allowed in mobile home parks to allow for 12 units per acre with improved design standards	Increasing density would increase development intensity in the area, potentially resulting in a change to an area's visual character and views of surrounding areas. However, new design standards would ensure that new development would be compatible with the existing setting.
DS-2. Include flexible building heights	Flexible building heights could result in changes to the existing setting by intensifying development. Taller buildings could block scenic views and alter the visual character of an area. However, the increase in building heights would likely not affect areas with high-quality views because the surrounding expansive landscape would remain the primary point of visual interest and would continue to dominate the views.
DS-3. Reduce or remove lot coverage standards in commercial and higher-density residential zones including when part of a mixed-use project or areas where adequate infrastructure and public services are available	Reducing or removing lot coverage standards could result in additional development, which could alter the existing setting. However, new design standards would ensure that new development would be compatible with the existing setting.
BR-1. Increase by-right development and administrative level review subject to zoning compliance though: • Design review • Development and design standards for mixed-use and multifamily • Add infill definition	The design review and new guidelines for multifamily and mixed-use development would include design standards to ensure that the new development would be compatible with the existing setting. Infill development includes developing vacant or underutilized lots within an existing urban area. New infill development projects are typically consistent with the existing surroundings.
DB-1. Bring Density Bonus Ordinance into compliance with new State Density Bonus law; include adoption of procedures and timelines for review	Increasing density bonuses would increase development intensity in the area. An increase in permitted development intensity could change an area's visual character and views of surrounding areas. However, new design standards would ensure

New Amendments	Amendment's Effect on Visual Resources
	that new development would be compatible with the existing setting.
DB-2. Further expand Density Bonus provisions beyond state requirements to all for up to 100% Density Bonus for mixed-use projects and residential zoned areas where adequate infrastructure and public services are available	See effect for DB-1.
DB-4. Establish density bonus code to allow duplexes, triplexes and fourplexes on Single Family (RS) and Multifamily (MF) residential zones where adequate infrastructure and public services are available	See effect for DB-1.
CH-1. Allow for different types of cluster housing, including tiny house communities; agriculture-, conservation-, and open space–oriented communities; cottage housing; and cohousing	Different types of housing could change the existing visual character of neighborhoods.
DG-1. Prepare a standalone Community Design Manual for Mixed-Use and Multifamily Development that updates adopted Community Design Guidelines for these development types, and develop a clear design review process for mixed-use and multifamily projects	The design review and new guidelines for multifamily and mixed-use development would include design standards to ensure that the new development would be compatible with the existing setting.

The County has prepared the Design Manual to provide guidelines for achieving high-quality design for relevant housing types in unincorporated Placer County. As discussed in Table 3.1-1, while the proposed amendments would promote flexible building heights and result in higher density standards, adherence to the Design Manual would ensure that new development would limit the visual impacts on the surrounding community. The manual implements various General Plan policies that address the county's housing stock and supports the County's efforts to have higher-density, mixed-use, transit-oriented, and infill development at locations identified in the General Plan, specific special plans, and zoning. The Manual is also intended to streamline the project approval process for multifamily and mixed-use projects, making it easier to obtain approvals for projects that include an affordable housing component as well as market rate housing. The policies in the Manual would help implement the new units that could result as part of the General Plan and zoning changes proposed under the project.

While conformance with the Placer County Code is required for any project approval, the Design Manual offers additional direction about what the County would like in terms of building design and site planning, and provides clear evaluation criteria that can be used in decision making. They aim to be prescriptive enough to create a framework for designing individual buildings and to carry out the vision in the County's General Plan and applicable Specific Plans and Master Plans, but flexible enough to allow for creativity and innovation in design of individual projects. The Design Manual is intended as a regulatory tool rather than a set of policies, meaning development applications must be consistent with the standards and guidelines in order to be approved. Working together, they respond to and implement the fundamental community design principles expressed in this section.

The Placer County General Plan policies set the foundation for guidelines in the Design Manual. The most relevant goals and policies, along with design concepts in various Specific Plans and Master Plans, were combined to create the following design principles, which all new projects, including the

proposed project, would be required to adhere to: respect community character, promote livability, make connections, meet housing needs, create compact mixed-use development, and ensure sustainability. In unurbanized areas, conformance with the Design Manual would ensure that degradation of the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings would be less than significant. Similarly, in urbanized areas, adhering to the Design Manual would limit conflicts with zoning or other regulations governing scenic quality, resulting in ***less than significant*** impacts.

Projected Development

Implementation of the proposed project would facilitate development that would permanently alter the nature and appearance of each individual project site. Although design plans would be drafted as each site is developed, it can be assumed that project structures would be, at a minimum, partially visible from surrounding residents, as well as surrounding commercial and resort uses and those traveling along local roadways. Residential, commercial, and resort viewers would have longer-duration views with a higher degree of sensitivity, while users of the roadways would have limited-duration views of the project due to speed and the focus on the roadway ahead. Many of the proposed sites for new dwelling units would be infill development throughout the county, within areas that currently include views of those surrounding developments. As such, concentrating new slightly higher-density residential development adjacent to existing residential, commercial, residential, and institutional uses would result in development that is consistent with the existing surroundings. Infill development, as proposed at many sites, is better suited for visual compatibility than the same development placed in undeveloped or underdeveloped areas where existing residential development is sparse and the natural environment, including forested and open grassland habitats, is pristine and minimally disturbed.

Some views from surrounding uses would likely be buffered by retaining existing onsite dense trees and potentially planting new trees and vegetation. However, should an individual project propose to remove existing trees currently buffering these views, the new buildings may be visible as a result of construction of the project. Therefore, as development occurs throughout the project area, residents and visitors in the area would notice the visual effects of urbanization. Depending on the location of the project site, potential changes that degrade the character or quality of the existing site could be considerable.

All new development and redevelopment projects proposed under the project would be reviewed pursuant to CEQA. These project-level environmental reviews would evaluate the specific location, design, and other characteristics of each dwelling unit project to determine if the project would degrade the visual character or quality of the site. The visual analysis of any project must consider the existing visual character and quality of the area. Another factor to consider in the analysis would be the existing visual sensitivity in the project area, which is defined by the available public views of the project, the number of viewers, and the duration of those views. Therefore, a project on a site that has both high visual quality and high visual sensitivity would have the most significant visual impact. In areas that are already urbanized, the environmental review would consider if a project would conflict with zoning or other regulations governing scenic quality.

Each project-level review would provide an additional mechanism to evaluate and reduce the adverse visual effects of individual projects under the project. Furthermore, with respect to the new development potential where more intense development and flexible heights are being considered, each project would adhere to the Design Manual intended to reduce potential aesthetic-related

impacts of future development under each project. Consistency with the Design Manual would ensure that at each dwelling unit site, the new development would respect and enhance essential design characteristics and historical development that make it attractive and livable. The individual projects would be required to respond to and complement the setting, while protecting the county's natural features and scenic qualities, especially views of ridgelines, hilltops, and natural terrain. The Design Manual would also ensure the use of building materials, colors, and textures that blend with the natural landscape. Individual development applications must be consistent with the Design Manual in order to be approved by the County. This would ensure that the new development would result in the same high-quality design and to promote complementary uses and appearances. Each development proposal would be reviewed by the County's Development Review Committee to ensure that proposed development projects are designed in ways that are in harmony and compatible with the existing landscape and surrounding development. Adherence to the standards and guidelines would ensure consistency with zoning or other regulations governing scenic quality, resulting in ***less than significant*** impacts.

Impact AES-4: Introduction of a new source of substantial light or glare that would adversely affect daytime or nighttime views in the area (less than significant with mitigation)

The amount of lighting in the county differs greatly between the regions and different parts of the county. In urbanized areas, light pollution and glare are prominent, while rural and rural transition areas have dark skies with little light pollution from urban areas, making these areas ideal locations for astronomical viewing. An increase in permitted heights and development intensities, as proposed under the project, would result in increases in light and glare throughout the county.

Construction

Short-term light and glare impacts associated with construction activities facilitated by implementation of the project would likely be limited to nighttime lighting (for security purposes) in the evening/nighttime hours. In accordance with Section 9.36.030 of the Placer County Code, construction activities are permitted only between the hours of 6:00 AM and 8:00 PM Monday through Friday and 8:00 AM and 8:00 PM on Saturday and Sunday. Therefore, future construction activities may require minimal hours of evening/nighttime construction lighting, which would cease by 8:00 PM. In the event that project construction lighting becomes a nuisance to surrounding uses, the County would ensure construction-related lighting would be oriented away from adjacent residential areas, if necessary, and consist of the minimal wattage necessary to provide safety at the construction site. Construction-related lighting impacts would be short-term and would cease generally by 8:00 PM. Therefore, short-term light and glare impacts associated with future construction activities would be ***less than significant***.

Operation

The amendments to the County General Plan, Zoning Ordinance, and Zoning Maps would modify land uses, zoning, and density in certain areas throughout the county, which in turn would intensify related lighting sources and light spillage onto adjacent land uses. In addition to new lighting sources, because the project would allow for higher-intensity development, its implementation would likely result in larger buildings with more exterior glazing that could result in new sources of glare. Despite the new and expanded sources of nighttime illumination and glare, the proposed project is not expected to generate a substantial increase in light and glare.

Upon development of the various housing projects, new sources of lighting would include new immediately adjacent street lighting, security lighting, vehicle headlights, and lighting that would originate from the interior of proposed residential uses. New glare sources of the development could be caused by light reflections from pavement, vehicles, and building materials, such as reflective glass and polished surfaces. Glare can create hazards to motorists and be a nuisance for bicyclists and pedestrians and other sensitive viewers. At this time, the specific types of building materials and glass surfaces of the proposed buildings are unknown. Some of the interior lights and glare would likely be screened by the perimeter vegetation.

The Design Manual outlines prohibited lighting, fixture types, glare, and light trespass. The standards and guidelines encourage lighting for pedestrian activity and safety, while respecting existing residential neighbors and the natural setting. In addition, while the Design Manual stipulates that building entryways and areas of high activity should be appropriately illuminated, the potential nuisance that lighting might cause neighbors and rural locations should be limited. These standards would reduce the potential for future projects to result in substantial light or glare, new sources of light or glare that are more substantial than other light or glare in the area, or exterior light that is cast offsite. In addition, any proposed lighting would be required to be in compliance with Placer County and California Building Code, Title 24 lighting codes. The project would also comply with Policy 1.O.9 of the General Plan, which discourages the use of outdoor lighting that shines unnecessarily onto adjacent properties or into the night sky.

Lighting impacts would vary, depending on the location of the project sites. In South Placer County and some sites of the foothill region, exterior lighting would be added to sites that are in residential neighborhoods where there currently is some lighting from housing units and adjacent roadways. In these areas, limited to no residential street lighting is provided; however, the night sky is lit by the surrounding urban development and I-80. Because of the urbanized nature of the surrounding area, a substantial amount of ambient nighttime lighting currently exists, affecting views of the nighttime sky. The small increases of building intensity as a result of the project, combined with the fact that the sites are not concentrated in one particular area, but rather located throughout the county, would result in only a minor change to urbanized areas. The housing development projects in South Placer County and some of the foothill region would adhere to the Design Manual lighting specifications, shielding techniques, light pollution considerations, and glare limitations, resulting in ***less than significant*** impacts.

In portions of the foothill region and the High Sierra region, implementation of the project would incorporate development that would convert underdeveloped land in a rural and semi-rural setting to a more developed landscape, resulting in new sources of light and glare. Development of the project areas may expose offsite residents to new sources of lighting. If this lighting is not adequately directed toward its intended use, it may cause spill-over and glare that would present a nuisance to surrounding uses. Development proposed within the ski resorts and other more urbanized areas in these regions would have lighting that would be generally uniform with existing lighting conditions. However, new housing along the SR 89 corridor and other underdeveloped parcels could introduce new building and vehicular light and glare sources to an area that currently has limited to no sources of light and glare. Additionally, excessive light spill-over may act as a deterrent to wildlife in sensitive habitat areas during evening hours and may present a nuisance or potential safety hazard by distracting motorists on nearby roadways. The housing development projects in the foothill region and the High Sierra region would adhere to the Design Manual lighting specifications, shielding techniques, light pollution considerations, and glare limitations. However,

implementation of Mitigation Measure AES-2 would also be required to reduce light and glare, resulting in ***less than significant impacts with mitigation***.

Regardless, in areas that do not currently have a substantial amount of lighting, like the foothill region and the High Sierra region, light and glare impacts could be potentially significant.

Mitigation Measure AES-2: Implement Lighting Plan

A lighting plan will be developed for individual projects that are located on underdeveloped parcels in areas that are surrounded by limited urban development. The lighting plan will be submitted to the Development Review Committee for review and approval. The lighting plan will include a detailed lighting and photometric plan that:

- Demonstrates compliance with the lighting requirements outlined in the Design Manual. This includes minimizing impacts on adjoining and nearby land uses.
- Streetlights will not exceed the minimum number required by the County unless otherwise approved by the DRC. Parking lots would be lit, but would allow gaps in lighting.
- Includes the type of lighting fixtures proposed in parking areas (as needed for additional housing developments), including pole height. All site lighting in parking lots will be full cut-off design. The metal pole color will be such that the pole blends into the landscape (i.e., black, bronze, or dark bronze).
- Includes building lighting that is shielded and directed downward, such that the bulb or ballast is not visible. Lighting fixture design will complement the building colors and materials and will be used to light entries, soffits, covered walkways and pedestrian areas such as plazas. Roof and wall pack lighting will not be used. Lighting intensity will be of a level that only highlights the adjacent building area and ground area and will not impose glare on any pedestrian or vehicular traffic.
- Includes landscape lighting that will not impose glare on any pedestrian or vehicular traffic.

3.1.3 References Cited

California Department of Transportation. 2020. *Scenic Highways*. https://dot.ca.gov/programs/design/lap-landscape-architecture-and-community-livability/lap-liv-i-scenic-highways. Accessed May 29, 2020.

Placer County. 2003. *Placer County Design Guidelines Manual.* https://www.placer.ca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/10136/Design-Guidelines-Manual-PDF. Accessed June 1, 2020.

Placer County. 2019. *Design Manual: Development Standards and Design Guidelines for Multi-Family and Mixed-Use Development*. Public Review Draft. September 30, 2019.

Placer County Planning Services Division. 2013. *Placer County Landscape Design Guidelines*. https://www.placer.ca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/10131/Landscape-Design-Guidelines-PDF. Accessed June 1, 2020.

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. 2020. *About Lake Tahoe*. https://www.epa.gov/lake-tahoe/about-lake-tahoe. Accessed May 29, 2020.

3.2 Agricultural and Forestry Resources

This section describes the regulatory and environmental setting for agricultural and forestry resources. It also describes impacts on agricultural and forestry resources that could result from implementation of Placer County's (County) proposed General Plan amendments, Zoning Ordinance update, and the development of design standards and guidelines for mixed-use development (project).

Comments received on the Notice of Preparation included concerns regarding future development in areas zoned as residential-agriculture and farmland. This analysis considers the impacts on existing agricultural land uses throughout the County.

3.2.1 Existing Conditions

Regulatory Setting

Federal

Farmland Protection Policy Act

The Farmland Protection Policy Act (FPPA) of 1984 requires federal agencies to consider how their activities or responsibilities that involve financing or assisting construction of improvement projects, or acquiring, managing, or disposing of federal land and facilities may affect farmland.

The purpose of the FPPA is to minimize federal actions leading to the conversion of farmland to nonagricultural uses by ensuring that federal programs are administered in a manner compatible with state government, local government, and private programs designed to protect farmland. The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is the agency primarily responsible for implementing the FPPA, which is a voluntary program that provides funds to help purchase development rights to keep productive farmland in agricultural uses. The program provides matching funds to state, local, or tribal government entities and nongovernmental organizations with existing farmland protection programs to purchase conservation easements. Participating landowners agree not to convert the land to nonagricultural uses and retain all rights to the property for future agriculture. A minimum 30-year term is required for conservation easements, and priority is given to applications with perpetual easements. NRCS provides up to 50 percent of the fair market value of the easement.

State

Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) includes a finding that the conversion of agricultural lands to nonagricultural uses threatens the long-term health of the state's agricultural economy. Impacts on agricultural resources are evaluated on the basis of a project's potential to affect land designated as Important Farmland. In California, the farmland classification system developed by the Department of Conservation's Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP) is the primary system used to evaluate the quality and distribution of farmland in

California. The FMMP prepares Important Farmland maps approximately every 2 years for most of the state's agricultural regions on the basis of soil survey information and land inventory and monitoring criteria developed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's NRCS. The farmland classification system used by the FMMP consists of eight mapping categories: five categories of agricultural lands and three categories of nonagricultural lands. The characteristics of these categories are described in Table 3.2-1.

Table 3.2-1. Important Farmland Category Definitions

Farmland Category	Definition
Important Farmlands	
Prime Farmland	Prime Farmland is defined by the state as "irrigated land with the best combination of physical and chemical features able to sustain long-term production of agricultural crops." Prime Farmland has the soil quality, growing season, and moisture supply needed to produce sustained high yields. To be designated as Prime Farmland, the land must have been used for production of irrigated crops at some time during the 4 years prior to the mapping date. The majority of the lands in Zone 6 of the inventory area are designated as Prime Farmland.
Farmland of Statewide Importance	The state defines Farmland of Statewide Importance as "irrigated land similar to Prime Farmland that has a good combination of physical and chemical characteristics for the production of agricultural crops." However, this land has minor shortcomings, such as greater slopes or less ability to store soil moisture than Prime Farmland. In order for land to be designated as Farmland of Statewide Importance, it must have been used for production of irrigated crops at some time during the 4 years prior to the mapping date. Most of the Farmland of Statewide Importance in the county is outside the inventory area. However, several parcels are within Zone 6 of the inventory area.
Unique Farmland	Unique Farmland is considered to consist of lower-quality soils and is used for production of the state's leading agricultural crops. This land is usually irrigated but may include non-irrigated orchards or vineyards as found in some climatic zones in California. To qualify for this designation, land must have been used for crops at some time during the 4 years prior to the mapping date. Several small parcels of Unique Farmland are located throughout Zone 6 of the inventory area.
Farmland of Local Importance	Farmland of Local Importance is important to the local agricultural economy as determined by each county's board of supervisors and a local advisory committee. Farmland of Local Importance is found throughout the inventory area.
Other Agricultural Lands	
Grazing Land	Grazing Land is land on which the existing vegetation is suited to the grazing of livestock. This category is used only in California and was developed in cooperation with the California Cattlemen's Association, the University of California Cooperative Extension, and other groups interested in the extent of grazing activities. The minimum mapping unit for Grazing Land is 40 acres. Grazing Land is found throughout the inventory area.
Nonagricultural Lands	

Farmland Category	Definition
Urban and Built-Up Land	Urban and Built-Up Land consists of land occupied by structures with a building density of at least 1 unit to 1.5 acres, or approximately six structures to a 10-acre parcel. This type of land is used for residential, industrial, commercial, construction, institutional, public administration, railroad and other transportation yards, cemeteries, airports, golf courses, sanitary landfills, sewage treatment, water control structures, and other developed purposes.
Other Land	Other Land is land not included in any other mapping category. Examples include low-density rural developments and brush, timber, wetland, and riparian areas not suitable for livestock grazing. This category also includes vacant and nonagricultural land surrounded on all sides by urban development; confined livestock, poultry, or aquaculture facilities; strip mines; borrow pits; and waterbodies smaller than 40 acres.
Water	Water includes perennial waterbodies with an extent of at least 40 acres.

Source: California Department of Conservation 2007.

California Land Conservation Act of 1965 (Williamson Act)

The California Land Conservation Act (Williamson Act) is one of the state's primary mechanisms for conserving farmland. The Williamson Act enables counties and cities to designate agricultural preserves (Williamson Act lands) and offer preferential taxation to private agricultural landowners based on the income-producing value of their property in agricultural use, rather than on the property's assessed market value. In return for the preferential tax rate, the landowner is required to sign a contract with the county or city agreeing not to develop the land for a minimum 10-year period. Contracts are automatically renewed annually unless a party to the contract files for nonrenewal or petitions for cancellation. If the landowner chooses not to renew the contract, it expires at the end of its duration. Under certain circumstances, a county or city may approve cancellation of a Williamson Act contract. Cancellation requires private landowners to pay back taxes and cancellation fees.

Permissible land uses under Williamson Act contracts are governed by Government Code Section 51238.1. Each city and county has the discretion to determine land uses that are or are not compatible with Williamson Act contracts, provided these uses are not prohibited under the act. The following are categories into which land can be placed under the Williamson Act.

Prime Agricultural Land

Prime Agricultural Land enrolled under Williamson Act contracts meets any of the following criteria.

1. Land that is Class I or Class II in the NRCS land use compatibility classification system
2. Land that rates 80–100 in the Storie Index Rating system
3. Land that supports livestock used for the production of food and fiber and has an annual carrying capacity equivalent to at least one annual unit per acre as defined by the U.S. Department of Agriculture
4. Land planted with fruit- or nut-bearing trees, vines, bushes, or crops that have a nonbearing period of less than 5 years and will normally return during the commercial-bearing period on an annual basis from the production of unprocessed agricultural plant production not less than $200 per acre

5. Land that has returned from the production of unprocessed agricultural plant production with an annual gross value of not less than $200 per acre for 3 of the previous 5 years

Non-Prime Agricultural Land

Non-Prime Agricultural Land enrolled under Williamson Act contracts is other agricultural land that does not meet any of the criteria for classification listed above for Prime Agricultural Land. Non-Prime Agricultural Land is defined as Open Space Land of Statewide Significance under the California Open Space Subvention Act and may be identified as such in other documents. Most Non-Prime Agricultural Land is used for grazing or non-irrigated crops. However, Non-Prime Agricultural Land may also include other open space uses compatible with agriculture and consistent with local general plans.

Land in Nonrenewal

The nonrenewal period begins with a Notice of Nonrenewal from the County, and the contract is terminated at the end of the nonrenewal period. However, upon the filing for nonrenewal under the Williamson Act, the existing contract remains in effect for the remainder of the time left on the existing contract. During the nonrenewal process, the annual tax assessment gradually increases. At the end of the 9-year nonrenewal period, the contract expires and the land is no longer designated under the Williamson Act.

Farmland Security Zones

A Farmland Security Zone is an area created within an agricultural preserve by a board of supervisors (board) upon request by a landowner or group of landowners. An agricultural preserve defines the boundary of an area within which a city or county will enter into contracts with landowners. The boundary is designated by resolution of the board or city council having jurisdiction. Agricultural preserves must generally be at least 100 acres in size.

California Government Code (§§ 51110–51119.5, Article 2)

California Government Code Sections 51110–51119.5 establishes timberland production zones (TPZ) and describes restrictions and requirements. A TPZ is a 10-year restriction on the use of land that replaced the use of agricultural preserves (Williamson Act contracts) that had previously been used for timberland. Land use under a TPZ is restricted to growing and harvesting timber, and to compatible uses approved by the county (or city). In return, taxation of TPZ-designated timberland is restricted based on use.

Local

General Plan

Agricultural Resources

This section provides excerpts of the relevant goals and policies from the Placer County General Plan that pertain to agricultural resources (Placer County 2013).

Goal 7.A: To provide for the long-term conservation and use of agriculturally designated lands.

Policies

7.A.1: The County shall protect agriculturally designated areas from conversion to non-agricultural uses.

7.A.2: The County shall ensure that unincorporated areas within city spheres of influence that are designated for agricultural uses are maintained in large parcel sizes of 10-acre minimums or larger.

7.A.7: The County shall maintain agricultural lands in large parcel sizes to retain viable farming units.

Goal 7.B: To minimize existing and future conflicts between agricultural and non-agricultural uses in agriculturally designated areas.

Policies

7.B.1: The County shall identify and maintain clear boundaries between urban/suburban and agricultural areas and require land use buffers between such uses where feasible, except as may be determined to be unnecessary or inappropriate within a Specific Plan as part of the Specific Plan approval. These buffers shall occur on the parcel for which the development permit is sought and shall favor protection of the maximum amount of farmland.

7.B.2: The County shall consider fencing subdivided lands adjoining agricultural uses as a potential mitigation measure to reduce conflicts between residential and agricultural uses. Factors to be considered in implementing such a measure include:

a. The type of agricultural operation (i.e., livestock, orchard, timber, row crops);

b. The size of the lots to be created;

c. The presence or lack of fences in the area;

d. Existing natural barriers that prevent trespass; and,

e. Passage of wildlife.

Forest Resources

This section provides excerpts of the relevant goals and policies from the Placer County General Plan that pertain to forest resources (Placer County 2013).

Goal 7.E: To conserve Placer County's forest resources, enhance the quality and diversity of forest ecosystems, reduce conflicts between forestry and other uses, and encourage a sustained yield of forest projects.

Policies

7.E.2: The County shall discourage development that conflicts with timberland management.

7.3.4: The County shall encourage qualified landowners to enroll in the Timberland Production Zone (TPZ) program.

Municipal Code

Agricultural Resources

Below are local regulations from the municipal code that pertain to agricultural resources.

5.24.040 Right-to-farm. Placer County's policy is to preserve, protect and encourage the development and improvement of its agricultural land for the production of food and other agricultural products. This section of the municipal code was developed to reduce the loss to the County of its commercial agricultural resources by limiting the circumstances under which nonagricultural operations extend into agricultural areas to avoid situations where agricultural operations may deemed a nuisance.

17.06.010 Zone and combining districts established. Placer County has established the following agricultural zones: agricultural exclusive (AE), farm (F), and agricultural residential (RA). In addition, Placer County has established the agriculture combining district (-AG).

17.44.010 Residential agricultural (RA). Allowable residential uses on residential agricultural parcels include mobile homes and single-family dwellings.

17.64.060: Agricultural preserve and contract eligibility requirements: To enter into the Williamson Act Land Program in Placer County, land must qualify as an agricultural preserve and meet minimum requirements for entrance into a contract. The site must be designated in one of a set of specific zoning districts, including residential agricultural and residential forest. The site must also be at least 10 acres for prime agricultural lands and 40 acres for nonprime agricultural lands.

Forest Resources

Below are local regulations from the municipal code that pertain to forest resources.

17.06.010 Zone and combining districts established. Placer County has established the following zones relevant to forest and timberland production: forestry (FOR), timberland production (TPZ), and forest residential (RF).

17.16.010 Timberland production (TPZ): The TPZ district is intended to be an exclusive area for the growing and harvesting of timber and those uses that are an integral part of a timber management operation.

17.46.010 Residential forest (RF). Allowable residential uses on residential forest parcels include mobile homes and single-family dwellings.

Environmental Setting

Important Farmland

Most of Placer County's agricultural production occurs in the western portion of the County (Placer County 1994). All four categories are present: Prime, Statewide Importance, Unique, and Local Importance (California Department of Conservation 2016). As in much of the state, acreage of Important Farmland is decreasing as a result of conversion to nonagricultural uses. The county lost approximately 13,000 acres in Important Farmland between 2006 and 2016 (California Department of Conservation 2006, 2016).

The areas potentially affected by growth resulting from project implementation (see Figure 2-3 in Chapter 2, Project Description) are located on land classified by the FMMP as urban and built-up land (100.0 acres), grazing land (5.2 acres), other land (57.5 acres), and unclassified land (156.2 acres) (California Department of Conservation 2016). None of the land in potential growth areas is located on Important Farmland. However, some of the growth areas are located adjacent to or surrounded by Important Farmland.

Agricultural Land under Williamson Act or Farmland Security Zone Contract

Most of Placer County's land in Williamson Act and Farmland Security Zone contract is in the western portion of the county (Placer County 2020a). None of the parcels that comprise the project site are located on land in Williamson Act or Farmland Security Zone contract.

Land Zoned for Agricultural Uses

As discussed above under *Important Farmland*, agricultural production in Placer County occurs primarily in the western portion of the County (Placer County 1994). Grazing land occurs in the foothill region at elevations between 300 and 2,000 feet above mean sea level. Land zoned for agricultural uses, defined above under *Municipal Code* as AE, F, RA, and -AG, occurs also primarily in the western portion of the County (Placer County 2020b).

None of the land in the potential growth areas resulting from project implementation is zoned for agricultural use.

Land Zoned for Forest Uses, Including Land in Timberland Protection Zones

Most of Placer County's forested areas are in the central and eastern parts of the County. Land zoned for forested uses, defined above under Municipal Code as FOR, RF, and TPZ, occurs intermittently across this area (Placer County 2020b).

None of the land proposed for the project is in land zoned for forest uses.

3.2.2 Environmental Impacts

The environmental analysis in this section focuses on the two main components of the project: (1) amendments to the Land Use Element in the County's General Plan, Zoning Ordinance, and Community Design Manual, and (2) the potential locations for the new dwelling units that could be constructed as a result of changes to the Zoning Ordinance (a total of 194 units distributed throughout the county).

The general land use pattern allowed by the housing-related code amendments is evaluated in the following discussions for its potential to adversely affect existing agricultural and forestry resources. An adverse effect would be assumed to occur if development would result in a substantial change to existing agricultural or forestry resources.

The analysis in this section also considers the impacts from the potential development of dwelling units at specific sites throughout the county. As a result of project implementation, a total of 194 units could be constructed, as noted below. While these units could be developed as a result of project implementation, the project itself does not propose any site-specific development.

- 50 units in the Roseville area (South Placer County)
- 13 units in the Loomis/Newcastle area (foothill region)
- 49 units in the Auburn/Bowman area (foothill region)
- 82 units in the eastern county (High Sierra region), including:
    - 31 units near Sugar Bowl
    - 4 units near Squaw Valley
    - 42 units near SR 89
    - 5 units near Northstar

Methods for Analysis

This section describes the methods for analyzing the impacts on agricultural and forested lands of implementing the proposed project.

The proposed project comprises targeted amendments to the General Plan, Placer County Zoning Ordinance, Zoning Maps, and Community Design Guidelines Manual, which would provide a framework for future housing development within the county on identified parcels. No specific level of future development was forecast during this analysis because there is no reasonable way to know how many of the uses allowable under the project may be approved in the future, and the locations of such uses cannot be known at this time.

Criteria from Appendix G of the State CEQA Guidelines were used to determine whether the project would have a significant impact on agricultural and forestry resources. The agricultural and forestry resources analysis is both quantitative and qualitative. Impacts related to agricultural and forested lands were assessed based on geographic information system (GIS) analysis of the project with respect to FMMP Important Farmland categories (California Department of Conservation 2016), County Williamson Act and Farmland Security Zone data (Placer County 2020a), and zoning designations (Placer County 2020b).

Thresholds of Significance

In accordance with Appendix G of the State CEQA Guidelines, the proposed project would be considered to have a significant effect if it would result in any of the conditions listed below.

- Conversion of Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the FMMP of the California Resources Agency, to nonagricultural use.
- Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use or conflict with a Williamson Act contract.
- Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of forest land (as defined in California Public Resources Code § 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by California Public Resources Code § 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code § 51104[g]).
- Loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use.
- Other changes in the existing environment that, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland to nonagricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use.

Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Impact AG-1: Conversion of Important Farmland to nonagricultural use; conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use or with a Williamson Act contract; conflict with existing zoning of forest land, timberland, or timberland zoned Timberland Production; loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use (no impact)

None of the areas of potential growth (see Figure 2-3 in Chapter 2, *Project Description*) are located on Important Farmland, within a Williamson Act contract, on forest or timberland, or would convert forest land.

Furthermore, none of the project components in Table 2-3 in Chapter 2, *Project Description*, would result in the allowance of any changes to the types of agricultural or forest land mentioned above. The proposed General Plan Amendments and zoning changes are primarily to facilitate new uses in certain areas in order to promote mixed-use development and to modify density controls. As noted in Table 2-3, the affected districts and zoning designations are within mixed-use, multifamily and residential districts. The changes to zoning are limited to density controls in established areas of unincorporated Placer County and does not propose any changes to where development would occur, particularly into agricultural areas. There would be ***no impact***.

Impact AG-2: Potential to cause changes in the existing environment that could result in conversion of Farmland to nonagricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use (less than significant)

While some of the parcels proposed for development are located near agricultural areas, none are close enough to be disturbed by ongoing agricultural production, such as noise or odors. Further, Placer County's Right-to-Farm code, quoted under *Municipal Code*, would protect existing agricultural uses from complaint resulting from new uses near agricultural land. It is not expected, therefore, that the long-term implications of new development on non-agricultural lands adjacent to active agriculture would result in the conversions of such land to other uses. This impact would be ***less than significant***.

While some of the potential growth areas are located near forested land, including timberland zoned as TPZ, none are close enough to be disturbed by ongoing forest management. Further, TPZ contracts are for a minimum of 10 years, meaning that most of the land would not be harvested. Accordingly, any harvest-related traffic would occur with long intervals between occurrences. It is unlikely that timber harvest operations would result in nuisance complains that would put pressure on ongoing timber uses. The impact would be ***less than significant***.

3.2.3 References Cited

California Department of Conservation. 2006. Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program. Placer County. Available: https://www.conservation.ca.gov/dlrp/fmmp/Pages/Placer.aspx. Accessed: June 4, 2020.

California Department of Conservation. 2016. *Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program*. Placer County. Available: https://www.conservation.ca.gov/dlrp/fmmp/Pages/Placer.aspx. Accessed: May 2020.

Placer County. 1994. *Countywide General Plan: Final Environmental Impact Report*. July 26, 1994. Prepared by: Crawford Multari & Starr, DKS Associates, Psomas and Associates, Jones & Stokes Associates, Recht Hausrath & Associates, J. Laurence Mintier & Associates. https://www.placer.ca.gov/2981/General-Plan-Environmental-Impact-Report. Accessed May 18, 2020.

Placer County. 2013. *Placer County General Plan*. Section 7 Agricultural and Forestry Resources. May 2013. https://www.placer.ca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/8566/Agricultural-and-Forestry-Resources-PDF. Accessed May 18, 2020.

Placer County. 2020a. Placer County: Parcels. Available: http://gis-placercounty.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/e49d7e972674481cbb5ecc047b8f98eb_0. Last updated: April 2020. Date accessed: May 28, 2020.

Placer County. 2020b. Placer County: Zoning. Available: http://gis-placercounty.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/cf289230d7b74fcf9ca6a858ca8ccb18_0. Last updated: April 2020. Date accessed: May 28, 2020

3.3 Air Quality

This section discusses existing air quality conditions in the project area, presents the regulatory framework for air quality management, and analyzes the potential for Placer County's (County) proposed General Plan amendments, Zoning Ordinance update, and the development of design standards and guidelines for mixed-use development (project) to affect existing air quality conditions, both regionally and locally. It also analyzes the types and quantities of emissions (including those leading to odors) that would be generated both on a temporary basis from construction activities and over the long term from operation of the proposed project. The analysis determines whether the emissions would be significant in relation to applicable air quality standards and determines and identifies feasible mitigation measures for significant adverse impacts, if required. This section also includes an analysis of cumulative air quality impacts. Emissions of greenhouse gases (GHG) and potential impacts on climate change, as well as County and state goals regarding GHG emissions, are discussed in Section 3.8, *Greenhouse Gas Emissions,* of this environmental impact report (EIR).

The analysis in this section is based on a review of existing air quality conditions in Placer County and air quality regulations administered by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA), the California Air Resources Board (CARB), and the Placer County Air Pollution Control District (PCAPCD). Appendix C, *Criteria Pollutant and GHG Modeling Results*, presents supporting air quality calculations for the impact analysis.

Comments received on the Notice of Preparation included concerns over how higher-density development will affect air quality. This analysis considers impacts on air quality for existing land uses throughout the county.

3.3.1 Existing Conditions

Regulatory Setting

The federal Clean Air Act (CAA) and its subsequent amendments form the basis for the nation's air pollution control effort. The USEPA is responsible for implementing most aspects of the CAA. A key element of the CAA is the national ambient air quality standards (NAAQS) for criteria pollutants. The CAA delegates enforcement of the NAAQS to the states. In California, the CARB is responsible for enforcing air pollution regulations and ensuring the NAAQS and California ambient air quality standards (CAAQS) are met. CARB, in turn, delegates regulatory authority for stationary sources and other air quality management responsibilities to local air agencies. The PCAPCD is the local air agency for the project area. The following sections provide more detailed information on federal, state, and local air quality regulations that apply to the project.

Federal

Clean Air Act and National Ambient Air Quality Standards

The CAA was first enacted in 1963 and has been amended numerous times in subsequent years (1965, 1967, 1970, 1977, and 1990). The CAA establishes federal air quality standards, known as NAAQS, for six criteria pollutants and specifies future dates for achieving compliance. The CAA also

mandates that the states submit and implement a State Implementation Plan (SIP) for local areas not meeting those standards. The plans must include pollution control measures that demonstrate how the standards will be met.

The 1990 amendments to the CAA identify specific emission-reduction goals for areas not meeting the NAAQS. These amendments require both a demonstration of reasonable further progress toward attainment and incorporation of additional sanctions for failure to attain or meet interim milestones. Table 3.3-1 shows the NAAQS currently in effect for each criteria pollutant, as well as the CAAQS (discussed further below).

Table 3.3-1. National and State Ambient Air Quality Standards

Criteria Pollutant	Average Time	California Standards	National Standards[a]	
			Primary	Secondary
Ozone	1-hour	0.09 ppm	None[b]	None[b]
	8–hour	0.070 ppm	0.070 ppm	0.070 ppm
Particulate matter (PM10)	24-hour	50 μg/m^3	150 μg/m^3	150 μg/m^3
	Annual mean	20 μg/m^3	None	None
Fine particulate matter (PM2.5)	24-hour	None	35 μg/m^3	35 μg/m^3
	Annual mean	12 μg/m^3	12.0 μg/m^3	15 μg/m^3
Carbon monoxide	8-hour	9.0 ppm	9 ppm	None
	1-hour	20 ppm	35 ppm	None
Nitrogen dioxide	Annual mean	0.030 ppm	0.053 ppm	0.053 ppm
	1-hour	0.18 ppm	0.100 ppm	None
Sulfur dioxide[c]	Annual mean	None	0.030 ppm	None
	24-hour	0.04 ppm	0.014 ppm	None
	3-hour	None	None	0.5 ppm
	1-hour	0.25 ppm	0.075 ppm	None
Lead	30-day Average	1.5 μg/m^3	None	None
	Calendar quarter	None	1.5 μg/m^3	1.5 μg/m^3
	3-month average	None	0.15 μg/m^3	0.15 μg/m^3
Sulfates	24-hour	25 μg/m^3	None	None
Visibility-reducing particles	8-hour	–[d]	None	None
Hydrogen sulfide	1-hour	0.03 ppm	None	None
Vinyl chloride	24-hour	0.01 ppm	None	None

Sources: California Air Resources Board 2020a, 2020b.
ppm = parts per million.
μg/m^3 = micrograms per cubic meter.

[a] National standards are divided into primary and secondary standards. Primary standards are intended to protect public health, whereas secondary standards are intended to protect public welfare and the environment.

[b] The federal 1-hour standard of 12 parts per hundred million was in effect from 1979 through June 15, 2005. The revoked standard is referenced because it was employed for such a long period and is a benchmark for State Implementation Plans.

[c] The annual and 24-hour national ambient air quality standard (NAAQS) for sulfur dioxide only apply for 1 year after designation of the new 1-hour standard to those areas that were previously in nonattainment for 24-hour and annual NAAQS.

[d] California ambient air quality standard for visibility-reducing particles is defined by an extinction coefficient of 0.23 per kilometer—visibility of 10 miles or more due to particles when relative humidity is less than 70%.

Nonroad Diesel Rule

The USEPA established a series of increasingly strict emission standards for new off-road diesel equipment, and on-road diesel trucks. Construction equipment used to implement future development associated with growth from project implementation, including heavy-duty trucks and off-road construction equipment, would be required to comply with the emission standards.

Corporate Average Fuel Economy Standards

The Corporate Average Fuel Economy Standards (CAFE) were first enacted in 1975 to improve the average fuel economy of cars and light-duty trucks. However, on August 2, 2018, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) and USEPA proposed to amend the fuel efficiency standards for passenger cars and light trucks and establish new standards covering model years 2021 through 2026 by maintaining the current model year 2020 standards through 2026 (Safer Affordable Fuel-Efficient [SAFE] Vehicles Rule). On September 19, 2019, USEPA and NHTSA issued a final action on the One National Program Rule, which is consider Part One of the SAFE Vehicles Rule and a precursor to the proposed fuel efficiency standards. The One National Program Rule enables USEPA/NHTSA to provide nationwide uniform fuel economy and GHG vehicle standards, specifically by: (1) clarifying that federal law preempts state and local tailpipe GHG standards, (2) affirming NHTSA's statutory authority to set nationally applicable fuel economy standards, and (3) withdrawing California's CAA preemption waiver to set state-specific standards.

USEPA and NHTSA published their decisions to withdraw California's waiver and finalize regulatory text related to the preemption on September 27, 2019 (84 *Federal Register* [Fed. Reg.] 51310). California, 22 other states, the District of Columbia, and two cities filed suit against Part One of the SAFE Vehicles Rule on September 20, 2019 (*California et al. v. United States Department of Transportation et al*., 1:19-cv-02826, U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia). On October 28, 2019, the Union of Concerned Scientists, Environmental Defense Fund, and other groups filed a protective petition for review after the federal government sought to transfer the suit to the D.C. Circuit (*Union of Concerned Scientists v. National Highway Traffic Safety Administration*). Opening briefs for the petition are currently scheduled to be completed on November 23, 2020. The lawsuit filed by California and others is stayed pending resolution of the petition.

USEPA and NHTSA published final rules to amend and establish national carbon dioxide and fuel economy standards on April 30, 2020 (Part Two of the SAFE Vehicles Rule) (85 Fed. Reg. 24174). The revised rule changes the national fuel economy standards for light-duty vehicles from 46.7 miles per gallon to 40.4 miles per gallon in future years. California, 22 other states, and the District of Columbia filed a petition for review of the final rule on May 27, 2020. The fate of the SAFE Vehicles Rule remains uncertain in the face of pending legal deliberations.

State

California Clean Air Act and California Ambient Air Quality Standards

In 1988, the state legislature adopted the California Clean Air Act (CCAA), which established a statewide air pollution control program. The CCAA requires all air districts in the state to endeavor to meet the CAAQS by the earliest practical date. Unlike the CAA, the CCAA does not set precise attainment deadlines. Instead, the CCAA establishes increasingly stringent requirements for areas that will require more time to achieve the standards. CAAQS are generally more stringent than

NAAQS and incorporate additional standards for sulfates, hydrogen sulfide, visibility-reducing particles, and vinyl chloride. The CAAQS and NAAQS are shown in Table 3.3-1.

CARB and local air districts bear responsibility for meeting the CAAQS, which are to be achieved through district-level air quality management plans incorporated into the SIP. In California, USEPA has delegated authority to prepare SIPs to CARB, which, in turn, has delegated that authority to individual air districts. CARB traditionally has established state air quality standards, maintaining oversight authority in air quality planning, developing programs for reducing emissions from motor vehicles, developing air emission inventories, collecting air quality and meteorological data, and approving SIPs.

The CCAA substantially adds to the authority and responsibilities of air districts. The CCAA designates air districts as lead air quality planning agencies, requires air districts to prepare air quality plans, and grants air districts authority to implement transportation control measures. The CCAA also emphasizes the control of "indirect and area-wide sources" of air pollutant emissions. The CCAA gives local air pollution control districts explicit authority to regulate indirect sources of air pollution and to establish traffic control measures.

Statewide Truck and Bus Regulation

Originally adopted in 2005, the on-road truck and bus regulation requires heavy trucks to be retrofitted with particulate matter (PM) filters. The regulation applies to privately and federally owned diesel-fueled trucks with a gross vehicle weight rating greater than 14,000 pounds. Compliance with the regulation can be reached through one of two paths: (1) vehicle retrofits according to engine year or (2) phase-in schedule. Compliance paths ensure that by January 2023, nearly all trucks and buses will have 2010 model year engines or newer.

State Tailpipe Emission Standards

Like the USEPA at the federal level, CARB has established a series of increasingly strict emission standards for new off-road diesel equipment, and on-road diesel trucks operating in California. New equipment used for construction would be required to comply with the standards.

Toxic Air Contaminant Regulation

California regulates toxic air contaminants (TAC) primarily through the Toxic Air Contaminant Identification and Control Act (Tanner Act) and the Air Toxics "Hot Spots" Information and Assessment Act of 1987 ("Hot Spots" Act). In the early 1980s, CARB established a statewide comprehensive air toxics program to reduce exposure to air toxics. The Tanner Act created California's program to reduce exposure to air toxics. The "Hot Spots" Act supplements the Tanner Act by requiring a statewide air toxics inventory, notification of people exposed to a significant health risk, and facility plans to reduce these risks.

CARB has identified diesel particulate matter (DPM) as a TAC and has approved a comprehensive Diesel Risk Reduction Plan to reduce emissions from both new and existing diesel-fueled engines and vehicles. The goal of the plan is to reduce DPM emissions and the associated health risk by 75 percent by 2010 and by 85 percent by 2020. The plan identifies 14 measures that CARB will implement over the next several years. Projects would be required to comply with any applicable diesel control measures from the Diesel Risk Reduction Plan.

Local Regulations

Placer County Air Pollution Control District

The PCAPCD has local air quality jurisdiction over projects in Placer County. Some of the responsibilities of the air district include overseeing stationary-source emissions, approving permits, maintaining emissions inventories, maintaining local air quality stations, overseeing agricultural and non-agricultural burn permits, and reviewing California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and National Environmental Policy Act documents for air quality impacts. The PCAPCD manages air quality through a comprehensive program that includes long-term planning, regulations, incentives for technical innovation, education, and community outreach. The air district has adopted the *2013 PM2.5 Implementation and Maintenance Plan for Sacramento PM2.5 Nonattainment area* (PM2.5 Plan) and the 2017 *Sacramento Regional 8-Hour Ozone Attainment and Reasonable Further Progress Plan (2017 Ozone SIP)* for the federal ambient air quality standards for the Sacramento Federal Non-Attainment Area.

The PCAPCD is responsible for adopting and enforcing rules and regulations that have been adopted to achieve and maintain federal and state ambient air quality standards in all areas affected by emission sources under PCAPCD jurisdiction, including the enforcement of all applicable provisions of state and federal law. Development associated with the implementation of the proposed project may be subject to the following PCAPCD rules, and others, during implementation (Placer County Air Pollution Control District 2020a).

- **Rule 202 (Visible Emissions)**: Prohibits the discharge of air contaminants for a period or periods aggregating more than 3 minutes in any 1 hour.
- **Rule 205 (Nuisance)**: Prohibits the discharge of air contaminants that cause injury, detriment, nuisance, or annoyance to a considerable number of persons or to the public, or which endanger the comfort, repose, health, or safety of any such persons or the public, or which cause or have a natural tendency to cause injury or damage to business or property.
- **Rule 207 (Particulate Matter)**: Prohibits the discharge of PM in excess of 0.1 grain per cubic foot of gas at standard conditions.
- **Rule 228 (Fugitive Dust Emissions)**: Limits the quantity of PM entrained in the ambient air, or discharged into the ambient air, as a result of anthropogenic (i.e., human-made) fugitive dust sources by requiring actions to prevent, reduce, or mitigate fugitive dust emissions.
- **Rule 242 (Stationary Internal Combustion Engines)**: Limits emissions of nitrogen oxides (NO_X) and carbon monoxide (CO) from stationary internal combustion engines (if construction requires engines rated at more than 50 brake horsepower).

Placer County General Plan

Excerpted below are the relevant goal, policies, and implementation programs from the *Placer County General Plan* that pertain to air quality (Placer County 2013).

Goal

6.F. To protect and improve air quality in Placer County.

Policies

6.F.1. The County shall cooperate with other agencies to develop a consistent and effective approach to air quality planning and management.

6.F.2. The County shall develop mitigation measures to minimize stationary source and area source emissions.

6.F.3. The County shall support the Placer County Air Pollution Control District (PCAPCD) in its development of improved ambient air quality monitoring capabilities and the establishment of standards, thresholds, and rules to more adequately address the air quality impacts of new development.

6.F.4. The County shall solicit and consider comments from local and regional agencies on proposed projects that may affect regional air quality.

6.F.5. The County shall encourage project proponents to consult early in the planning process with the County regarding the applicability of Countywide indirect and areawide source programs and transportation control measures (TCM) programs. Project review shall also address energy-efficient building and site designs and proper storage, use, and disposal of hazardous materials.

6.F.6. The County shall require project-level environmental review to include identification of potential air quality impacts and designation of design and other appropriate mitigation measures or offset fees to reduce impacts. The County shall dedicate staff to work with project proponents and other agencies in identifying, ensuring the implementation of, and monitoring the success of mitigation measures.

6.F.7. The County shall encourage development to be located and designed to minimize direct and indirect air pollutants.

6.F.8. The County shall submit development proposals to the PCAPCD for review and comment in compliance with CEQA prior to consideration by the appropriate decision making body.

6.F.9. In reviewing project applications, the County shall consider alternatives or amendments that reduce emissions of air pollutants.

6.F.10. The County may require new development projects to submit an air quality analysis for review and approval. Based on this analysis, the County shall require appropriate mitigation measures consistent with the PCAPCD's 1991 Air Quality Attainment Plan (or updated edition).

6.F.11. The County shall apply the buffer standards described in Part 1 of this Policy Document and meteorological analyses to provide separation between possible emission/nuisance sources (such as industrial and commercial uses) and residential uses.

Implementation Programs

6.17. The County shall coordinate with other local, regional, and state agencies, including the PCAPCD and the California Air Resources Board (CARB), in incorporating regional and County clean air plans into County planning and project review procedures. The County shall also cooperate with the PCAPCD and ARB in the following efforts:

a. Enforcing the provision of the California and federal Clean Air Acts, state and regional policies, and established standards for air quality;

b. Establishing monitoring stations to accurately determine the status of carbon monoxide, ozone, nitrogen dioxide, hydrocarbon and PM_{10} concentrations;

c. Developing and implementing clean fuel regulations for vehicle fleets; and,

d. Developing consistent procedures and thresholds for evaluating both project-specific and cumulative air quality impacts for proposed projects.

6.18. The County shall work with the PCAPCD to develop significance thresholds that would trigger requirements for air quality analyses and project mitigation. Those thresholds and mitigation measures shall be incorporated into the criteria and strategies from the Placer County Air Quality Attainment Plan (AQAP, 1991) and the State Implementation Plan (SIP) which were prepared in order to attain state and federal air quality standards.

6.19. The County shall coordinate with the PCAPCD regarding its update to the 1991 AQAP as required every three years. The County shall ensure that the PCAPCD's triennial updates reflect the projected population estimates and vehicle travel associated with the updated General Plan, and include additional air quality mitigation projects to compensate for the increased population and emissions associated with anticipated development.

6.20. The County should coordinate with the PCAPCD and the Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG) relating to the preparation of the State Implementation Plan (SIP) and the associated progress reports which demonstrate the attainment of federal air quality standards. The County should ensure that the SIP reflect any revised General Plan population and vehicle travel activity projections associated with any federal nonattainment area within Placer County.

6.21. The County shall explore alternative financing mechanisms for local air quality improvement programs. The County shall also examine whether grants are available to establish an air quality monitoring program. In addition, the County shall develop a methodology providing project proponent funding or roadway improvements that equitably recovers the costs of those improvements.

6.22. In consultation with the PCAPCD, cities and special districts, transit providers, and major employers in Placer County, the County shall adopt a program to encourage the widespread use of clean fuels. This program shall include the following components:

a. Vigorously pursuing replacement of existing County vehicles that burn gasoline and diesel fuel with vehicles that use clean fuels including, but not limited to, methanol, compressed natural gas (CNG), liquefied petroleum gas (LPG), and electric batteries;

b. Encouraging existing fueling stations in the County to provide clean fuels such as methanol and LPG; and

c. Encouraging bus service companies based in Placer County to use clean fuel buses in their daily operations.

Environmental Setting

Ambient air quality in the project area is affected by climatological conditions, topography, and the types and amounts of pollutants emitted. Placer County spans three area basins: Sacramento Valley Air Basin (SVAB), Mountain Counties Air Basin (MCAB), and the Lake Tahoe Air Basin. However, development with implementation of the proposed project would only occur in the SVAB and MCAB. The following discussion describes relevant characteristics of these two air basins, describes key pollutants of concern, summarizes existing ambient pollutant concentrations, and identifies sensitive receptors.

Regional Climate and Meteorology

The westernmost portion of Placer County is in the SVAB, which is bounded on the west by the Coast Ranges and on the north and east by the Cascade Range and Sierra Nevada. The MCAB is east of the SVAB along the northern Sierra Nevada.

The region to the west has a Mediterranean climate characterized by hot, dry summers and cool, rainy winters, while the climate to the east varies greatly based on elevation and proximity to the Sierra Nevada. During winter, the north Pacific storm track intermittently dominates weather in the

region where fair weather alternates with periods of extensive clouds and precipitation, which tends to be a heavier mixture of rain and snow to the east. Periods of dense and persistent low-level fog, which is most prevalent between storms, are also characteristic of winter weather. The frequency and persistence of heavy fog diminishes with the approach of spring, when precipitation is generally light. The average yearly temperature range for the valley to the west is 20°F to 115°F, with summer high temperatures often exceeding 90°F and winter low temperatures dropping below freezing at night.

In general, the prevailing winds are moderate in strength and vary from moist clean breezes from the south to dry land flows from the north. The mountains surrounding the region can create a barrier to airflow that can trap air pollutants under certain meteorological conditions. The highest frequency of air stagnation occurs in the autumn and early winter when large high-pressure cells collect over the Sacramento Valley. The lack of surface wind during these periods and the reduced vertical flow caused by less surface heating reduce the influx of outside air and allow air pollutants to become concentrated in a stable volume of air (e.g., PM 2.5 micrometers or less in diameter [PM2.5]). The surface concentrations of pollutants are highest when these conditions are combined with temperature inversions (warm air over cool air), which trap pollutants near the ground. In the summer, longer daylight hours, high temperatures, and stagnant air conditions are suitable for the formation of some criteria pollutants (e.g., ozone [O_3]).

Pollutants of Concern

Criteria Pollutants

The federal and state governments have established NAAQS and CAAQS, respectively, for six criteria pollutants: O_3, CO, lead, nitrogen dioxide (NO_2), sulfur dioxide (SO_2), and PM, which consists of PM 20 micrometers or less in diameter (PM10) and PM2.5. O_3 is considered a regional pollutant because its precursors affect air quality on a regional scale. Pollutants such as CO, NO_2, SO_2, and lead are considered local pollutants that tend to accumulate in the air locally. PM is both a local and a regional pollutant. The primary criteria pollutants of concern generated by the most projects are O_3 precursors (reactive organic gases [ROG] and NO_X), CO, and PM.[1]

All criteria pollutants can have human health and environmental effects at certain concentrations. The ambient air quality standards for these pollutants (Table 3.3-1) are set to protect public health and the environment within an adequate margin of safety (CAA § 109). Epidemiological, controlled human exposure, and toxicology studies evaluate potential health and environmental effects of criteria pollutants, and form the scientific basis for new and revised ambient air quality standards.

The following list describes the principal characteristics and possible health and environmental effects from exposure to the primary criteria pollutants.

- **O_3**, a component of urban smog, is photochemical oxidant that is formed when ROG and NO_X (both by-products of the internal combustion engine) react with sunlight. ROG are compounds made up primarily of hydrogen and carbon atoms. Internal combustion associated with motor vehicle usage is the major source of hydrocarbons. Other sources of ROG are emissions

[1] As discussed, there are also ambient air quality standards for SO_2, lead, sulfates, hydrogen sulfide, vinyl chloride, and visibility-reducing particles. However, these pollutants are typically associated with large stationary sources (e.g., manufacturing), which are not anticipated as a result of project implementation.

associated with the use of paints and solvents, the application of asphalt paving, and the use of household consumer products such as aerosols. The two major forms of NO_X are nitric oxide (NO) and NO_2. NO is a colorless, odorless gas formed from atmospheric nitrogen and oxygen when combustion takes place under high temperature and/or high pressure. NO_2 is a reddish-brown irritating gas formed by the combination of NO and oxygen. In addition to serving as an integral participant in O_3 formation, NO_X also directly acts as an acute respiratory irritant and increases susceptibility to respiratory pathogens.

O_3 poses a higher risk to those who already suffer from respiratory diseases (e.g., asthma), children, older adults, and people who are active outdoors. Exposure to O_3 at certain concentrations can make breathing more difficult, cause shortness of breath and coughing, inflame and damage the airways, aggravate lung diseases, increase the frequency of asthma attacks, and cause chronic obstructive pulmonary disease. Studies show associations between short-term O_3 exposure and non-accidental mortality, including deaths from respiratory issues. Studies also suggest long-term exposure to O_3 may increase the risk of respiratory-related deaths (U.S. Environmental Protection Agency 2019a). The concentration of O_3 at which health effects are observed depends on an individual's sensitivity, level of exertion (i.e., breathing rate), and duration of exposure. Studies show large individual differences in the intensity of symptomatic responses, with one study finding no symptoms to the least responsive individual after a 2-hour exposure to 400 parts per billion of O_3 and a 50 percent decrement in forced airway volume in the most responsive individual. Although the results vary, evidence suggests that sensitive populations (e.g., asthmatics) may be affected on days when the 8-hour maximum O_3 concentration reaches 80 parts per billion (U.S. Environmental Protection Agency 2019b).

In addition to human health effects, O_3 has been tied to crop damage, typically in the form of stunted growth, leaf discoloration, cell damage, and premature death. O_3 can also act as a corrosive and oxidant, resulting in property damage such as the degradation of rubber products and other materials.

- **CO** is a colorless, odorless, toxic gas produced by incomplete combustion of carbon substances, such as gasoline or diesel fuel. The primary adverse health effect associated with CO is interference with normal oxygen transfer to the blood, which may result in tissue oxygen deprivation. Exposure to CO at concentrations above the CAAQS or NAAQS (see Table 3.3-1) can also cause fatigue, headaches, confusion, dizziness, and chest pain. Ambient CO has no ecological or environmental effects (California Air Resources Board 2019).
- **PM** consists of finely divided solids or liquids such as soot, dust, aerosols, fumes, and mists. Two forms of fine particulates are now regulated—inhalable coarse particles, or PM10, and inhalable fine particles, or PM2.5. Particulate discharge into the atmosphere results primarily from industrial, agricultural, construction, and transportation activities. However, wind on arid landscapes also contributes substantially to local particulate loading. Additionally, secondary formation of PM, primarily in the form of fine particulate, occurs through the chemical transformation of precursors such as NO_X, SO_2, ammonia, and ROGs.

  Particulate pollution can be transported over long distances and may adversely affect people, especially those who are naturally sensitive or susceptible to breathing problems. Numerous studies have linked PM exposure to premature death in people with preexisting heart or lung disease. Other symptoms of exposure may include nonfatal heart attacks, irregular heartbeat, aggravated asthma, decreased lung function, and increased respiratory symptoms. Exposure to concentrations of PM above the current ambient air quality standards may result in these health

effects (U.S. Environmental Protection Agency 2018). Similar to O_3, the elderly and those with preexisting heart and lung diseases are at greater risk to the harmful effects of PM exposure. Children are also at increased risk because they breathe faster than adults, and therefore inhale more air per pound of body weight and tend to spend more time outdoors. The CAAQS and NAAQS for PM are set to protect these sensitive populations and define the number of particles that can be present in outdoor air without threatening the health of infants, children, or the elderly (California Air Resources Board 2019). The CAAQS and NAAQS for PM are shown in Table 3.3-1.

Depending on its composition, both PM10 and PM2.5 can also affect water quality and acidity, deplete soil nutrients, damage sensitive forests and crops, affect ecosystem diversity, and contribute to acid rain (U.S. Environmental Protection Agency 2019c).

Toxic Air Contaminants

Although state and federal standards have been established for criteria pollutants, no ambient standards exist for TACs. Many pollutants are identified as TACs because of their potential to increase the risk of developing cancer or because of their acute or chronic health risks. For TACs that are known or suspected carcinogens, the CARB has consistently found that there are no levels or thresholds below which exposure is risk-free. Individual TACs vary greatly in the risks they present. At a given level of exposure, one TAC may pose a hazard that is many times greater than another. TACs are identified and their toxicity is studied by the California Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment.

Air toxics are generated by a number of sources, including stationary sources, such as dry cleaners, gas stations, auto body shops, and combustion sources; mobile sources, such as motor vehicles, diesel trucks, ships, and trains; and area sources, such as farms, landfills, and construction sites. Adverse health effects of TACs can be carcinogenic (cancer-causing), short-term (acute) noncarcinogenic, and long-term (chronic) noncarcinogenic. Direct exposure to these pollutants has been shown to cause cancer, birth defects, damage to the brain and nervous system, and respiratory disorders.

The most relevant TACs are DPM and naturally occurring asbestos (NOA). DPM was established as a TAC in 1998, while some of the chemicals in diesel exhaust, such as benzene and formaldehyde, had previously been identified as TACs and listed as carcinogens under either the state's Proposition 65 or federal Hazardous Air Pollutants program. NOA can be released from serpentinite and ultramafic rocks when the rock is broken or crushed. According to Placer County's *Naturally Occurring Asbestos Hazard* maps, NOA is present in foothill areas throughout Placer County (Placer County 2008), and future development in the North Auburn region would be located in areas "most likely to contain NOA" as they include ultramafic rock and serpentine rock (serpentinite) and associated soils, which are most likely to contain NOA.

Odors

Offensive odors rarely cause physical harm, but they can be unpleasant and lead to considerable distress among the public. This distress often generates citizen complaints to local governments and air districts. According to the County's 2017 *CEQA Handbook*, land uses associated with odor complaints typically include wastewater treatment plants, sanitary landfills, composting/green waste facilities, recycling facilities, chemical manufacturing plants, and painting/coating operations, agricultural operations, and slaughterhouse/food packaging plants. The County's *CEQA Handbook*

provides the Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District's (SMAQMD) list of screening distances for a variety of odor-generating facilities. However, the County notes that the significance of odor impacts should be determined based on not only distance, but also the downwind/upwind situation, dominant wind directions, and a facility's odor complaint history.

Existing Air Quality Conditions

The PCAPCD maintains and operates four ambient air monitoring stations, while CARB maintains and operates one site in Placer County. The purpose of the monitoring stations is to measure ambient concentrations of the pollutants which is used to determine whether the ambient air quality meets the NAAQS and CAAQS. Additionally, they are used to provide valuable information for public health. Table 3.3-2 summarizes the average criteria pollutant concentrations in Placer County for the last 3 years for which complete data was available (2016–2018).

Local monitoring data (Table 3.3-2) are used to designate areas as nonattainment, maintenance, attainment, or unclassified for the NAAQS and CAAQS. The four designations are defined as follows.

- **Nonattainment**—assigned to areas where monitored pollutant concentrations consistently violate the standard in question.
- **Maintenance**—assigned to areas where monitored pollutant concentrations exceeded the standard in question in the past but are no longer in violation of that standard.
- **Attainment**—assigned to areas where pollutant concentrations meet the standard in question over a designated period of time.
- **Unclassified**—assigned to areas were data are insufficient to determine whether a pollutant is violating the standard in question.

Table 3.3-2. Ambient Criteria Air Pollutant Monitoring Data for Placer County (2016–2018)

Pollutant Standards	2016	2017	2018
1-Hour Ozone (O_3)			
Maximum Concentration (ppm)	0.115	0.117	0.135
Number of Days Standard Exceeded			
CAAQS 1-Hour (>0.09 ppm)	5	4	12
8-Hour Ozone (O_3)			
State Maximum Concentration (ppm)	0.100	0.089	0.116
National Maximum Concentration (ppm)	0.099	0.088	0.115
National 4th Highest Concentration (ppm)	0.087	0.083	0.103
Number of days standard exceeded			
CAAQS 8-hour (>0.070 ppm)	35	36	46
NAAQS 8-hour (>0.070 ppm)	35	34	43
Nitrogen Dioxide (NO_2)			
Maximum 1-Hour Concentration	50	52	54
Annual Average Concentration	8	8	8
Number of Days Standard Exceeded			
CAAQS 1-Hour (0.18 ppm)	0	0	0

Pollutant Standards	2016	2017	2018
NAAQS 1-Hour (0.100 ppm)	0	0	0
Particulate Matter (PM10)[a]			
State Maximum 24-Hour Concentration	56.6	123.9	270.1
National Maximum 24-Hour Concentration	62.4	141.7	307.5
State Annual Average Concentration	12.2	NA	NA
Number of Days Standard Exceeded			
CAAQS 24-Hour (>50 μg/m^3)	2	18	31
NAAQS 24-Hour (>150 μg/m^3)	0	0	17
Fine Particulate Matter (PM2.5)			
National Maximum 24-Hour Concentration (μg/m^3)	28.6	29.7	171.8
24-hour Standard 98th Percentile (μg/m^3)	20.2	18.0	56.5
National Annual Average Concentration	6.8	7.2	11.9
Number of Days Standard Exceeded			
NAAQS 24-Hour (>35 μg/m^3)	0	0	14

Source: California Air Resources Board 2020c. Data compiled by ICF.
Note: No data available for carbon monoxide (CO).
[a]PM10 data not available at the county level. Values shown are for MCAB.

CAAQS = California ambient air quality standards
NA = data not available
NAAQS = national ambient air quality standards
μg/m^3 = micrograms per cubic meter
ppm = parts per million

Table 3.3-3 summarizes the attainment status of Placer County with regard to the NAAQS and CAAQS.

Table 3.3-3. Federal and State Attainment Status for Placer County

Criteria Pollutant	Federal Designation	State Designation
Ozone (8-hr)	Nonattainment (P)	Nonattainment
CO	Attainment	Attainment/Unclassified
PM10	Attainment	Nonattainment
PM2.5 (24-hr)	Nonattainment (P)	Attainment/Unclassified
PM2.5 (Annual)	Attainment/Unclassified	Attainment/Unclassified
NO_2	Attainment	Attainment
SO_2	Attainment	Attainment
Lead	Attainment	Attainment
Sulfates	(No federal standard)	Attainment
Hydrogen Sulfide	(No federal standard)	Unclassified
Visibility Reducing Particles	(No federal standard)	Unclassified

Sources: California Air Resources Board 2020; U.S. Environmental Protection Agency 2020.
Note: At the time of designation, if the available data do not support a designation of attainment or nonattainment, the area is designated as unclassifiable.

CO = carbon monoxide
PM2.5 = particulate matter less than or equal to 2.5 microns
PM10 = particulate matter less than or equal to 10 microns.
NO_2 = nitrogen dioxide.
SO_2 = sulfur dioxide.
(P) = designation applies to a portion of the county.

Sensitive Receptors

The impact of air pollutant emissions on sensitive members of the population is a special concern. Sensitive receptors are defined as locations where pollutant-sensitive members of the population may reside or where the presence of air pollutant emissions could adversely affect use of the land. CARB has identified the following people as the most likely to be affected by air pollution: children younger than 14, people older than 65, athletes, and people with cardiovascular and chronic respiratory diseases. These groups are classified as sensitive receptors (California Air Resources Board 2005). Locations that may contain a high concentration of these sensitive population groups include residences, schools, day-care centers, playgrounds, and medical facilities (Placer County 2017). Most health studies indicate that health effects are strongest within 1,000 feet of emission sources (California Air Resources Board 2005).

Residential areas, such as those within proximity of the new units, are considered sensitive to air pollution because residents (including children and the elderly) tend to be at home for extended periods, resulting in sustained exposure to any pollutants present. In general, these sensitive receptors are concentrated in the cities and small towns throughout Placer County. Sensitive receptors within the project area also include hospitals, schools, playgrounds, and neighborhood parks.

3.3.2 Environmental Impacts

The environmental analysis in this section focuses on the two main components of the project: (1) amendments to the Land Use Element in the County's General Plan, Zoning Ordinance, and Community Design Manual, and (2) the potential locations for the new dwelling units that could be constructed as a result of changes to the Zoning Ordinance (a total of 194 units distributed throughout the county).

The general land use pattern allowed by the housing-related code amendments is evaluated in the following discussions for its potential to adversely affect air quality. An adverse effect would be assumed to occur if development would exceed an established threshold of significance.

The analysis in this section also considers the impacts from the potential development of dwelling within certain areas throughout the county. As a result of project implementation, a total of 194 units could be constructed, as noted below. While these units could be developed as a result of project implementation, the project itself does not propose any site-specific development.

- 50 units in the Roseville area (South Placer County)
- 13 units in the Loomis/Newcastle area (foothill region)
- 49 units in the Auburn/Bowman area (foothill region)
- 82 units in the eastern county (High Sierra region), including:

- 31 units near Sugar Bowl
- 4 units near Squaw Valley
- 42 units near SR 89
- 5 units near Northstar

Methods for Analysis

Air quality impacts associated with construction and operation of the proposed project were assessed and quantified using industry standard and accepted software tools, techniques, and emission factors. The following subsections provide a summary of the methodology. A full list of assumptions and emission calculations can be found in Appendix C. The methodology used to estimate air quality emissions discussed below is the same that was used to estimate GHG emissions, as described in Section 3.8.

Construction Emissions

The 194 units that could be developed under the proposed project would generate construction-related emissions from mobile and stationary construction equipment exhaust, employee and haul truck vehicle exhaust, land clearing and material movement, paving, and application of architectural coatings.

For purposes of analysis, it is assumed that buildout of the proposed project would be 2030. With an anticipated buildout year of 2030, implementation of various projects associated with the proposed project would occur over an extended period and would depend on factors such as economic conditions, market and housing demands, and other considerations. Since the project does not directly propose development, it is not possible to know with certainty how many units would be constructed within a single year. As such, it was conservatively assumed that up to 25 percent (49 units) of the potential 194 units would be constructed in a single year. This approach is recommended by SMAQMD in their guidance for plan-level analyses (Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District 2016).

Maximum daily emissions from project construction were estimated using default assumptions for single-family housing land use in the California Emissions Estimator Model (CalEEMod), version 2016.3.2. Changes associated with the General Plan and Zoning Ordinance are discussed qualitatively.

Operational Emissions

Operation of the potential 194 residential units would generate criteria pollutants and precursor emissions that could result in long-term impacts on ambient air quality in the project area. Operational emissions would result from motor vehicle travel, onsite combustion of natural gas for space and water heating, use of off-road equipment, consumer products (e.g., cleaning supplies, kitchen aerosols, cosmetics, toiletries), and the re-application of architectural coatings.

Maximum daily emissions generated during operation of the proposed project at full buildout (2030) were estimated using CalEEMod version 2016.3.2, and daily trip rates consistent with the transportation analysis (Section 16, *Transportation)*. The analysis also accounts for CARB's criteria pollutant adjustment factors to account for the SAFE Vehicle Rule.

Changes associated with the General Plan and Zoning Ordinance are discussed qualitatively.

Thresholds of Significance

In accordance with Appendix G of the State CEQA Guidelines, the proposed project would be considered to have a significant effect if it would result in any of the conditions listed below.

- Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan.
- A cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is a nonattainment area for an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard.
- Exposure of sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations.
- Other emissions (such as those leading to odors) affecting a substantial number of people

Appendix G of the State CEQA Guidelines further indicates the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management or air pollution control district may be relied on to make the significance determinations. The thresholds used for determining significance of criteria pollutant emissions are presented in Table 3.3-4. These thresholds are based on criteria established by the PCAPCD and consider whether a project's emissions would result in a cumulatively considerable adverse contribution to existing air quality conditions. If a project's emissions would be below these levels, the project would not be expected to result in a cumulatively considerable contribution to the significant project-level and cumulative impact.

Table 3.3-4. Placer County Air Pollution Control District Criteria Pollutant and Precursor Thresholds (pounds per day)

	Ozone Precursor Emissions		
Source	**ROG**	**NO_X**	**PM10**
Construction (short-term)	82	82	82
Operational (long-term)	55	55	82

Source: Placer County Air Pollution Control District 2017
NO_X = nitrogen oxides
PM10 = particulate matter 10 microns or less in diameter.
ROG = reactive organic gases

PCAPCD also considers localized CO emissions to result in significant impacts if concentrations exceed the CAAQS. The air district has adopted the following screening criteria that provide a conservative indication of whether project-generated traffic would cause a potential CO hot spot. If both criteria are met, PCAPCD recommends traffic-generated CO concentrations be modeled and compared with the CAAQS to determine impact significance.

- Vehicle emissions generated by the project exceed 550 pound per day, and
- Either of the following scenarios would occur:
    - Peak-hour level of service (LOS) on one or more streets or at one or more intersections (both signalized and non-signalized) in the project vicinity would be degraded from an acceptable LOS (A, B, C, or D) to an unacceptable LOS (E or F), or
    - Project would substantially worsen an already existing unacceptable peak-hour LOS on one or more streets or at one or more intersections in the project vicinity. Substantially worsen

includes situations where delay would increase by 10 seconds or more when project-generated traffic is included.

PCAPCD has also adopted a threshold to evaluate receptor exposure to TACs. The "substantial" TAC threshold defined by the PCAPCD is the probability of contracting cancer for the maximum exposed individual exceeding 10 in 1 million. This risk threshold is used by PCAPCD to evaluate potential risks for both existing and new sources in Placer County (Placer County Air Pollution Control District 2017).

Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Impact AQ-1: Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan (less than significant)

PCAPCD is required, pursuant to the NAAQS and CAAQS, to reduce emissions of criteria pollutants for which the County is in nonattainment (i.e., O_3, PM10, and PM2.5). The most recent PCAPCD air quality attainment plans are the PM2.5 Plan and the 2017 Ozone SIP. The simplest test to assess project consistency is to determine if the project proposes development that is consistent with the growth anticipated by the relevant land use plans that were used in the formulation of the air quality attainment plans; if so, then the project would be consistent with the attainment plans.

PCAPCD's air quality attainment plans are based, in part, on regional population and employment (and thus vehicle miles traveled [VMT]) growth projections from Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG). Thus, a project's conformance with SACOG's Metropolitan Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy that was considered in the preparation of the air quality attainment plans would demonstrate that the project would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of plans.

Further, the Placer County General Plan is the governing land use document for physical development within the county, so projects that propose development consistent with growth anticipated by the current General Plan are considered consistent with the air quality attainment plans. If a project would propose development that is less dense than anticipated within the current General Plan, the project would likewise be consistent with the attainment plans because emissions would be less than estimated within the current General Plan. If a project proposes development that is greater than that anticipated in the General Plan and SACOG's growth projections, the project could be in conflict with the attainment plans, and might have a potentially significant impact on air quality because emissions could exceed those estimated for the existing land use plan (i.e., General Plan).

As stated in Chapter 2, *Project Description*, the proposed project consists of targeted amendments to the General Plan, the Placer County Zoning Ordinance, Zoning Maps, and Community Design Guidelines Manual. As a result of these amendments, an additional 194 residential units could be developed throughout the county during the buildout period. Potential growth resulting from project implementation is not outside SACOG's growth assumptions, as they represent only minor changes on a large geographic scale. However, while the targeted amendments authorize new development, no specific development projects are proposed as part of the proposed project. Further, any potential growth resulting from the 194 additional units is not expected to be a substantial increase from existing conditions or General Plan projections. As such, impacts associated with inconsistency with applicable air quality attainment plans would be ***less than***

significant, and no mitigation is required. Please refer to Section 3.11, *Land Use and Planning* for further information related to the proposed project's consistency with relevant plans.

Impact AQ-2: Cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is a nonattainment area for an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard (less than significant with mitigation)

Construction

Construction of future residential development associated with implementation of the proposed project would occur intermittently throughout the county during the buildout period. Construction of the project would result in the temporary generation of criteria pollutant emissions that could result in short-term impacts on ambient air quality. Emissions could originate from mobile and stationary construction equipment exhaust, employee and haul truck vehicle exhaust, land clearing, architectural coatings, and asphalt paving. Construction-related emissions would vary substantially depending on the level of activity, length of the construction period, specific construction activities, types of equipment, number of personnel, wind and precipitation conditions, and soil moisture content.

Buildout of the proposed project is anticipated to occur over a 10-year period, with full buildout in 2030. As the precise timing and intensity of future development is not known at this time, it is not clear the exact number of units that will be constructed in a single year. Accordingly, the total number of proposed units were amortized over 4 years to present a worst-case and conservative assessment of the potential maximum daily and annual construction emissions that could theoretically occur with the project. This approach assumes that 25 percent of the total potential growth associated with project implementation could occur in a single year. For the purposes of analysis, emissions generated by this construction were modeled in 2020, corresponding to the year with the highest emission factors for equipment and vehicles. This approach is consistent with SMAQMD guidance for plan-level analyses (Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District 2016). Estimated construction emissions prior to mitigation are summarized in Table 3.3-5 and compared to the PCAPCD's ROG, NO_X, and PM10 thresholds.

As shown in Table 3.3-5, emissions resulting from construction of 25 percent of the total residential units associated with project implementation would not generate emissions of criteria air pollutants in excess of PCAPCD's thresholds. As such, impacts would be ***less than significant***, and no mitigation is required.

Table 3.3-5. Maximum Construction Emissions[a] (pounds per day)

Source	ROG	NO_X	PM10
Demolition	3	33	2
Site Preparation	4	42	20
Grading	5	50	11
Building Construction	2	20	1
Paving	1	14	1
Architectural Coating	55	2	<1
Maximum Daily Emissions	**55**	**50**	**20**
PCAPCD threshold	*82*	*82*	*82*
Exceed threshold?	*No*	*No*	*No*

NO_X = nitrogen oxides
PCAPCD = Placer County Air Pollution Control District
PM10 = particulate matter 10 microns or less in diameter.
ROG = reactive organic gases
[a] Assumed 25% of project construction (approximately 49 units) would occur in one year. Methodology per SMAQMD guidance that states, "for construction projects that will last more than 4 years, lead agencies should assume 25% of the total land uses would be constructed in 1 single year, unless otherwise known." (SMAQMD 2016)

Operation

The 194 units could be constructed in multiple phases with operations likely to occur concurrently with construction. Therefore, operational air quality emissions could include overlapping construction emissions. However, per PCAPCD guidance, because construction emissions are short-term and operational emissions are long-term, the significance of air quality impacts is determined separately for construction and operation (Chang pers. comm.).

Operation of the proposed project could result in changes in travel patterns and VMT in the local and regional transportation network. Vehicle emissions were estimated using CalEEMod and activity data provided by the project traffic engineer (Tokarski pers. comm.). Emissions would also be generated by energy and area sources (e.g., architectural coatings, consumer products, landscaping). Emissions were modeled for the anticipated buildout year, 2030. Appendix C presents supporting air quality calculations for the impact analysis.

Table 3.3-6 presents the estimated operational emissions with implementation of the proposed project before mitigation. The emissions are compared to PCAPCD's ROG, NO_X, and PM10 thresholds. If the proposed project's emissions are less than these levels, the project would not be expected to result in a cumulatively considerable contribution to the significant project-level and cumulative impact.

Table 3.3-6. Maximum Unmitigated Operational Emissions in 2030 (pounds per day)

Source	ROG	NO_X	PM10
Area	306	6	51
Energy	<1	1	<1
Mobile	2	16	12
Total	**309**	**22**	**63**
PCAPCD threshold	*55*	*55*	*82*
Exceed threshold?	*Yes*	*No*	*No*

NO_X = nitrogen oxides
PCAPCD = Placer County Air Pollution Control District
PM10 = particulate matter 10 microns or less in diameter.
ROG = reactive organic gases

As shown in Table 3.3-6, operation of the proposed project would generate emissions of ROG in excess of PCAPCD's threshold. Most ROG emissions would be generated from area sources, which include architectural coating, consumer products, hearth use, and landscaping. Of these area sources, ROG emissions from the proposed project are mainly attributed to use of hearths, which account for 97 percent of the total emissions of ROG during operation.

To address ROG emissions during operation, implementation of **Mitigation Measure AQ-2** requires the project to install all electric appliances, prohibiting the use of wood-burning or natural gas in new developments associated with the project.

Regarding changes to the General Plan and Zoning Ordinance, none of the project components in Table 2-3 in Chapter 2 would directly result in development of new units and serve primarily to facilitate new uses in certain areas in order to promote mixed-use development and change density controls. Operation of future development associated with these changes, beyond the anticipated 194 units explicitly discussed here, would also be subject to **Mitigation Measure AQ-2**, similar to what is specified for the 194 new potential units.

As shown in Table 3.3-7, after mitigation, operation of the proposed project would not generate emissions in excess of PCAPCD's thresholds. Accordingly, this impact would be ***less than significant with mitigation***.

Table 3.3-7. Maximum Mitigated Operational Emissions in 2030 (pounds per day)

Source	ROG	NO_X	PM10
Area	9	0	<1
Energy	<1	1	<1
Mobile	2	16	11
Total	**12**	**16**	**12**
PCAPCD threshold	*55*	*55*	*82*
Exceed threshold?	*No*	*No*	*No*

NO_X = nitrogen oxides
PCAPCD = Placer County Air Pollution Control District
PM10= particulate matter 10 microns or less in diameter
ROG = reactive organic gases

Mitigation Measure AQ-2: Installation of Electric Appliances in New Construction

Require the installation of only electric appliances in future residential construction associated with the proposed project. Future residential units will have no wood-burning or natural gas fireplaces or stoves.

Impact AQ-3: Exposure of sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations (less than significant with mitigation)

The discussion of pollutant concentrations associated with both the construction and operation of the proposed project is provided below.

Regarding changes to the General Plan and Zoning Ordinance, none of the project components in Table 2-3 in Chapter 2 would directly result in development of new units and serve primarily to facilitate new uses in certain areas in order to promote mixed-use development and change density controls. Construction and operation of future development associated with these changes, beyond the anticipated 194 units explicitly discussed here, would also be subject to **Mitigation Measures AQ-3a and AQ-3b**, similar to what is specified for the 194 new potential units. Similarly, the conclusions in the following discussion also apply to future development associated with changes to land use controls.

Toxic Air Contaminants

Diesel Particulate Matter

DPM, which is classified as a carcinogenic TAC by CARB, is the primary exhaust pollutant of concern with regard to health risks to sensitive receptors. Diesel-powered construction equipment as well as heavy-duty truck movement and hauling both onsite and offsite would emit DPM that could potentially expose nearby sensitive receptors to pollutant concentrations. For purposes of analysis, diesel PM10 exhaust emissions presented in this analysis are used as a surrogate for DPM, consistent with Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment guidance (2015). Throughout the project area, it is expected that most construction activity would occur near sensitive receptors, namely existing residential units on affected parcels and adjacent parcels. The addition of a fourth unit on the affected parcels would require construction equipment that may be close to existing units. In general, constructing single dwelling units is a low-intensity activity relative to most development projects. However, some heavy-duty equipment may be required to construct the additional housing units.

Construction activities of future development projects under the proposed project would generate DPM that could expose existing and future receptors to significant health risks. Without specific project-level information for the development of the proposed 194 units, a quantitative evaluation of potential health risk impacts is not possible at this time. Depending on the size and scale of an individual development project, along with its construction schedule and proximity to receptors, there may be instances where DPM emissions could result in cancer or non-cancer health risks that exceed PCAPCD's thresholds, resulting in a potentially significant impact.

Mitigation Measure AQ-3a would reduce emissions of DPM during project construction through measures such as off-road equipment maintenance and limits to vehicle idling. With implementation of these measures, emissions of DPM would be reduced to levels below PCAPCD's 10 in one million cancer risk threshold, and the impact would be ***less than significant with mitigation***.

Future operation of the proposed project would not result in TACs because no stationary sources are proposed, and the proposed project would not result in a significant net increase in VMT. Additionally, while the development of 194 additional residential units throughout the county would result in increased traffic, the traffic would predominantly be passenger vehicles, which is not a significant source of diesel emissions. Therefore, impacts associated with TACs would be ***less than significant*** during operation.

Mitigation Measure AQ-3a: Compliance with PCAPCD Recommended Construction Mitigation Measures

To control emissions of criteria air pollutants during construction, the project proponent/operator and/or its contractor(s) will implement the following measures during construction of the proposed residential units, subject to verification by the County:

- Maintain all construction equipment properly according to manufacturer's specifications.
- Fuel all off-road and portable diesel-powered equipment with CARB certified motor vehicle diesel fuel (non-taxed version suitable for use off-road).
- Comply with the State Off-Road Regulation by using diesel construction equipment meeting CARB's Tier 2 certified engines or cleaner off-road heavy-duty diesel engines.
- Comply with the State On-Road Regulation by using on-road heavy-duty trucks that meet the CARB's Tier 3 standard for on-road heavy-duty diesel engines.
- All on and off-road diesel equipment shall not idle for more than 5 minutes. Signs shall be posted in the designated queuing areas and/or job sites to remind drivers and operators of the 5-minute idling limit.
- Diesel idling within 1,000 feet of sensitive receptors is not permitted.
- Staging and queuing areas shall not be located within 1,000 feet of sensitive receptors.
- Use Electrified equipment when feasible.
- Substitute gasoline-powered in place of diesel-powered equipment, where feasible.
- Use alternatively fueled construction equipment on-site where feasible, such as compressed natural gas (CNG), liquefied natural gas (LNG), propane or biodiesel.
- Require contractors to repower equipment with the cleanest engines available.
- Require construction equipment use installed California Verified Diesel Emission Control Strategies. These strategies are listed at: http://www.arb.ca.gov/diesel/verdev/vt/cvt.htm
- Require the contractor to prepare a dust control plan when the disturbed area is more than one (1) acre.
- Reduce the amount of the disturbed area where possible.
- Use water trucks or sprinkler systems in sufficient quantities to prevent airborne dust from leaving the site. Increased watering frequency is required whenever wind speeds exceed 15 mph. Reclaimed (non-potable) water should be used whenever possible.
- All dirt stock-pile areas should be sprayed daily as needed.

- All roadways, driveways, sidewalks, etc. to be paved should be completed as soon as possible, with building pads laid as soon as possible after grading unless seeding or soil binders are used.

Naturally Occurring Asbestos

Review of NOA maps indicate that development under the proposed project could occur in areas that contain NOA. More specifically, residential units in the North Auburn region would be in an area that is "most likely to contain" NOA. Therefore, construction in these areas may expose sensitive receptors to NOA, and the impact could be potentially significant. For this reason, future developments in NOA areas may be subject to PCAPCD's Asbestos Airborne Toxic Control Measures and the applicable PCAPCD dust control measures. For construction and grading activities that would disturb 1 acre or less, PCAPCD's Airborne Toxic Control Measures require various measures to minimize dust emissions, including vehicle speed limitations, application of water prior to and during ground disturbance, keeping storage piles wet or covered, and track-out prevention and removal (Placer County Air Pollution Control District 2020b).

Mitigation Measure AQ-3b would require the preparation of an asbestos dust mitigation plan prior to construction that would disturb more than 1 acre in areas that are known to have NOA. The asbestos dust mitigation plan must specify how the project will minimize emissions and must address specific emission sources. Regardless of the size of the disturbance, activities must not result in emissions that visibly cross the property line. The contractor must obtain district approval of the asbestos dust mitigation plan prior to construction (Placer County Air Pollution Control District 2014).

Mitigation Measure AQ-: Discovery of Naturally Occurring Asbestos during Construction

During construction activity, if NOA, serpentine, or ultramafic rock is discovered by the owner/operator and an ADMP has not been submitted, the following measures shall be implemented. For additional information, visit the PCAPCD's website at https://www.placer.ca.gov/1621/NOA-Construction-Grading.

- When the construction area is equal to or greater than 1 acre, the applicant will prepare an ADMP and obtain approval by the PCAPCD within 14 days of the discovery of NOA, serpentine, or ultramafic rock. The applicant will contact the PCAPCD before retaining a qualified state registered geologist to conduct initial geologic evaluations as part of the ADMP application process
- Maintain the dust mitigation measures until the provisions of the PCAPCD-approved ADMP plan are implemented
- Implement the provisions of the PCAPCD-approved ADMP within 14 days of its approval
- Maintain the provisions of the PCAPCD-approved ADMP throughout the remainder of the construction or grading activity
- Each subsequent individual lot developer will prepare an ADMP when the construction area is equal to or greater than 1 acre
- The project developer and each subsequent lot seller must disclose the presence of ultramafic rock, serpentine, or NOA during any subsequent real estate transaction processes. The disclosure must include a copy of the CARB pamphlet entitled "Asbestos-

Containing Rock and Soil—What California Homeowners and Renters Need to Know," or other similar fact sheets which may be found on the PCAPCD's website (Placer County Air Pollution Control District 2020c).

With implementation of **Mitigation Measure AQ-3b** the impacts related to exposure to NOA during construction of the proposed project would be ***less than significant with mitigation***.

Localized Carbon Monoxide

CO hot-spot analyses address the implications of high short-term concentrations of CO, which typically occur at locations with high traffic volumes and congestion. For this reason, hot spots are often correlated with LOS at intersections. Due to the short-term and temporary nature of construction activities, CO emissions generated during construction of the proposed project are not anticipated to result in long-term CO hot-spot impacts. During operations, a project would result in localized CO impacts if vehicle emissions generated by the project would exceed 550 pounds per day, and if peak-hour LOS on one or more streets or at one or more intersections in the project vicinity would be degraded from an acceptable LOS to an unacceptable LOS, or if the project would substantially worsen an already existing unacceptable peak-hour LOS on one or more streets or at one or more intersections in the project vicinity.

Operation of the proposed project would result in 23 pounds of CO per day from mobile sources (see Appendix C), which is well below the 550 pounds per day threshold. Additionally, according to the project's Traffic Impact Assessment, operation of the proposed project would not result in significant LOS degradation at any street or intersection in the vicinity of the project area. Therefore, impacts related to exposure to CO hot spots would be ***less than significant***.

Localized Fugitive Dust

Excavation, grading, and other construction activities related to development of the residential units associated with the proposed project may cause wind-blown dust that could contribute PM to the local atmosphere. This dust can be an irritant, causing watery eyes or irritating the lungs, nose, and throat. Depending on exposure, PM in general can cause adverse health effects, as can specific contaminants such as lead or asbestos, which may be constituents of dust. Given that most construction activity would occur near sensitive receptors, namely existing residential units on affected parcels and adjacent parcels, the impact of fugitive dust during construction would be potentially significant.

Mitigation Measure AQ-3a would reduce emissions during project construction through compliance with PCAPCD's recommended construction mitigation measures. Several of these measures are related to control of fugitive dust emissions including preparation of a dust control plan, minimizing disturbed areas where possible, and use of water trucks or sprinkler systems. After implementation of these fugitive dust mitigation measures, the impact related to localized fugitive dust during construction of the proposed project would be ***less than significant*** with mitigation.

Regional Criteria Pollutants (ROG, NO_X, and PM)

Air quality thresholds presented in Table 3.3-4 consider existing air quality concentrations and attainment or nonattainment designations under the NAAQS and CAAQS. The NAAQS and CAAQS are informed by a wide range of scientific evidence that demonstrates there are known safe concentrations of criteria pollutants. PCAPCD considers projects that generate criteria pollutant and

O_3 precursor emissions below their thresholds to be minor in nature and would not adversely affect air quality such that the health-protective NAAQS or CAAQS would be exceeded.

As discussed under Impact AQ-2, after implementation of **Mitigation Measures AQ-2**, neither construction nor operation of the proposed project would generate ROG, NO_X, or PM10 emissions in excess of PCAPCD's thresholds. As such, the project would not be expected to contribute a significant level of air pollution that would degrade regional air quality within the PCAPCD.

While regional criteria pollutant emissions generated by the project would not result in a significant impact, the California Supreme Court's decision in *Sierra Club v. County of Fresno* (6 Cal. 5th 502) (hereafter referred to as the Friant Ranch Decision) requires environmental documents attempt to connect a project's regional air quality impacts to specific health effects or explain why it is not technically feasible to perform such an analysis. The Friant Ranch Decision reviewed the long-term, regional air quality analysis contained in the EIR for the proposed Community Plan Update and Friant Ranch Specific Plan (Friant Ranch Project). The Friant Ranch Project is a 942-acre master-plan development in unincorporated Fresno County within the San Joaquin Valley Air Basin, an air basin currently in nonattainment under the NAAQS and CAAQS for O_3 and PM2.5. The Court found that the EIR's air quality analysis was inadequate because it failed to provide enough detail "for the public to translate the bare [criteria pollutant emissions] numbers provided into adverse health impacts or to understand why such a translation is not possible at this time." Consistent with the Friant Ranch Decision, Table 3.3-8 provides a conservative estimate of potential health effects associated with proposed project emissions. The estimates were developed using SMAQMD's draft Project Health Effects Tool (version 1), which was developed to characterize health risks for projects within the Sacramento Federal Nonattainment Area (SFNA), including western Placer County (Ramboll 2019). To develop the tool, SMAQMD conducted photochemical and health effects modeling of hypothetical projects throughout the SFNA with NO_X, ROG and PM2.5 emissions at 82 pounds per day, which corresponds to the highest daily emissions threshold of all SFNA air districts, including the PCAPCD (see Table 3.3-4). The tool outputs the estimated health effects at the 82-pound-per-day emissions rate by spatial interpolating the health effects from the hypothetical projects based on user inputs for the latitude and longitude coordinates of a project.

The results presented in Table 3.3-8 are conservative because they are based on a source generating 82 pounds per day of ROG, NO_X, and PM2.5. As shown in Tables 3.3-5 and 3.3-7, maximum daily emissions during construction and operation of the proposed project are well below 82 pounds. For this reason, any increase in regional health risks associated with project-generated emissions would be less than those presented in Table 3.3-8, which are already very small increases over the background incident health effect. The impact would be ***less than significant***.

Table 3.3-8 Conservative Estimate of Increased Regional Health Effect Incidence Resulting from Construction or Operation of the Project (cases per year)

Health End Point	Age Range[a]	Mean Incidences (per year)[b]	Percent of Background Health Incidence[c]
Emergency Room Visits, Asthma	0–99	<1	<1%
Mortality, All Cause	30–99	1	<1%
Hospital Admissions, Asthma	0–64	<1	<1%
Hospital Admissions, All Cardiovascular[d]	65–99	<1	<1%
Hospital Admissions, All Respiratory	65–99	<1	<1%
Acute Myocardial Infarction, Nonfatal	18–24	<1	<1%
Acute Myocardial Infarction, Nonfatal	25–44	<1	<1%
Acute Myocardial Infarction, Nonfatal	45–54	<1	<1%
Acute Myocardial Infarction, Nonfatal	55–64	<1	<1%
Acute Myocardial Infarction, Nonfatal	65–99	<1	<1%
Hospital Admissions, All Respiratory	65–99	<1	<1%
Mortality, Non-Accidental	0–99	<1	<1%
Emergency Room Visits, Asthma	0–17	<1	<1%
Emergency Room Visits, Asthma	18–99	<1	<1%

Source: SMAQMD Minor Project Health Screening Tool, version 1, published January 2020.

Note: The analysis point is one of the example locations in the center of Placer County at 38.9569, -121.023.

[a] Affected age ranges are shown. Other age ranges are available, but the endpoints and age ranges shown here are the ones used by the USEPA in their health assessments. The age ranges are consistent with the epidemiological study that is the basis of the health function.

[b] Health effects are shown in terms of incidences of each health endpoint and how it compares to the base (2035 base year health effect incidences, or "background health incidence") values. Health effects and background health incidences are across the Northern California model domain.

[c] The percent of background health incidence uses the mean incidence. The background health incidence is an estimate of the average number of people that are affected by the health endpoint in a given population over a given period of time. In this case, these background incidence rates cover the modeled domain. Health incidence rates and other health data are typically collected by the government as well as the World Health Organization. The background incidence rates used here are obtained from BenMAP, as reported in SMAQMD's Minor Project Health Screening Tool, version 1.

[d] Less myocardial infarctions.

Impact AQ-4: Other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people (less than significant)

Although offensive odors rarely cause any physical harm, they can be unpleasant and lead to considerable distress among the public. This distress may often generate citizen complaints to local governments and air districts. Any project with the potential to frequently expose the public to objectionable odors would be deemed to have a significant impact.

According to CARB's *Air Quality and Land Use Handbook*, land uses associated with odor complaints typically include sewage treatment plants, landfills, recycling facilities, and manufacturing (California Air Resources Board 2005). Odor impacts on residential areas and other sensitive receptors, such as hospitals, day-care centers, and schools, warrant the closest scrutiny, but

consideration should also be given to other land uses where people may congregate, such as recreational facilities, work sites, and commercial areas.

Potential odor emitters during construction of the individual residential units include diesel exhaust, asphalt paving, and architectural coatings. Construction-related activities near existing receptors would be temporary in nature, and construction activities would not result in nuisance odors that would violate PCAPCD Rule 205. Potential odor emitters during operations would include exhaust from vehicles, off-road equipment, and residential cooking equipment. However, odor impacts would be limited to the circulation routes and parking areas, and would not exceed or be dissimilar to the existing odor conditions. Although such brief exhaust odors may be considered unpleasant, they would not affect a substantial number of people, and any odor-related impacts would be ***less than significant***.

3.3.3 References Cited

Printed References

California Air Resources Board 2005. *Air Quality and Land Use Handbook: A Community Health Perspective*. April. Available: http://www.arb.ca.gov/ch/landuse.htm. Accessed May 2020.

California Air Resources Board. 2019. *California Ambient Air Quality Standards*. Available: < https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/resources/california-ambient-air-quality-standards>. Accessed May 2020

California Air Resources Board. 2020a. *California Ambient Air Quality Standards*. Available: https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/resources/california-ambient-air-quality-standards. Accessed May 2020.

California Air Resources Board. 2020b. *National Ambient Air Quality Standards*. https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/resources/national-ambient-air-quality-standards. Accessed May 2020.

California Air Resources Board. 2020c. *iADAM: Air Quality Data Statistics Top 4 Summary*. Available: https://www.arb.ca.gov/adam/topfour/topfour1.php. Accessed May 2020.

Placer County. 2008. *Naturally Occurring Asbestos Hazard*. Available: https://www.placer.ca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/1435/Placer-County-Naturally-Occurring-Asbestos-Hazard---Index-Map-PDF. Accessed May 2020.

Placer County. 2013. *Placer County General Plan*. May. Available: https://www.placer.ca.gov/2977/Placer-County-General-Plan. Accessed May 2020.

Placer County. 2017. *Placer County CEQA Handbook.* Available: https://www.placer.ca.gov/1801/CEQA-Handbook. Accessed June 2020.

Placer County Air Pollution Control District. 2014. *Asbestos Dust Mitigation Plan (ADMP) Guidance*. May 21. Available: https://www.placer.ca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/1226/Naturally-Occurring-Asbestos-Dust-Mitigation-Plan-ADMP-Guidance-PDF. Accessed June 2020.

Placer County Air Pollution Control District 2017. *CEQA Handbook*. Available: https://www.placerair.org/1801/CEQA-Handbook. Accessed July 2020.

Placer County Air Pollution Control District. 2020a. *Rules*. Available: https://www.placer.ca.gov/1861/Rules. Accessed May 2020.

Placer County Air Pollution Control District. 2020b. *Dust Control for Projects in Areas "Most Likely" to Contain Naturally-Occurring Asbestos (NOA) Fact Sheet*. Available: https://www.placerair.org/DocumentCenter/View/1401/Dust-Control-for-Projects-in-Areas--Most-Likely-to-Contain-Naturally-Occurring-Asbestos-PDF. Accessed June 2020.

Placer County Air Pollution Control District. 2020c. NOA Construction & Grading. Available: https://www.placer.ca.gov/1621/NOA-Construction-Grading. Accessed July 2020.

Ramboll. 2019. *GUIDANCE TO ADDRESS THE FRIANT RANCH RULING FOR CEQA PROJECTS IN THE SAC METRO AIR DISTRICT*. December. Available: http://www.airquality.org/LandUseTransportation/Documents/SMAQMD_FriantRanch_DraftFinalPublic.pdf. Accessed May 2020.

Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District 2016. *Guide to Air Quality Assessment in Sacramento County.* Last revision August 2016.

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. 2018. *Health and Environmental Effects of Particulate Matter (PM)*. Available: <https://www.epa.gov/pm-pollution/health-and-environmental-effects-particulate-matter-pm>. Accessed May 2020.

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency 2019a. *Health Effects of Ozone Pollution*. Available: https://www.epa.gov/ground-level-ozone-pollution/health-effects-ozone-pollution. Accessed April 12, 2019.

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency 2019b. *Health Effects of Ozone In the General Population*. Available: https://www.epa.gov/ozone-pollution-and-your-patients-health/health-effects-ozone-general-population. Accessed April 12, 2019.

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency 2019c. *Health and Environmental Effects of Particulate Matter (PM)*. Available: https://www.epa.gov/pm-pollution/health-and-environmental-effects-particulate-matter-pm. Accessed April 12, 2019

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. 2020. *The Greenbook Nonattainment Areas for Criteria Pollutants*. Last updated: April 30, 2020. Available: https://www.epa.gov/green-book. Accessed: May 2020.

Personal Communications

Tokarski, David. DKS Associates. April 22, 2020—email correspondence with Erin Efner, ICF.

Chang, Yu-Shuo. Placer County Air Pollution Control District. October 21, 2020—email correspondence with Sarah Halterman, ICF.

3.4 Biological Resources

This section describes the regulatory and environmental setting for biological resources. It also describes impacts on biological resources that could result from implementation of Placer County's (County) proposed General Plan amendments, Zoning Ordinance update, and the development of design standards and guidelines for mixed-use development (project) and provides mitigation measures that would avoid and minimize these impacts, where feasible.

Key sources of information used in the preparation of this section include the following.

- Placer County General Plan, adopted 1994, updated 2013 (Placer County 2013).
- *Western Placer County Habitat Conservation Plan and Natural Community Conservation Plan* (Placer County 2018).
- Placer County Conservation Program Final Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Report (Placer County 2020)
- Placer County Natural Resources Report (Placer County Planning Department 2004).
- The California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB) (California Department of Fish and Wildlife 2020).
- California Native Plant Society's (CNPS) online Inventory of Rare and Endangered Plants of California (California Native Plant Society 2020).
- Information for Planning and Consultation (IPaC). List of threatened and endangered species within the project area (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service 2020).
- Google Earth aerial and ground-level photography (Google Earth 2020).

No comments were received in response to the Notice of Preparation regarding biological resources.

3.4.1 Existing Conditions

Regulatory Setting

Federal

Endangered Species Act

The federal Endangered Species Act (ESA) of 1973 and subsequent amendments provide for the conservation of endangered and threatened species and the ecosystems on which they depend. The two agencies that oversee ESA are the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), with jurisdiction over plants, wildlife, and resident fish, and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), with jurisdiction over anadromous fish and marine fish and mammals.

Section 7

Section 7 of ESA mandates that all federal agencies consult with USFWS and NMFS if they determine that a proposed action may affect a listed species or its habitat. The purpose of consultation with

USFWS and NMFS is to ensure that the federal agencies' actions do not jeopardize the continued existence of a listed species or destroy or adversely modify critical habitat for listed species.

Section 9

Section 9 of ESA describes activities that are prohibited. The ESA specifically prohibits the take of any fish or wildlife species listed as endangered. Take is defined as the action of or attempt to hunt, harm, harass, pursue, shoot, wound, capture, kill, trap, capture, or collect a species, or attempt to engage in any such conduct. Section 9 prohibitions also apply to threatened species unless a special rule has been defined with regard to take at the time of listing. The term harm is further defined as:

> … an act which actually kills or injures wildlife. Such act may include significant habitat modification or degradation where it actually kills or injures wildlife by significantly impairing essential behavioral patterns, including breeding, feeding or sheltering (50 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] § 17.3).

The term harass is further defined as:

> …an intentional or negligent act or omission which creates the likelihood of injury to wildlife by annoying it to such an extent as to significantly disrupt normal behavioral patterns which include, but are not limited to, breeding, feeding, or sheltering (50 CFR § 17.3).

Under Section 9 of ESA, the take prohibition applies only to wildlife and fish species. However, Section 9 does prohibit the unlawful removal and reduction to possession, or malicious damage or destruction of any endangered plant from federal land. Section 9 prohibits acts to remove, cut, dig up, damage, or destroy an endangered plant species in non-federal areas in knowing violation of any state law or in the course of criminal trespass. Candidate species and species that are proposed or under petition for listing receive no protection under Section 9.

Section 10

Section 10(a)(1)(B) of ESA involves the issuance of an incidental take permit for any non-federal action that is reasonably certain to take an endangered or threatened species. The ESA requires that applications for incidental take permits are accompanied by a habitat conservation plan (HCP). The HCP describes how the take of individuals will be offset to the maximum extent practicable by providing for the conservation of the affected species through specific mitigation measures.

Critical Habitat

Critical habitat refers to areas designated by USFWS or NMFS for the conservation of species listed as threatened or endangered under ESA. When a species is proposed for listing under ESA, USFWS or NMFS considers whether there are certain areas essential to the conservation of the species.

Critical habitat is defined in Section 3 of ESA as follows.

1. The specific areas within the geographical area occupied by a species at the time it is listed in accordance with ESA, on which are found those physical or biological features that:
    a. are essential to the conservation of the species, and
    b. may require special management considerations or protection; and
2. Specific areas outside the geographical area occupied by a species at the time it is listed, upon a determination that such areas are essential for the conservation of the species.

Any federal action (permit, license, or funding) in critical habitat requires that federal agency to consult with USFWS and/or NMFS where the action has potential to adversely modify the habitat for the species.

Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act

The Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson-Stevens Act) establishes a management system for national marine and estuarine fishery resources. This legislation requires that all federal agencies consult with NMFS regarding all actions or proposed actions permitted, funded, or undertaken that may adversely affect essential fish habitat (EFH). EFH is defined as "waters and substrate necessary to fish for spawning, breeding, feeding, or growth to maturity." The legislation states that migratory routes to and from anadromous fish spawning grounds are considered EFH. The phrase *adversely affect* refers to the creation of any effect that reduces the quality or quantity of EFH. Federal activities that occur outside EFH but may nonetheless have an effect on EFH waters and substrate must also be considered in the consultation process.

Under the Magnuson-Stevens Act, effects on habitat managed under the Pacific Coast Salmon Fishery Management Plan must also be considered. The Magnuson-Stevens Act states that consultation regarding EFH should be consolidated, where appropriate, with the interagency consultation, coordination, and environmental review procedures required by other federal statutes, such as the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act, the Clean Water Act (CWA), and ESA. EFH consultation requirements can be satisfied through concurrent environmental compliance if the lead agency provides NMFS with timely notification of actions that may adversely affect EFH, and the notification meets requirements for EFH assessments.

Migratory Bird Treaty Act

The Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) domestically implements a series of international treaties that provide for migratory bird protection. The current list of species protected by the MBTA can be found in the November 1, 2013, *Federal Register* (Fed. Reg.) (78 Fed. Reg. 65844–65864). This list contains several hundred species, including essentially all native birds. Permits for take of nongame migratory birds are only needed for specific activities, such as scientific collecting, rehabilitation, propagation, education, taxidermy, and protection of human health and safety and of personal property.

Executive Order 13186: Responsibilities of Federal Agencies to Protect Migratory Birds

Executive Order (EO) 13186 (signed January 10, 2001) directs each federal agency taking actions that would have or would likely have a negative impact on migratory bird populations to work with USFWS to develop a memorandum of understanding to promote the conservation of migratory bird populations. Protocols developed under the memorandum of understanding must include the following agency responsibilities.

- Avoid and minimize, to the extent practicable, adverse impacts on migratory bird resources when conducting agency actions.
- Restore and enhance habitat of migratory birds, as practicable.
- Prevent or abate the pollution or detrimental alteration of the environment for the benefit of migratory birds, as practicable.

The EO is designed to assist federal agencies in their efforts to comply with the MBTA; it does not constitute any legal authorization to take migratory birds.

Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act

The Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act requires consultation with USFWS, NMFS, and the state fish and wildlife agencies where the waters of any stream or other body of water are proposed, authorized, permitted, or licensed to be impounded, diverted, or otherwise controlled or modified under a federal permit or license. Consultation is undertaken for the purpose of preventing loss of and damage to wildlife resources.

Clean Water Act

The federal CWA regulates discharges of pollutants to waters of the United States and serves as the primary federal law protecting the quality of the nation's surface waters, including lakes, rivers, and coastal wetlands.

The CWA empowers the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) to set national water quality standards and effluent limitations and includes programs addressing both point-source and nonpoint-source pollution. Point-source pollution is pollution that originates or enters surface waters at a single, discrete location, such as an outfall structure or an excavation or construction site. Nonpoint-source pollution originates over a broader area and includes urban contaminants in stormwater runoff and sediment loading from upstream areas. CWA operates on the principle that all discharges into the nation's waters are unlawful unless specifically authorized by a permit; permit review is the CWA's primary regulatory tool.

Permits for Fill Placement in Waters and Wetlands (Section 404)

Under CWA Section 404, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) regulates the discharge of dredged and fill materials into waters of the United States. Waters of the United States subject to jurisdiction under CWA Section 404 are defined in USACE 1986 regulations at 33 CFR Section 328.3 and in USEPA regulations at 40 CFR Section 230.3, unless otherwise modified.

Unless an activity is exempt under Section 404(f) of the CWA, applicants must obtain a permit from USACE for all discharges of dredged or fill material into waters of the United States, including wetlands, before proceeding with a proposed activity.

Department of the Army permits issued by USACE are issued under various forms of authorization. These include individual permits that are issued following a review of individual applications and general permits that authorize a category or categories of activities in specific geographical regions or nationwide (33 CFR § 320.1(c)). General permits are Department of the Army authorizations issued on a nationwide or regional basis for a category or categories of activities when:

1. those activities are substantially similar in nature and cause only minimal individual and cumulative environmental impacts; or
2. the general permit would result in avoiding unnecessary duplication of the regulatory control exercised by another federal, state, or local agency provided it has been determined that the environmental consequences of the action are individually and cumulatively minimal. (33 CFR § 323.2(h)).

General permits issued by USACE include Regional and Programmatic General Permits issued by a division or district engineer after compliance with the procedures of 33 CFR Part 325, and Nationwide Permits, issued by regulation (33 CFR § 330) for certain specified activities nationwide. If certain conditions are met, the specified activities can take place without the need for an individual or regional permit (33 CFR § 325.5(c)(2)).

Compliance with CWA Section 404 requires compliance with several other environmental laws and regulations. USACE cannot issue an individual permit or verify the use of a general permit until the requirements of NEPA, ESA, and the National Historic Preservation Act (see Section 3.5, *Cultural Resources*) have been met. In addition, USACE cannot issue or verify any permit that may result in a discharge of a pollutant into waters of the United States until a water quality certification has been issued pursuant to CWA Section 401.

Permits for Stormwater Discharge (Section 402)

As described in Section 3.10, *Hydrology and Water Quality*, Section 402 of CWA regulates construction-related stormwater discharges to surface waters through the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) program, administered by USEPA. In California, the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) is authorized by USEPA to oversee the NPDES program through the Regional Water Quality Control Boards (Regional Water Board) (see the related discussion under *Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act*). The proposed action is within the jurisdiction of the Central Valley Regional Water Board (Central Valley Water Board).

NPDES permits are required for construction projects that disturb more than 1 acre of land. The NPDES permitting process requires the applicant to file a public notice of intent to discharge stormwater and to prepare and implement a stormwater pollution prevention plan. The stormwater pollution prevention plan includes a site map and a description of proposed construction activities. In addition, it describes the best management practices that will be implemented to prevent soil erosion and discharge of other construction-related pollutants (e.g., petroleum products, solvents, paints, cement) that could contaminate nearby water resources. Permittees are required to conduct annual monitoring and reporting to ensure that best management practices are correctly implemented and effective in controlling the discharge of stormwater-related pollutants.

Water Quality Certification (Section 401)

Under CWA Section 401, applicants for a federal license or permit to conduct activities that may result in the discharge of a pollutant into waters of the United States must obtain certification from the state in which the discharge would originate, or, if appropriate, from the interstate water pollution control agency with jurisdiction over affected waters at the point where the discharge would originate. Therefore, all projects that have a federal component and may affect state water quality (including projects that require federal agency approval, such as issuance of a Section 404 permit) must also comply with CWA Section 401.

Executive Order 11990: Protection of Wetlands

EO 11990, signed May 24, 1977, directs all federal agencies to refrain from assisting in or giving financial support to projects that encroach on publicly or privately owned wetlands. It further requires that federal agencies support a policy to minimize the destruction, loss, or degradation of wetlands. Such a project that encroaches on wetlands may not be undertaken unless the agency has determined that: (1) there are no practicable alternatives to such construction, (2) the project

includes all practicable measures to minimize harm to wetlands that would be affected by the project, and (3) the impact will be minor.

Executive Order 13112: Prevention and Control of Invasive Species

EO 13112, signed February 3, 1999, directs all federal agencies to prevent and control the introduction of invasive species in a cost-effective and environmentally sound manner. The EO established the National Invasive Species Council, which is composed of federal agencies and departments, and a supporting Invasive Species Advisory Committee composed of state, local, and private entities. In 2008, the National Invasive Species Council released an updated national invasive species management plan (National Invasive Species Council 2008) that recommends objectives and measures to implement the EO and prevent the introduction and spread of invasive species. The EO requires consideration of invasive species in NEPA analyses, including their identification and distribution, their potential impacts, and measures to prevent or eradicate them.

State

California Endangered Species Act

The California Endangered Species Act (CESA) (California Fish and Game Code §§ 2050–2116) states that all native species or subspecies of a fish, amphibian, reptile, mammal, or plant and their habitats that are threatened with extinction and those experiencing a significant decline that, if not halted, would lead to a threatened or endangered designation will be protected or preserved.

Under Section 2081 of the California Fish and Game Code, a permit from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) is required for projects that could result in the take of a species that is state-listed as threatened or endangered. Take is defined more narrowly under CESA than ESA. Under CESA, take of a species means hunt, pursue, catch, capture, or kill, or attempt to hunt, pursue, catch capture, or kill (California Fish and Game Code § 86). The state definition of take does not include harm or harass, as the definition of take under ESA does. As a result, the threshold for take under CESA is higher than that under ESA. For example, habitat modification is not necessarily considered take under CESA.

Natural Communities Conservation Planning Act

California Fish and Game Code Sections 2800–2835 detail the state's policies on the conservation, protection, restoration, and enhancement of the state's natural resources and ecosystems. The intent of the legislation is to provide for conservation planning as an officially recognized policy that can be used as a tool to eliminate conflicts between the protection of natural resources and the need for growth and development. In addition, the legislation promotes conservation planning as a means of coordination and cooperation among private interests, agencies, and landowners, and as a mechanism for multispecies and multihabitat management and conservation. The development of natural community conservation plans (NCCP) is an alternative to obtaining take authorization under Section 2081 of the California Fish and Game Code. The Placer County Conservation Program (PCCP) discussed below is currently in draft form and could take effect during the life of the proposed project.

California Native Plant Protection Act

California Fish and Game Code Sections 1900–1913 codify the Native Plant Protection Act of 1977 (NPPA), which is intended to preserve, protect, and enhance endangered or rare native plants in the state. Under Section 1901, a species is endangered when its prospects for survival and reproduction are in immediate jeopardy from one or more causes. A species is rare when, although not threatened with immediate extinction, it exists in such small numbers throughout its range that it may become endangered if its present environment worsens. The NPPA gave the California Fish and Game Commission the power to designate native plants as endangered or rare, and the NPPA protected endangered and rare plants from take. According to CDFW, a CESA Section 2081 permit for incidental take of listed threatened and endangered plants from all activities is required, except for activities specifically authorized by the NPPA. Because rare plants are not included under CESA, mitigation measures for impacts on rare plants are specified in a formal agreement between CDFW and the project proponent.

California Fish and Game Code Section 1600 (Lake and Streambed Alteration)

Sections 1600–1603 of the California Fish and Game Code state that it is unlawful for any person or agency to substantially divert or obstruct the natural flow or substantially change the bed, channel, or bank of any river, stream, or lake in California that supports wildlife resources, or to use any material from the streambeds, without first notifying CDFW. A lake and streambed alteration agreement (LSAA) must be obtained if effects are expected to occur. A stream is a body of water that flows at least periodically or intermittently through a bed or channel having banks, and that supports wildlife, fish, or other aquatic life. This definition includes watercourses having a surface or subsurface flow that supports or has supported riparian vegetation. CDFW's jurisdiction within altered or artificial waterways is based on the value of those waterways to fish and wildlife.

California Fish and Game Code—Various Sections

The California Fish and Game Code provides protection from take for a variety of species. Section 5050 prohibits take of fully protected amphibians and reptiles. Section 3515 prohibits take of fully protected fish species. Eggs and nests of all birds are protected under Section 3503, nesting birds (including raptors and passerines) are protected under Sections 3503.5 and 3513, birds of prey are protected under Section 3503.5, and fully protected birds are listed under Section 3511. Migratory nongame birds are protected under Section 3800. Fully protected mammals are listed under Section 4700. The California Fish and Game Code defines take as "hunt, pursue, catch, capture, or kill, or attempt to hunt, pursue, catch, capture, or kill." Except for take related to scientific research, all take of fully protected species is prohibited. CDFW cannot issue a take permit for fully protected species, except under narrow conditions for scientific research or the protection of livestock, or if an NCCP has been adopted.

California Food and Agriculture Code

More than 30 different sections of the California Food and Agriculture Code pertain to the state's mandate to prevent the introduction and spread of injurious animal pests, plant diseases, and noxious weeds. Most of these statutes and their associated regulations (Title 3 of the California Code of Regulations) are contained in Food and Agriculture Code Sections 403, 461, 5004, 5021–5027, 5301–5310, 5321–5323, 5401–5404, 5421, 5430–5432, 5434, 5761–5763, 7201, 7206–7207, and 7501–7502. These codes describe procedures and regulations concerning: plant quarantines, regulation of noxious weed seed, emergency pest eradications to protect agriculture, pests as public

nuisances, vectors of infestation and infection, the sale, transport and propagation of noxious weeds, and the protection of native species and forests from weeds. California Department of Food and Agriculture enforces most of these statutes and their relevant regulations. Construction and restoration activities associated with the project must meet the pest and vector control requirements of this code.

Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act

Under the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act (Porter-Cologne Act) definition, waters of the state are "any surface water or groundwater, including saline waters, within the boundaries of the state." Although all waters of the United States that are within the borders of California are also waters of the state, the reverse is not true. Therefore, California retains authority to regulate discharges of waste into any waters of the state, regardless of whether USACE has concurrent jurisdiction under CWA Section 404, and defines discharges to receiving waters more broadly than the CWA does. Revised definitions for state wetlands and procedures for permitting impacts on these wetlands were recently adopted by the State Water Board (State Water Resources Control Board 2019).

Waters of the state fall under the jurisdiction of the nine Regional Water Boards. The Roseville, Loomis/Newcastle, and Auburn/Bowman areas are under the jurisdiction of the Central Valley Water Board, and the eastern county area is under the jurisdiction of the Lahontan Regional Water Board. Under the Porter-Cologne Act, each Regional Water Board must prepare and periodically update water quality control basin plans. The basin plan that is in place for the Central Valley Water Board is the Sacramento River Basin and San Joaquin River Basin Water Quality Control Plan, and the basin plan for the Lahontan Regional Water Board is the Lahontan Basin Plan. Each basin plan sets forth water quality standards for surface water and groundwater, as well as actions to control nonpoint and point sources of pollution. California Water Code Section 13260 requires any person discharging waste, or proposing to discharge waste, in any region that could affect the waters of the state to file a report of discharge (an application for waste discharge requirements) with the applicable Regional Water Board. California Water Code Section 13050 authorizes the State Water Board and the affiliated Regional Water Board to regulate biological pollutants. Aquatic invasive plants discharged to receiving waters are an example of this kind of pollutant. Construction and restoration activities associated with the action alternatives that may discharge wastes into the waters of the state must meet the discharge control requirements of the Porter-Cologne Act.

California Wetlands Conservation Policy

The goals of the California Wetlands Conservation Policy, adopted in 1993 (Executive Order W-59-93), are "to ensure no overall net loss, and achieve a long-term net gain in the quantity, quality, and permanence of wetlands acreage and values in California, in a manner that fosters creativity, stewardship, and respect for private property;" to reduce procedural complexity in the administration of state and federal wetlands conservation programs; and to make restoration, landowner incentive programs, and cooperative planning efforts the primary focus of wetlands conservation.

Oak Woodlands Conservation Act

Senate Bill 1334, the Oak Woodlands Conservation Act, was enacted by the California Legislature in 2004 to add Section 21083.4 to the Public Resources Code regarding oak woodlands conservation. Section 21083.4(b) requires that a county make a determination whether a project within its

jurisdiction may result in conversion of oak woodlands that would have a significant effect on the environment. If a county determines that there may be a significant effect on oak woodlands, the county must require one or more of four oak woodlands mitigation alternatives to mitigate the significant effect of the conversion of woodlands. These alternatives are: conserving oak woodlands through conservation easements; planting an appropriate number of trees and maintaining them; contributing funds to the Oak Woodlands Conservation Fund; or other mitigation measures developed by the county. Exemptions from requirements of Public Resources Code Section 21083.4(b) include projects undertaken pursuant to an approved NCCP or approved subarea plan within an approved NCCP that includes oaks as a covered species or that conserves oak habitat through natural community conservation preserve designation and implementation and mitigation measures that are consistent with Public Resources Code Section 21083.4(b).

Local

Placer County General Plan

This section provides excerpts of the relevant goals and policies from the Placer County General Plan that pertain to biological resources (Placer County 2013).

Goal

1.I. To establish and maintain interconnected greenbelts and open spaces for the protection of native vegetation and wildlife and for the community's enjoyment.

Policies

1.I.1. The County shall require that significant natural, open space, and cultural resources be identified in advance of development and incorporated into site-specific development project design. The Planned Residential Developments (PDs) and the Commercial Planned Development (CPD) provisions of the Zoning Ordinance can be used to allow flexibility for this integration with valuable site features.

1.I.2. The County shall require that development be planned and designed to avoid areas rich in wildlife or of a fragile ecological nature (e.g., areas of rare or endangered plant species, riparian areas). Alternatively, where avoidance is infeasible or where equal or greater ecological benefits can be obtained through off-site mitigation, the County shall allow project proponents to contribute to off-site mitigation efforts in lieu of on-site mitigation.

Goal

6.A. To protect and enhance the natural qualities of Placer County's rivers, streams, creeks and groundwater.

Policies

6.A.1. The County shall require the provision of sensitive habitat buffers which shall, at a minimum, be measured as follows: 100 feet from the centerline of perennial streams, 50 feet from centerline of intermittent streams, and 50 feet from the edge of sensitive habitats to be protected, including riparian zones, wetlands, old growth woodlands, and the habitat of special status, threatened or endangered species (see discussion of sensitive habitat buffers in Part I of this Policy Document). Based on more detailed information supplied as a part of the review for a specific project or input from state or federal regulatory agency, the County may determine that such setbacks are not applicable in a particular instance of should be modified based on the new information provided. The County may, however, allow exceptions, such as in the following cases:

1. Reasonable use of the property would otherwise be denied;

2. The location is necessary to avoid or mitigate hazards to the public;
3. The location is necessary for the repair of roads, bridges, trails, or similar infrastructure; or,
4. The location is necessary for the construction of new roads, bridges, trails, or similar infrastructure where the County determines there is no feasible alternative and the project has minimized environmental impacts through project design and infrastructure placement.

6.A.2. The County shall require all development in the 100-year floodplain to comply with the provisions of the Placer County Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance.

6.A.3. The County shall require development projects proposing to encroach into a stream zone or stream setback to do one or more of the following, in descending order of desirability:

a. Avoid the disturbance of riparian vegetation;
b. Replace all functions of the existing riparian vegetation (on-site, in-kind);
c. Restore another section of stream (in-kind); and/or
d. Pay a mitigation fee for in-kind restoration elsewhere (e.g., mitigation banks).

6.A.4. Where stream protection is required or proposed, the County should require public and private development to:

a. Preserve stream zones and stream setback areas through easements or dedications. Parcel lines (in the case of a subdivision) or easements (in the case of a subdivision or other development) shall be located to optimize resource protection. If a stream is proposed to be included within an open space parcel or easement, allowed uses and maintenance responsibilities within that parcel or easement should be clearly defined and conditioned prior to map or project approval;
b. Designate such easement or dedication areas (as described in a. above) as open space;
c. Protect stream zones and their habitat value by actions such as: 1) providing an adequate stream setback, 2) maintaining creek corridors in an essentially natural state, 3) employing stream restoration techniques where restoration is needed to achieve a natural stream zone, 4) utilizing riparian vegetation within stream zones, and where possible, within stream setback areas, 5) prohibiting the planting of invasive, nonnative plants (such as Vinca major and eucalyptus) within stream zones or stream setbacks, and 6) avoiding tree removal within stream zones;
d. Provide recreation and public access near streams consistent with other General Plan policies;
e. Use design, construction, and maintenance techniques that ensure development near a creek will not cause or worsen natural hazards (such as erosion, sedimentation, flooding, or water pollution) and will include erosion and sediment control practices such as: 1) turbidity screens and other management practices, which shall be used as necessary to minimize siltation, sedimentation, and erosion, and shall be left in place until disturbed areas; and/or are stabilized with permanent vegetation that will prevent the transport of sediment off site; and 2) temporary vegetation sufficient to stabilize disturbed areas.
f. Provide for long-term stream zone maintenance by providing a guaranteed financial commitment to the County which accounts for all anticipated maintenance activities.

6.A.5. The County shall continue to require the use of feasible and practical best management practices (BMPs) to protect streams from the adverse effects of construction activities and urban runoff and to encourage the use of BMPs for agricultural activities.

6.A.6. The County shall require development projects to comply with the municipal and construction stormwater permit requirements of the Federal Clean Water Act National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Phase I and II programs and the State General Municipal and

Construction permits. Municipal requirements affecting project design and construction practices are enacted through the County's Stormwater Quality Ordinance. Separate construction permits may be required by and obtained through the State Water Resources Control Board.

6.A.7. All new development and redevelopment projects shall be designed so as to minimize the introduction of pollutants into stormwater runoff, to the maximum extent practicable, as well as minimize the amount of runoff through the incorporation of appropriate Best Management Practices.

6.A.8 The County shall support implementation of Low Impact Development site design and Watershed Process Management requirements for new and redevelopment projects in accordance with the NPDES Phase I and II programs, and applicable NPDES permits.

6.A.9. The County shall require that natural watercourses be integrated into new development in such a way that they are accessible to the public and provide a positive visual element.

6.A.10. The County shall discourage grading activities during the rainy season, unless adequately mitigated, to avoid sedimentation of creeks and damage to riparian habitat.

6.A.11. Where the stream zone has previously been modified by channelization, fill, or other human activity, the County shall require project proponents to restore such areas by means of landscaping, revegetation, or similar stabilization techniques as a part of development activities.

6.A.12. The County shall require that newly-created parcels include adequate space outside of watercourses' setback areas to ensure that property owners will not place improvements (e.g., pools, patios, and appurtenant structures), within areas that require protection.

Goal

6.B. To protect wetland communities and related riparian areas throughout Placer County as valuable resources.

Policies

6.B.1. The County shall support the "no net loss" policy for wetland areas regulated by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife. Coordination with these agencies at all levels of project review shall continue to ensure that appropriate mitigation measures and the concerns of these agencies are adequately addressed.

6.B.2. The County shall require new development to mitigate wetland loss in both federal jurisdictional and non-jurisdictional wetlands to achieve "no net loss" through any combination of the following, in descending order of desirability: (1) avoidance; (2) where avoidance is not possible, minimization of impacts on the resource; or (3) compensation, including use of a mitigation and conservation banking program that provides the opportunity to mitigate impacts to special status, threatened, and endangered species and/or the habitat which supports these species in wetland and riparian areas. Non-jurisdictional wetlands may include riparian areas that are not federal “waters of the United States” as defined by the Clean Water Act.

6.B.3. The County shall discourage direct runoff of pollutants and siltation into wetland areas from outfalls serving nearby urban development. Development shall be designed in such a manner that pollutants and siltation will not significantly adversely affect the value or function of wetlands.

6.B.4. The County shall strive to identify and conserve remaining upland habitat areas adjacent to wetlands and riparian areas that are critical to the survival and nesting of wetland and riparian species.

6.B.5. The County shall require development that may affect a wetland to employ avoidance, minimization, and/or compensatory mitigation techniques. In evaluating the level of compensation to be required with respect to any given project, (a) on-site mitigation shall be preferred to off-site, and in-kind mitigation shall be preferred to out-of-kind; (b) functional replacement ratios may vary to the extent necessary to incorporate a margin of safety reflecting the expected degree of success associated with the mitigation plan; and (c) acreage replacement ratios may vary depending on the

relative functions and values of those wetlands being lost and those being supplied, including compensation for temporal losses. The County shall continue to implement and refine criteria for determining when an alteration to a wetland is considered a less-than significant impact under CEQA.

Goal

6.C. To protect, restore, and enhance habitats that support fish and wildlife species so as to maintain populations at viable levels.

Policies

6.C.1. The County shall identify and protect significant ecological resource areas and other unique wildlife habitats critical to protecting and sustaining wildlife populations. Significant ecological resource areas include the following:

a. Wetland areas including vernal pools.

b. Stream zones.

c. Any habitat for special status, threatened, or endangered animals or plants.

d. Critical deer winter ranges (winter and summer), migratory routes and fawning habitat.

e. Large areas of non-fragmented natural habitat, including blue oak woodlands, valley foothill and montane riparian, valley oak woodlands, annual grasslands, and vernal pool/grassland complexes.

f. Identifiable wildlife movement zones, including but not limited to, non-fragmented stream environment zones, avian and mammalian migratory routes, and known concentration areas of waterfowl within the Pacific Flyway.

g. Important spawning and rearing areas for anadromous fish.

6.C.2. The County shall require development in areas known to have particular value for wildlife to be carefully planned and, where possible, located so that the reasonable value of the habitat for wildlife is maintained.

6.C.3. The County shall encourage the control of residual pesticides to prevent potential damage to water quality, vegetation, fish, and wildlife.

6.C.4. The County shall encourage private landowners to adopt sound fish and wildlife habitat management practices, as recommended by California Department of Fish and Wildlife officials, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the National Marine Fisheries Service, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and the Placer County Resource Conservation District.

6.C.5. The County shall require mitigation for development projects where isolated segments of stream habitat are unavoidably altered. Such impacts should be mitigated on-site with in-kind habitat replacement or elsewhere in the stream system through stream or riparian habitat restoration work where it is clear that offsite replacement provides greater functions and values than onsite replacement.

6.C.6. The County shall support preservation of the habitats of threatened, endangered, and/or other special status species. Where County acquisition and maintenance is not practicable or feasible, federal and state agencies, as well as other resource conservation organizations, shall be encouraged to acquire and manage endangered species' habitats.

6.C.7. The County shall support the maintenance of suitable habitats for all indigenous species of wildlife, without preference to game or non-game species, through maintenance of habitat diversity.

6.C.8. The County shall support the preservation or reestablishment of fisheries in the rivers and streams within the County, whenever possible.

6.C.9. The County shall require new private or public developments to preserve and enhance existing riparian habitat unless public safety concerns require removal of habitat for flood control or other essential public purposes (See Policy 6.A.1.). In cases where new private or public development results in modification or destruction of riparian habitat the developers shall be responsible for acquiring, restoring, and enhancing at least an equivalent amount of like habitat within or near the project area.

6.C.10. The County will use the California Wildlife Habitat Relationships (WHR) system as a standard descriptive tool and guide for environmental assessment in the absence of a more detailed site-specific system.

6.C.11. Prior to approval of discretionary development permits involving parcels within a significant ecological resource area, the County shall require, as part of the environmental review process, a biotic resources evaluation of the sites by a wildlife biologist, the evaluation shall be based upon field reconnaissance performed at the appropriate time of year to determine the presence or absence of special status, threatened, or endangered species of plants or animals. Such evaluation will consider the potential for significant impact on these resources, and will identify feasible measures to mitigate such impacts or indicate why mitigation is not feasible. In approving any such discretionary development permit, the decision-making body shall determine the feasibility of the identified mitigation measures.

Significant ecological resource areas shall, at a minimum, include the following:

a. Wetland areas including vernal pools.

b. Stream zones.

c. Any habitat for special status, threatened or endangered animals or plants.

d. Critical deer winter ranges (winter and summer), migratory routes and fawning habitat.

e. Large areas of non-fragmented natural habitat, including blue oak woodlands, valley foothill and montane riparian, valley oak woodlands, annual grasslands, vernal pool/grassland complexes habitat.

f. Identifiable wildlife movement zones, including but not limited to, non-fragmented stream environment zones, avian and mammalian migratory routes, and known concentration areas of waterfowl within the Pacific Flyway.

g. Important spawning and rearing areas for anadromous fish.

6.C.12. The County shall cooperate with, encourage, and support the plans of other public agencies to acquire fee title or conservation easements to privately-owned lands in order to preserve important wildlife corridors and to provide habitat protection of California Species of Concern and state or federally listed threatened, or endangered plant and animal species, or any species listed in an implementing agreement for a habitat conservation plan and natural communities conservation plan.

6.C.13. The County shall support and cooperate with efforts of other local, state, and federal agencies and private entities engaged in the preservation and protection of significant biological resources from incompatible land uses and development. Significant biological resources include endangered or threatened species and their habitats, wetland habitats, wildlife migration corridors, and locally important species/communities.

6.C.14. The County shall support the management efforts of the California Department of Fish and Wildlife to maintain and enhance the productivity of important fish and game species (such as the Blue Canyon and Loyalton Truckee deer herds) by protecting important natural communities for these species from incompatible urban/suburban, rural residential, agricultural, or recreational development.

Goal

6.D. To preserve and protect the valuable vegetation resources of Placer County.

Policies

6.D.1. The County shall encourage landowners and developers to preserve the integrity of existing terrain and natural vegetation in visually-sensitive areas such as hillsides, ridges, and along important transportation corridors.

6.D.2. The County shall require developers to use native and compatible nonnative species, especially drought-resistant species, to the extent possible in fulfilling landscaping requirements imposed as conditions of discretionary permits or for project mitigation.

6.D.3. The County shall support the preservation of outstanding areas of natural vegetation, including, but not limited to, oak woodlands, riparian areas, and vernal pools.

6.D.4. The County shall ensure that landmark trees and major groves of native trees are preserved and protected. In order to maintain these areas in perpetuity, protected areas shall also include younger vegetation with suitable space for growth and reproduction.

6.D.5. The County shall establish procedures for identifying and preserving special status, threatened, and endangered plant species that may be adversely affected by public or private development projects.

6.D.6. The County shall ensure the conservation of sufficiently large, continuous expanses of native vegetation to provide suitable habitat for maintaining abundant and diverse wildlife.

6.D.7. The County shall support the management of wetland and riparian plant communities for passive recreation, groundwater recharge, nutrient catchment, and wildlife habitats. Such communities shall be restored or expanded, where possible.

6.D.8. The County shall require that new development preserve natural woodlands to the maximum extent possible.

6.D.9. The County shall require that development on hillsides be limited to maintain valuable natural vegetation, especially forests and open grasslands, and to control erosion.

6.D.10. The County shall encourage the planting of native trees, shrubs, and grasslands in order to preserve the visual integrity of the landscape, provide habitat conditions suitable for native wildlife, and ensure that a maximum number and variety of well-adapted plants are maintained.

6.D.11. The County shall support the continued use of prescribed burning, mastication, chipping, and other methods to mimic the effects of natural fires to reduce fuel loads and associated fire hazard to human residents and to enhance the health of biotic communities.

6.D.12. The County shall support the retention of vegetated corridors, consistent with Fire Safe Practices, along circulation routes in order to preserve their rural character.

6.D.13. The County shall support the preservation of native trees and the use of native, drought-tolerant plant materials in all revegetation/landscaping projects.

6.D.14. The County shall require that new development avoid ecologically-fragile areas (e.g., areas of special status, threatened, or endangered species of plants, and riparian areas). Where feasible, these areas should be protected through public or private acquisition of fee title or conservation easements to ensure protection.

Goal

6.E. To preserve and enhance open space lands to maintain the natural resources of the County.

Policies

6.E.1. The County shall support the preservation and enhancement of natural land forms, natural vegetation, and natural resources as open space to the maximum extent feasible. The County shall permanently protect, as open space, areas of natural resource value, including wetlands, riparian corridors, unfragmented woodlands, and floodplains.

6.E.2. The County shall require that new development be designed and constructed to preserve the following types of areas and features as open space to the maximum extent feasible:

a. High erosion hazard areas;

b. Scenic and trail corridors;

c. Streams, riparian vegetation;

d. Wetlands;

e. Significant stands of vegetation;

f. Wildlife corridors; and

g. Any areas of special ecological significance.

6.E.3. The County shall support the maintenance of open space and natural areas that are interconnected and of sufficient size to protect biodiversity sustain viable populations, accommodate wildlife movement, and sustain ecosystems.

6.E.4. The County shall coordinate with local, state, and federal agencies and private organizations to establish visual and physical links among open space areas. Where appropriate, these open space areas are to be connected by scenic corridors, wildlife corridors, and trails. Dedication of easements shall be encouraged, and in many cases, required as lands are developed and built.

Placer Legacy Program

Adopted in June 2000, the Placer Legacy Open Space and Agricultural Conservation Program (Placer Legacy) is a program of Placer County to protect and conserve open space and agricultural lands. The program has been developed to implement the goals, policies, and programs of the Placer County General Plan by meeting a number of objectives.

1. Maintain a viable agricultural segment of the economy.
2. Conserve natural features necessary for access to a variety of outdoor recreation opportunities.
3. Retain important scenic and historic areas.
4. Preserve the diversity of plant and animal communities.
5. Protect endangered and other special-status plant and animal species.
6. Separate urban areas into distinct communities, and ensure public safety.

Placer Legacy comprises four primary areas of program work: program startup; natural resource conservation planning activities; program implementation (acquisition, monitoring, development and maintenance); and public outreach.

Program start-up activities included preparing an implementation plan to direct program activities and assembling staff to implement the program. This phase of the program is completed.

Natural resource conservation planning activities involve realizing program objectives through long-range planning efforts, such as watershed planning and the PCCP.

Program implementation activities consist of purchasing properties and conservation easements, monitoring acquired properties and easements, making improvements to acquired properties for public access, stream and creek restoration projects, and maintaining county parks and trails. This component of the program involves working with “willing-seller” property owners to ensure that the potential land acquisition meets the goals of the Placer Legacy program as well as the needs of

the property owners. Some improvements entail constructing trails and staging areas, providing restrooms and picnic facilities, and improving road access. Maintenance activities on some properties consist of the installation of field fencing, clearing plant debris, clearing brush to reduce wildfire risk, and ensuring safe use for the public.

Public outreach activities consist of educating the public about the Placer Legacy program through publications, billboards, and ongoing media stories; and giving presentations to the Board of Supervisors and interested stakeholders at meetings, workshops, forums, and events.

Placer County Conservation Program

The PCCP covers approximately 200,000 acres of western Placer County, including important natural communities such as stream environments, vernal pool grasslands, blue oak and valley oak woodlands, and agricultural lands. The PCCP analyzes the biological resources within the plan area and identifies a conservation strategy reflecting the geography of natural communities and covered species. The PCCP includes two integrated programs: a joint NCCP and HCP that will protect, enhance, and restore natural resources within western Placer County while providing a mechanism for development projects to meet requirements under ESA, CESA, CWA, and the California Natural Community and Conservation Planning Act. The overall goal of the program is to ensure full compliance with federal, state, and county laws while making the permit application process more efficient, and to improve the quality of environmental mitigation measures for sensitive species occurring in the county. In December 2018, Placer County released a Draft of the PCCP.

Placer County Tree Preservation Ordinance

Placer County's Tree Preservation Ordinance provides protection for trees in unincorporated areas within the county. The ordinance requires locating and characterizing protected trees to provide the data needed to prepare a formal protected tree report and subsequent tree removal permit. A formal protected tree report is required before a tree can be removed. This ordinance states that "no person, firm, corporation or county agency shall conduct any development activities within the protected zone of any protected tree on public or private land, or harm, destroy, kill or remove any protected tree unless authorized by a tree permit." Under the ordinance, a protected tree is defined as the following.

- A tall woody plant native to California (excluding foothill pines and plants that are typically shrubs), with a single main stem or trunk at least 6 inches diameter at breast height (dbh), or a multiple trunk with an aggregate of at least 10 inches dbh.
- All native trees regardless of size within riparian zones. A riparian zone is defined as any area within 50 feet from the centerline of a seasonal creek or stream; any area 100 feet from the centerline of a year-round creek, stream, or river; and any area within 100 feet of the shoreline of a pond, lake, or reservoir.
- All landmark trees. A landmark tree is defined as a tree or grove of trees designated by resolution of the County Board of Supervisors to be of historical or cultural value, an outstanding specimen, an unusual species and/or of significant community benefit. Landmark trees may include nonnative species.

Trees may be exempted from permitting requirements under several circumstances, including trees (1) that have been identified by an arborist, forester, or county arborist/licensed landscape architect

as "dying" or "unhealthy," (2) dead trees, or (3) trees that are in a hazardous condition presenting an immediate danger to health and property.

Under the ordinance, the County may require replacement plantings that can be based on an inch-for-inch replacement. Replacement plantings may be planted onsite and/or other offsite locations. Maintenance and irrigation is required for 3 years. Alternatively, if the project area is not large enough to support the replacement plantings, the County may require implementation of a revegetation plan or an in-lieu payment of the installation cost into the County's Tree Preservation Fund. Since 2007, the County has also required project proponents to contribute to the conservation of land versus implementing an onsite compensatory replacement planting plan when conditions for onsite replacement are not favorable to woodland restoration.

Environmental Setting

Topography

The project area includes portions of the Sacramento Valley, Sierra Nevada foothills, and Sierra Nevada Mountains. Placer County covers an elevational gradient from the Sacramento Valley to the crest of the Sierra Nevada. Elevations in the four areas are in the following approximate ranges:

- Roseville area: 150 feet above mean sea level (amsl) to 200 feet amsl
- Loomis/Newcastle area: 400 feet amsl to 880 feet amsl
- Auburn/Bowman area: 1,200 feet amsl to 1,500 feet amsl
- Eastern county area: 5,960 feet amsl to 7,080 feet amsl

Soils

Soil conditions are generally correlated with landforms. On the valley terraces, most soils are well drained, moderately deep to deep over an impermeable claypan or hardpan, with a sandy loam or loam surface layer and a dense clay subsoil. The soils on alluvial bottoms are very deep, with a sandy loam or loam surface layer and a sandy loam to clay subsoil. At higher elevations in the foothills, the soils are generally well-drained sandy loams and loams derived from metamorphic and volcanic parent materials. In the Sierra Nevada, soils are granitic in origin, very shallow to deep, well drained or somewhat excessively drained, and loamy or sandy.

The soil survey of western Placer County identifies numerous named associations that vary by texture and composition (Natural Resources Conservation Service 2019). Several general soil types relevant to sensitive biological resources are hydric soils, drainageway alluvial soils, Mehrten formation soils, serpentine soils, and foothill soil associations.

Several soil types in the Roseville area are hydric soils that have dense subsurface clay and hardpan layers that impede water percolation and, therefore, are seasonally saturated. These soils often support vernal pools and other seasonal wetlands, especially when located in topographic depressions that hold water into the dry season.

Drainageway alluvial soils are well-drained and range from sandy loams to soils developed by repeated deposition of sediment during periodic floods. In the Roseville and Loomis/Newcastle areas in western Placer County, these soils are usually dry at the surface during summer, but the depth to groundwater is shallow enough that they tend to support riparian vegetation.

Mehrten formation soils can support distinct biotic communities. The underlying volcanic rock is impermeable or very slowly permeable, and vernal pools form in the depressions. In the Loomis/Newcastle area in western Placer County, northern volcanic mudflow vernal pools are restricted to the Mehrten formation.

Many of California's rare plants and unusual natural communities occur on serpentine soils, a chemically hostile substrate that helps better adapted native plants to resist competition from nonnative invasive species. Serpentine soils are found in small patches around Foresthill, between Auburn and Colfax, and in isolated areas of the Tahoe National Forest. A band of ultramafic rock also runs north from Auburn and east of State Route 49. These areas may correlate with the Auburn/Bowman area.

The more varied geology and topography of the foothills in the Loomis/Newcastle area give rise to numerous soil types that vary in texture, depth, and slope. These soil types support mosaics of oak woodland.

Climate

The Roseville, Loomis/Newcastle, and Auburn/Bowman areas have a Mediterranean climate characterized by hot, dry summers and cool, rainy winters. The eastern county climate has cooler summers with more precipitation than the lower elevations and cold winters, with snow.

Land Cover Types

Information on land cover types was obtained from the PCCP and Google Earth aerial and ground-level photography (Placer County 2018; Google Earth 2020). The project area contains 13 general land cover types, as listed in Table 3.4-1. This table indicates where certain land cover types occur in relation to where in Placer County future development could occur, as discussed in Chapter 2, *Project Description*, and illustrated in Figure 2-3. The mapped land cover types in the project area are generally based on the California Wildlife Habitat Relationship system used by CDFW. Descriptions of the land cover types are provided following Table 3.4-1. These descriptions contain information summarized from the PCCP.

Some of the land cover types occurring in the project area are, for the purposes of this environmental impact report, identified as sensitive natural communities. These communities are considered special status because they include specific vegetation alliances that are recognized by CDFW as of limited distribution statewide or within a county or region (CNDDB Rank of S1–S3), or because they require focused analysis under federal and state laws and regulations, as discussed in *Regulatory Setting*. Sensitive natural communities may be of special concern to resource agencies and conservation organizations for a variety of reasons, including their locally or regionally declining status or because they provide important habitat to common and special-status species. Many of these habitats are monitored and reported in the CNDDB. The land cover types in the project area that are considered sensitive natural communities are indicated by an asterisk in Table 3.4-1. In addition, depending on specific locations and conditions, some areas of the canal land cover type could be regulated and considered special-status communities.

Table 3.4-1. Land Cover Types in the Project Area

	Potential Growth Areas in Unincorporated Placer County			
Land Cover Type	**Roseville**	**Loomis/ Newcastle**	**Auburn/ Bowman**	**Eastern County**
Annual grassland	X	X	X	
Fresh emergent wetland*			X	
Wet meadow*				X
Pond*		X		X
Riverine*		X	X	X
Canal			X	
Valley foothill and montane riparian*		X		X
Oak woodland*		X	X	
Blue oak-foothill pine woodland			X	
Sierran mixed conifer				X
Mixed and montane chaparral			X	X
Rural-residential		X	X	X
Suburban	X		X	X

*Sensitive natural community.

Annual Grassland

In western Placer County, annual grasslands occur naturally at the lower elevations below 300 feet. Annual grasslands in the Roseville, Loomis/Newcastle, and Auburn/Bowman areas are dominated by nonnative grasses and forbs, with few trees. Annual grasslands occur in the understory of oak woodlands, in openings in oak–foothill pine woodland, and foothill chaparral land cover types.

Fresh Emergent Wetland

Fresh emergent wetland occurs in the Loomis/Newcastle and eastern county areas. This wetland is characterized by tall, perennial grass-like plants that are rooted in soils and permanently or seasonally flooded or inundated. They are often associated with small human-made ponds and natural drainage ways that are enhanced by intentional or unintentional releases of irrigation water. Fresh emergent wetland can also occur as a fringe around ponds where the slopes are gentle enough to create a rim of shallow water and where water levels do not fluctuate widely. Unmaintained roadside ditches can also support emergent wetland. Small emergent wetlands can also be found along low-gradient reaches of streams in backwater areas or ponded overflow channels.

Wet Meadow

Wet meadows may occur in the eastern county area. Wet meadows are seasonally wet areas in shallow basins and in forest openings that support herbaceous wetland species, such as sedges (*Carex* spp.) and rushes (*Juncus* spp.). They may occur as transitional zones between fresh emergent wetlands and grassland in small shallow valleys that are gradually exposed as water levels fall during the dry season. Individual wetlands are typically small, and most occur within forest communities.

Pond

Ponds in the project area include an artificial off-stream impoundment in the Loomis/Newcastle area and natural ponds in the eastern county area. Ponds typically occur on relatively flat land and are shallow, with a perimeter that expands or contracts substantially based on the water depth. This variable fringe of the pond creates conditions that can allow the formation of fresh emergent wetland.

Riverine

Riverine systems occur in the Loomis/Newcastle, Auburn/Bowman, and eastern county areas and may include perennial, intermittent, and ephemeral streams, as well as canals. The larger streams in the eastern county area are perennial today and always have been perennial. Intermittent streams receive some input from groundwater discharge in addition to precipitation runoff and seasonal flow. They typically do not flow in the late summer and fall. Some streams in the project area were historically intermittent but have been changed to perennial because of inter-basin irrigation water transfers and urban runoff. Ephemeral streams receive no input from groundwater and flow only during and following storm events in response to precipitation runoff.

Valley Foothill and Montane Riparian

In the Loomis/Newcastle and Auburn/Bowman areas, valley foothill riparian communities of varying types occur along streams and canals. In the eastern county area, montane riparian communities occur along perennial and intermittent streams. Riparian communities in the project area include both the narrower definition of the habitat as stands of deciduous trees near perennial streams and the broader definition of riparian vegetation: herbs, forbs, and shrubs occurring in the riparian corridor without a woodland overstory. Along most streams in the project area, this community occurs as narrow and generally discontinuous bands of trees, rarely occurs on intermittent streams, and never occurs on ephemeral streams that flow only during storm events.

These communities are dependent on surface and subsurface water sources (e.g., groundwater) in streams and floodplains. Riparian communities are often characterized by highly variable successional stages of vegetation that are influenced by frequent disturbances associated with flooding, droughts, and grazing. Willow scrub is generally persistent but in an early successional stage that is eventually over-topped by valley oak (*Quercus lobata*), cottonwood (*Populus* sp.), or alder (*Alnus* sp.) in mature riparian communities.

Oak Woodland

Several types of oak woodland communities occur in the project area, including blue oak woodland, interior live oak woodland, valley oak woodland, and mixed oak woodland. Blue oak woodland dominates the lower elevations of western Placer County. Above elevations of approximately 1,500 feet in Placer County, blue oak woodland occurs mainly on gently sloping, well-drained, nutrient-poor dry sites where trees grow slowly. Blue oak woodland intergrades with annual grassland at lower elevations and with oak-foothill pine woodland, foothill chaparral, or ponderosa pine forest at higher elevations. CDFW considers blue oak woodland a sensitive natural community.

Interior live oak woodland has a restricted distribution in western Placer County, occurring at elevations of about 300–600 feet. Interior live oak woodland typically occurs on north-facing slopes and in drainages and stream canyons. At elevations above approximately 1,500 feet in Placer County, they occur in a wider variety of settings, from steep, rocky canyon slopes to gentle slopes or

ridges on nutrient-poor soils. Interior live oak woodland is typically interspersed with blue oak woodland.

In valley oak woodlands, large and broad-crowned valley oak trees occur in stands and blend into riparian habitats of valley oak or mixed tree species along stream courses and on active floodplains. Valley oak woodlands generally occur below elevations of 2,000 feet.

In mixed oak woodland, blue oak (*Quercus douglasii*) occurs in association with a variety of other trees, including interior live oak (*Quercus wislizeni*), canyon live oak (*Quercus chrysolepis*), Pacific madrone (*Arbutus menziesii*), tanoak (*Notholithocarpus densiflorus*), big-leaf maple (*Acer macrophyllum*), and foothill pine (*Pinus sabiniana*). Mixed oak woodland occurs throughout the foothills of the Sierra Nevada and Coast Ranges and is widespread in western Placer County, occurring at elevations of about 70–1,600 feet.

Blue Oak-Foothill Pine Woodland

Blue oak-foothill pine woodland occurs in the Auburn/Bowman area at elevations of about 190–1,600 feet. Blue oak-foothill pine woodland intergrades with oak woodland or foothill chaparral. These woodlands occur as open park-like stands that are usually dominated by scattered blue oak or interior live oak, with foothill pine occurring sparsely on the more shallow and rocky soils. Blue oak-foothill pine woodland usually has an understory of shrubs and an herbaceous layer dominated by nonnative annual grasses. Where the woodland is a dense mix of foothill pine, interior live oak, blue oak, and black oak (*Quercus kelloggii*), the shrub layer is more developed and the herbaceous layer sparser.

Sierran Mixed Conifer

Sierran mixed conifer communities occur throughout the eastern county area, although individual DUs may have more specific forest communities, such as white fir (*Abies concolor*), red fir (*Abies magnifica*), or lodgepole pine (*Pinus contorta*). Sierran mixed conifer forests may include white fir, Douglas-fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*), ponderosa pine (*Pinus ponderosa*), sugar pine (*Pinus lambertiana*), incense-cedar (*Calocedrus decurrens*), and black oak. The understory is generally a sparse herbaceous layer, with shrubs in more open stands.

Mixed and Montane Chaparral

Chaparral communities include successional habitats in mixed oak woodland in the Auburn/Bowman area and Sierran mixed conifer forest in the eastern county area. Chaparral communities in are characterized by high topographic and geologic diversity. Mixed and montane chaparral are shrub-dominated communities, although scattered pines or oaks may occur. Mixed chaparral occurs sparsely, intermixed with the various woodland land cover types. Chaparral often occurs in settings that are too hot, dry, rocky, and steep to support tree-dominated habitats. It generally occurs on south-facing slopes, transitioning to oak woodland or ponderosa pine forest on north-facing slopes.

Rural-Residential

Rural-residential areas are present in all areas, except the Roseville area. Rural-residential includes small pockets of remnant oak woodland land cover types, often with shrubs and lower branches cleared to reduce fuel loads and small paddocks grazed by a variety of livestock. Large residential lots may have most of the native vegetation removed and replaced with mowed annual grassland,

lawns, and widely scattered trees; such management techniques are often intended to reduce the risk of fire. Small patches of orchard also appear to be present in this cover type in the Auburn/Bowman area. Undeveloped lots or the natural portion of developed lots support remnant patches of mature oak woodland land cover types.

Suburban

Suburban areas include residential, community parks, and related uses. Ornamental plantings in the Roseville and Auburn/Bowman areas are often introduced evergreen and deciduous trees that may be as old as 100 years. These ornamental species range from approximately 20 to 50 feet high at maturity and are typically much smaller and younger than the occasional remnant oaks and pines in these neighborhoods. Suburban neighborhoods that were built in the last 40 or 50 years tend to have younger or smaller trees and less structural diversity than older neighborhoods. In foothill suburban areas, mature native oaks and pines are also present between the buildings. Intensively developed areas with highly manicured yards typically have very low wildlife habitat values. Small lawns and mature hedges in urban and suburban areas include many introduced fruiting species that may be attractive to birds and other wildlife.

Special-Status Species

Special-status species are defined as plants and animals that are legally protected under ESA, CESA, or other regulations and taxa that meet the criteria for listing, even if not currently included on any list, as described in Section 15380 of the CEQA Guidelines. Special-status species are species, subspecies, or varieties that fall into one or more of the categories listed below.

- Species that are listed or proposed for listing as threatened or endangered under ESA.
- Species that are candidates for listing under ESA.
- Species listed as threatened or endangered under CESA.
- Species that are candidates for listing under CESA.
- Species that meet the definitions of rare or endangered under CEQA (State CEQA Guidelines § 15380).
- Animals listed as California species of special concern on CDFW's Special Animals List (California Department of Fish and Wildlife 2020).
- Animals that are fully protected in California under the California Fish and Game Code (Sections 3511 [birds], 4700 [mammals], and 5050 [reptiles and amphibians]).
- Plants listed as rare under the NPPA (California Fish and Game Code § 1900 et seq.).
- Plants ranked as "rare, threatened, or endangered in California" (California Rare Plant Rank 1B and 2).
- Plants about which more information is needed to determine their status and plants of limited distribution (California Rare Plant Rank 3 and 4) that may be included as special-status species on the basis of local significance or recent biological information, or because they are taxa closely associated with a habitat that is declining at a significant rate.

Special-Status Plants

A total of 29 special-status plant species have the potential to occur in the project area (specifically, in the potential areas for growth as indicated in Figure 2-3 in Chapter 2, *Project Description*) based on known occurrence data and presence of potential habitat. Information for each species is provided in Table 3.4-2, including listing status, geographic distribution, habitat requirements, and potential for occurrence in each of the areas of growth. Many of the species are known from only one or two occurrences in the region surrounding the project area. Six species have been previously documented in or adjacent to a specific growth area:

- Dubious pea (CNDDB occurrence #2) and Brandegee's clarkia (CNDDB occurrence #61) in southeast Auburn
- Historic occurrences near Squaw Valley of Munroe's desert mallow (CNDDB occurrence #1) and Donner Pass buckwheat (CNDDB occurrence #4)
- American manna grass along the Truckee River (CNDDB occurrence #5)
- Two occurrences of alder buckhorn along SR 89 (CNDDB occurrences #1 and 19) (California Department of Fish and Wildlife 2020)

One other species, Plumas ivesia, has several CNDDB occurrences less than 1 mile from growth area in Martis Valley (California Department of Fish and Wildlife 2020).

None of the species listed in Table 3.4-2 are federally listed. One species, Boggs Lake hedge hyssop, is state listed as endangered and another species, Tahoe yellow cress, is a federal candidate for listing and is state listed as endangered.

Special-Status Fish and Wildlife

A total of 42 special-status wildlife species have the potential to occur in the project area (specifically, in the potential areas for growth as indicated in Figure 2-3 in Chapter 2, *Project Description*) based on known occurrence data and presence of potential habitat. Refer to Table 3.4-3 for a summary of legal status, distribution, habitat, and likelihood for occurrence in each of the affected areas for each of these special-status species. Special-status wildlife and fish species that have been previously documented within the vicinity of the proposed areas of growth include an historic occurrence of Sierra Nevada yellow-legged frog from Squaw Valley (CNDDB occurrence #91) and known dispersal/spawning habitat in the Truckee River and its tributaries for Lahontan cutthroat trout (CNDDB occurrence #9) in the eastern county portion of the project area (California Department of Fish and Wildlife 2020). Central Valley steelhead is known to spawn in Secret Ravine adjacent to the Loomis/Newcastle portion of the project area (CNDDB occurrence #3; California Department of Fish and Wildlife 2020).

Table 3.4-2. Special-Status Plants Identified as Potentially Occurring in the Project Area

Common Name *Scientific Name*	Legal Status[a] Federal/State/CRPR	Habitat and Distribution in California	Suitable Habitat Present in Potential Growth Areas (Yes/No)			
			Roseville	Loomis/Newcastle	Auburn/Bowman	Eastern County
Jepson's onion *Allium jepsonii*	–/–/1B.2	Serpentine or (volcanic) basalt outcrops in oak woodland, chaparral, and lower montane coniferous forest; 985–4,330 feet. Sierra Nevada foothills in Butte, El Dorado, Placer, and Tuolumne Counties.	No	No	Yes	Yes
Galena Creek rockcress *Arabis rigidissima* var. *demota*	–/–/1B.2	Rocky soils in broadleafed upland forest, upper montane coniferous forest; 7,400–8,400 feet. Martis Peak, Placer County; also Nevada.	No	No	No	Yes
Threetip sagebrush *Artemisia tripartite* ssp. *tripartite*	–/–/2B.3	Rocky, volcanic soils in openings in upper montane coniferous forest; 7,200–8,530 feet. Nevada, Placer, Plumas Counties; also Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New York, Oregon, Utah, Washington, Wyoming.	No	No	No	Yes
Austin's astragalus *Astragalus austiniae*	–/–/1B.3	Rocky substrates in alpine boulder and rock field, subalpine coniferous forest; 7,350–9,725 feet. Alpine, El Dorado, Nevada, and Placer Counties.	No	No	No	Yes
Big-scale balsamroot *Balsamorhiza macrolepis* var. *macrolepis*	–/–/1B.2	Sometimes on serpentine soils in chaparral, cismontane woodland, valley and foothill grassland; 295–5,102 feet. Scattered occurrences in the Coast Ranges and Sierra Nevada foothills.	No	Yes	Yes	No

Common Name *Scientific Name*	Legal Status[a] Federal/State/CRPR	Habitat and Distribution in California	Suitable Habitat Present in Potential Growth Areas (Yes/No)			
			Roseville	Loomis/Newcastle	Auburn/Bowman	Eastern County
Upswept moonwort *Botrychium ascendens*	–/–/2B.3	Wet areas in lower montane coniferous forest; 4,920–8,500 feet. Southern high Cascade Range, and scattered occurrences elsewhere: Butte, El Dorado, Lassen, Mono, Modoc, Plumas, Shasta, Tehama, and Tulare Counties; Idaho, Oregon, Nevada, Washington, and elsewhere.	No	No	No	Yes
Scalloped moonwort *Botrychium crenulatum*	–/–/2B.2	Lower montane coniferous forest, in moist meadows, bogs and fens, freshwater marsh, and near creeks; 4,920–8,750 feet. Scattered occurrences in mountains of California.	No	No	No	Yes
Mingan moonwort *Botrychium minganense*	–/–/2B.2	Lower montane coniferous forest, on creek banks; 4,920–7,450 feet. High Cascade Range, southern high Sierra Nevada.	No	No	No	Yes
Woolly-fruited sedge *Carex lasiocarpa*	–/–/2B.3	Lake and pond shores; 1,970–6,980 feet. High Cascade Range, northern high Sierra Nevada.	No	No	No	Yes
Davy's sedge *Carex davyi*	–/–/1B.3	Dry meadows and slopes in subalpine coniferous forest and upper montane coniferous forest; 4,920–10,500 feet. Northern and central high Sierra Nevada.	No	No	No	Yes
Hispid bird's-beak *Chloropyron molle* ssp. *hispidum*	–/–/1B.1	Meadow and seep, valley and foothill grassland, playa, on alkaline soils; below 510 feet. Central Valley in Alameda, Fresno, Kern, Merced, Placer, and Solano Counties.	No	Yes	No	No
Brandegee's clarkia *Clarkia biloba* ssp. *brandegeeae*	–/–/4.2	Chaparral, cismontane woodland, lower coniferous forest, often on road cuts; 240–3,000 feet. Northern Sierra Nevada foothills, from Butte County to El Dorado County.	No	Yes	Yes[b]	No

Common Name *Scientific Name*	Legal Status[a] Federal/State/CRPR	Habitat and Distribution in California	Suitable Habitat Present in Potential Growth Areas (Yes/No)			
			Roseville	Loomis/Newcastle	Auburn/Bowman	Eastern County
Fell-fields claytonia *Claytonia megarhiza*	–/–/2B.3	Alpine boulder and rock field, rocky or gravelly substrates in subalpine coniferous forest; 8,530–11,580 feet. Northern and central high Sierra Nevada and Warner Mountains in Alpine, Fresno, Mono, Modoc, Mariposa, Nevada, and Tuolumne Counties; Colorado, Montana, Wyoming, New Mexico, Canada.	No	No	No	Yes
Dwarf downingia *Downingia pusilla*	–/–/2B.2	Wet areas in valley and foothill grassland, vernal pools; below 1,460 feet. Inner north Coast Ranges, southern Sacramento Valley, northern and central San Joaquin Valley.	No	No	No	No
Donner Pass buckwheat *Eriogonum umbellatum* var. *torreyanum*	–/–/1B.2	Sparsely vegetated areas, on thin, rocky, volcanic soils; 6,085–8,595 feet. Northern high Sierra Nevada.	No	No	No	Yes[b]
Stinkbells *Fritillaria agrestis*	–/–/4.2	Chaparral, cismontane woodland, pinyon-juniper woodland, valley and foothill grassland, on clay or serpentinite substrate; 30–5,100 feet. At scattered localities in the Sacramento and San Joaquin Valleys, Sierra Nevada foothills, and south Coast Ranges.	No	Yes	Yes	No
Butte County fritillary *Fritillaria eastwoodiae*	–/–/3.2	Oak woodland, grassy openings in chaparral, and Ponderosa pine forest; 165–4,900 feet. Sierra Nevada foothills, from Shasta County to Yuba County.	No	Yes	Yes	No
American manna grass *Glyceria grandis*	–/–/2B.3	Bogs and fens, meadows and seeps, along streambanks and lake margins in marshes and swamps; 50–6,500 feet. Scattered occurrences along the North Coast and in the Sierra Nevada in Fresno, Humboldt, Mendocino, Mono, and Placer Counties; elsewhere.	No	Yes	Yes	Yes[b]

Common Name *Scientific Name*	Legal Status[a] Federal/State/CRPR	Habitat and Distribution in California	Suitable Habitat Present in Potential Growth Areas (Yes/No)			
			Roseville	Loomis/Newcastle	Auburn/Bowman	Eastern County
Boggs Lake hedge-hyssop *Gratiola heterosepala*	–/E/1B.2	Clay soils in areas of shallow water, lake margins of swamps and marshes, vernal pool margins; 33–7,792 feet. Inner north Coast Ranges, central Sierra Nevada foothills, Sacramento Valley, and Modoc Plateau.	No	No	No	Yes
Plumas ivesia *Ivesia serioleuca*	–/–/1B.2	Seasonally wet areas in Great Basin scrub, lower montane coniferous forest, meadows, vernal pools, usually on volcanic derived soils; 4,300–7,220 feet. Lassen, Nevada, Placer, Plumas, and Sierra Counties.	No	No	No	Yes
Red bluff dwarf rush *Juncus leiospermus* var. *leiospermus*	–/–/1B.1	Vernally mesic sites in chaparral, valley and foothill grassland, cismontane woodland; 110–3,315 feet. Shasta, Tehama, and Butte Counties.	No	No	No	No
Dubious pea *Lathyrus sulphureus* var. *argillaceus*	–/–/3	Chaparral, oak woodland; 490–903 feet. Interior north Coast Ranges, Cascade Range foothills, northern Sierra Nevada foothills.	No	Yes[b]	No	No
Legenere *Legenere limosa*	–/–/1B.1	Vernal pools; below 2,900 feet. Primarily in the lower Sacramento Valley, also from north Coast Ranges, northern San Joaquin Valley and the Santa Cruz mountains.	No	No	No	No
Long-petaled lewisia *Lewisia longipetala*	–/–/1B.3	Wet, rocky areas in alpine boulder and rock field, subalpine coniferous forest, on soils derived from granitic rock; 8,200–9,600 feet. El Dorado, Nevada, and Placer Counties.	No	No	No	No
Nuttall's ribbon-leaved pondweed *Potamogeton epihydrus*	–/–/2B.2	Shallow water of ponds, lakes, streams, and ditches; 1,210–7,120 feet. Outer north Coast Ranges, Modoc Plateau, high Sierra Nevada.	No	No	Yes	Yes

Common Name *Scientific Name*	Legal Status[a] Federal/State/CRPR	Habitat and Distribution in California	Suitable Habitat Present in Potential Growth Areas (Yes/No)			
			Roseville	Loomis/Newcastle	Auburn/Bowman	Eastern County
Alder buckthorn *Rhamnus alnifolia*	–/–/2B.2	Lower montane coniferous forest, meadows and seeps, riparian scrub, upper montane coniferous forest; 4,500–6,990 feet. Alpine, Nevada, Placer, Plumas, Sierra Counties; also Idaho, Oregon, Washington, and elsewhere.	No	No	No	Yes[b]
Tahoe yellow cress *Rorippa subumbellara*	C/E/1B.1	Lower montane coniferous forest, meadows and seeps, on decomposed granitic beaches; 6,220–6,230 feet. Lake Tahoe Basin: El Dorado, Nevada*, and Placer Counties; also adjacent Nevada.	No	No	No	Yes
Munro's desert mallow *Sphaeralcea munroana*	–/–/2B.2	Great Basin scrub; 6,560 feet. Placer County; Nevada, Oregon, and elsewhere.	No	No	No	Yes[b]
Oval-leaved viburnum *Viburnum ellipticum*	–/–/2B.3	Chaparral, cismontane woodland, and lower montane coniferous forest; 700–4,590 feet. Northwest California, San Francisco Bay Area, north and central Sierra Nevada foothills: Contra Costa, El Dorado, Fresno, Glenn, Humboldt, Mendocino, Napa, Placer, Shasta, Sonoma, and Tehama Counties; also Oregon, Washington.	No	Yes	Yes	No

Source: California Department of Fish and Wildlife 2020.

* = extirpated

? = uncertainty about distribution or identity

[a] Status explanations:

Federal

C = Candidate for listing.

– = No listing status.

State

E = Listed as endangered under CESA.
– = No listing status.

California Rare Plant Rank (CRPR)

1B = List 1B species: rare, threatened, or endangered in California and elsewhere.
2B = List 2 species: rare, threatened, or endangered in California but more common elsewhere.
3 = List 3 species: more information is needed about this plant.
4 = List 4 species: limited distribution; species on a watch list.
.1 = Seriously endangered in California (over 80% of occurrences threatened—high degree and immediacy of threat).
.2 = Fairly endangered in California (20–80% occurrences threatened).
.3 = Not very threatened in California (less than 20% of occurrences threatened/low degree and immediacy of threat or no current threats known).

[b] Species has recorded occurrence in or immediately adjacent to (i.e., less than 200 feet from) an affected area.

Table 3.4-3. Special-Status Wildlife Species Identified as Potentially Occurring in Project Area

Common Name *Scientific Name*	Legal Status[a] Federal/ State	Habitat and Distribution in California	Potential for Occurrence in Potential Growth Area (Yes/No)			
			Roseville	Loomis/Newcastle	Auburn/Bowman	Eastern County
Invertebrates						
Vernal pool fairy shrimp *Branchinecta lynchi*	FT/–	Occurs in the Central Valley from Shasta County to Tulare County and the central and southern Coast Ranges from northern Solano County to Ventura County.	Yes	No	No	No
Vernal pool tadpole shrimp *Lepidurus packardi*	FE/–	Occupies a variety of vernal pool habitats in the Central Valley of California and San Francisco Bay Area.	Yes	No	No	No
Valley elderberry longhorn beetle *Desmocerus californicus dimorphus*	FT/–	Elderberry shrubs, typically in riparian habitats. Central Valley below approximately 500 feet elevation.	Yes	Yes	No	No
Western bumble bee *Bombus occidentalis*	–/ST	Historically occurred throughout much of Northern California but currently appears to be absent from much of this area. Current known locations are high elevation sites in Northern California and a few sites on the Northern California coast. Nests underground in squirrel burrows, in mouse nests, and in open west-southwest facing slopes bordered by trees. Visits a wide variety of wildflowers. Plant genera it is most commonly associated with are *Cirsium*, *Erigonum*, *Solidago*, "Aster", *Ceonothus*, *Centaurea*, and *Penstemon*.	No	No	No	Yes
Crotch bumble bee *Bombus crotchii*	–/ST	Endemic to California. Current distribution limited to Pacific Coast, Western Desert, Central Valley, and adjacent foothill of southwestern California. Population decline pronounced in the Central Valley and is now largely absent (California Department of Fish and Wildlife 2019e). Inhabits open grasslands and shrublands in southern and central California, with occasional records in the northern portion of	Yes	Yes	Yes	No

Common Name *Scientific Name*	Legal Status[a] Federal/ State	Habitat and Distribution in California	Potential for Occurrence in Potential Growth Area (Yes/No)			
			Roseville	Loomis/Newcastle	Auburn/Bowman	Eastern County
		the state. Requires floral resources, undisturbed nest sites (e.g., abandoned rodent burrows, aboveground and belowground cavities—logs, dead vegetation/leaf litter, abandoned bird nests), and overwintering sites (e.g., soft loose soil and under leaf litter or plant debris). Uses wide variety of flowering plants and most commonly visits—*Fabaceae*, *Apocynaceae*, *Lamiaceae*, *Hydrophyllacae*, *Asclepiadaceae* and *Boraginaceae*.				
Amphibians						
Southern long-toed salamander *Ambystoma macrodactylum sigillatum*	–/SSC	Occupies mixed Sierra Nevada coniferous forest and alpine communities. Breeding occurs in permanent or temporary ponds, lakes and flooded meadows. Adults spend much of their lives underground, often utilizing the tunnels of burrowing mammals such as moles and ground squirrels.	No	No	No	Yes
Foothill yellow-legged frog *Rana boylii*	–/SE	Associated with rocky streams in valley foothill woodlands, riparian, mixed conifer, chaparral and wet meadow habitat. Require permanent water or at least streams where pools persist through the dry season. Species does occasionally use adjacent upland habitat for foraging and cover, usually within 100 meters. In California, occurs in the Cascade Mountains, the Coast Ranges, and the Sierra Nevada foothills.	No	Yes	Yes	No
Sierra Nevada yellow-legged frog *Rana sierrae*	FE/ST	Found in the Sierra Nevada above 4,500 feet. Associated with streams, lakes, and ponds in montane riparian, lodgepole pine, sub-alpine conifer, and wet meadow habitats; habitat also includes sunny river margins, meadow streams, isolated pools, and lake borders.	No	No	No	Yes

Common Name *Scientific Name*	Legal Status[a] Federal/ State	Habitat and Distribution in California	Potential for Occurrence in Potential Growth Area (Yes/No)			
			Roseville	Loomis/Newcastle	Auburn/Bowman	Eastern County
California red-legged frog *Rana draytonii*	FT/SSC	Foothill ponds and streams with emergent vegetation and open areas for basking, minimum 11–20 weeks of water for larval development, and upland refugia for aestivation. Occurs primarily in the foothills of the central Coast Ranges, with isolated populations in the Sierra Nevada.	No	Yes	Yes	No
Western spadefoot *Spea hammondii*	–/SSC	In winter, breeds in vernal pools and seasonal wetlands with a minimum 3-week inundation period; in summer, aestivates in grassland habitat, in soil crevices and rodent burrows. Range includes the Central Valley, south Coast Ranges, and foothills.	Yes	Yes	No	No
Reptiles						
Western pond turtle *Emys marmorata*	UR/SSC	Forages in ponds, marshes, slow-moving streams, sloughs, and irrigation/drainage ditches; nests in nearby uplands with low, sparse vegetation. Range spans across California west of the Sierra-Cascade crest, below 5,000 feet in elevation.	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Blainville's horned lizard *Phrynosoma blainvilli*	–/SSC	Variety of open habitats, including chaparral, oak savanna, and grassland; found primarily in areas with sandy, friable soils, scattered shrubs, and abundant ant colonies. Range includes most of western central and southwestern California below 8,000 feet elevation.	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Birds						
Long-eared owl *Asio otus*	–/SSC	Uses riparian deciduous forest, conifer forests, and mixed forests. Uncommon yearlong resident throughout California except the Central Valley, some coastal areas, and Coachella and Imperial Valleys of Southern California.	No	Yes	Yes	No
California spotted owl *Strix occidentalis*	–/SSC	Occurs from the southern Cascade Range along western slope of Sierra Nevada south to Tulare County; mountainous areas of coastal and southern California from Monterey	No	No	No	Yes

Common Name *Scientific Name*	Legal Status[a] Federal/ State	Habitat and Distribution in California	Potential for Occurrence in Potential Growth Area (Yes/No)			
			Roseville	Loomis/Newcastle	Auburn/Bowman	Eastern County
		County to northern Baja California; ranging from 1,000 to 8,500 feet in elevation. Nests in late-successional hardwood, coniferous, and coniferous-hardwood forests; typically nests and roosts in stands with high canopy closure (more than 75%).				
Great gray owl *Strix nebulosa*	–/SSC	Northern goshawks nest in mature old growth forests with more than 60% closed canopy. Breeding sites include Douglas-fir and pine forests, and aspen groves. Often builds nests near breaks in the canopy, and prefers sites with a creek, pond, or lake nearby.	No	No	No	Yes
Bald eagle *Haliaeetus leucocephalus*	–/SE, FP	Nests in large trees with open branchwork. Often chooses large tree in a stand to build a platform nest. Forages primarily in large inland fish-bearing waters with adjacent large trees or snags, and occasionally in uplands with abundant rabbits, other small mammals, or carrion. Breeding range includes the Sierra Nevada, Cascade Range, and portions of the Coast Ranges; winter range expands to include most of the state except southeastern California (although the species occurs along the Colorado River).	No	No	No	Yes
American peregrine falcon *Falco peregrinus anatum*	–/FP	Nests on high cliffs, banks, dunes, or mounds in a scrape on a depression or ledge in an open site. Will occasionally use human-made structures and tree or snag cavities or old nests of other raptors. Forages in a wide variety of habitats, but is most common near water, where shorebirds and waterfowl are abundant. Year-round range includes the Sierra Nevada, Cascade Range, northeastern California, Coast Ranges, and coast; winter range expands to include the Central Valley and the Delta and additional portions of eastern and southern California.	No	No	No	Yes

Common Name *Scientific Name*	Legal Status[a] Federal/ State	Habitat and Distribution in California	Potential for Occurrence in Potential Growth Area (Yes/No)			
			Roseville	Loomis/Newcastle	Auburn/Bowman	Eastern County
Northern harrier *Circus cyaneus*	–/SSC	Nests on the ground among herbaceous vegetation, such as grasses or cattails; forages in grasslands, agricultural fields, and marshes. Breeding range encompasses much of lowland California; winter range expands to include the remaining lowland areas.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
White-tailed kite *Elanus leucurus*	–/FP	Forages in ponds, marshes, slow-moving streams, sloughs, and irrigation/drainage ditches; nests in nearby uplands in valley/foothill riparian or other trees associated with compatible foraging habitat. Year-round range spans the Central Valley, Coast Ranges and coast, Sierra Nevada foothills, and Colorado River.	Yes	Yes	No	No
Swainson's hawk *Buteo swainsoni*	–/ST	Nests in isolated trees, open woodlands, and woodland margins; forages in grasslands and agricultural fields. Breeding range spans the Central Valley and Delta west of Suisun Marsh, northeastern California, and a few additional scattered sites; most of the population migrates south of California in fall/winter, although a small number winters in the Delta.	Yes	No	No	No
Northern goshawk *Accipiter gentilis*	–/SSC	Northern goshawks nest in mature old growth forests with more than 60% closed canopy. Breeding sites include Douglas-fir and pine forests, and aspen groves. Often builds nests near breaks in the canopy, and prefers sites with a creek, pond, or lake nearby.	No	No	No	Yes
California black rail *Laterallus jamaicensis coturniculus*	–/ST, FP	Nests and forages in saline, freshwater, or brackish emergent marshes with gently grading slopes and upland refugia with vegetative cover beyond the high-water line. Year-round range includes Suisun Marsh, San Pablo Bay, Morro Bay, a few patches in the Sierra Nevada foothills, and	No	Yes	No	No

Common Name *Scientific Name*	Legal Status[a] Federal/ State	Habitat and Distribution in California	Potential for Occurrence in Potential Growth Area (Yes/No)			
			Roseville	Loomis/Newcastle	Auburn/Bowman	Eastern County
		portions of southern California; winter range expands to include San Francisco Bay and the Marin County coast.				
Grasshopper sparrow *Ammodramus savannarum*	–/SSC	Nests and forages in dense grasslands; favors a mix of native grasses, forbs, and scattered shrubs. Breeding range spans much of the Central Valley and California coast, but populations are typically localized and disjunct; most individuals migrate, although some may be present year-round.	Yes	Yes	No	No
Yellow warbler *Setophaga petechia*	–/SSC	Nests and forages in early successional riparian habitats. Range includes coastal and northern California and the Sierra Nevada below approximately 7,000 feet; mostly extirpated from the southern Sacramento and San Joaquin Valleys.	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Yellow-breasted chat *Icteria virens*	–/SSC	Nests and forages in riparian thickets of willow and other brushy tangles near water and thick understory in riparian habitat. Breeding range includes the northern Sacramento Valley, Cascade Range, Sierra Nevada foothills, northwestern California, most of the Coast Ranges, the Colorado River, and other scattered sites; migrates south of California in fall/winter.	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Willow flycatcher *Empidonax traillii*	–/SE	Breeding habitat is typically moist meadows with perennial streams; lowland riparian woodlands dominated by willows, primarily in tree form, and cottonwoods; or smaller spring-fed or boggy areas with willow or alders.	No	No	No	Yes
Song sparrow ("Modesto" population) *Melospiza melodia*	–/SSC	Nests and forages primarily in emergent marsh, riparian scrub, and early successional riparian forest habitats, and infrequently in mature riparian forest and sparsely vegetated ditches and levees. Year-round range includes the	No	Yes	No	No

Common Name *Scientific Name*	Legal Status[a] Federal/ State	Habitat and Distribution in California	Potential for Occurrence in Potential Growth Area (Yes/No)			
			Roseville	Loomis/Newcastle	Auburn/Bowman	Eastern County
		Delta east of Suisun Marsh, the Sacramento Valley, and the northern San Joaquin Valley.				
Tricolored blackbird *Agelaius tricolor*	–/ST	Nests colonially in large, dense stands of freshwater marsh, riparian scrub, and other shrubs and herbs; forages in grasslands and agricultural fields. Year-round resident throughout the Central Valley and the central and southern coasts, with additional scattered locations throughout California.	No	Yes	No	No
Mammals						
American badger *Taxidea taxus*	–/SSC	Found in drier, open shrub, forest, and herbaceous habitats with friable soils. Year-round range spans all of California except the Humboldt and Del Norte coasts.	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Sierra Nevada mountain beaver *Aplodontia rufa californica*	–/SSC	In the Sierra Nevada mountain range species occupies open and intermediate-canopy forests with a dense shrub understory near water. Deep, friable soils are required for burrowing, along with a cool, moist microclimate.	No	No	No	Yes
Ringtail *Bassariscus astutus*	–/FP	Large acreages of oak woodland, riparian, and other dense brush habitats with rock recesses or hollow snags for cover. Year-round range spans much of California except the San Joaquin Valley, northeastern California, and portions of southern California.	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Sierra Nevada red fox *Vulpes vulpes necator*	FC/ST	Lives in a wide range of remote, high-elevation alpine and subalpine habitats, including meadows, dense mature forests, talus, and fell fields; in the central Sierra Nevada range, the species generally occurs above 7,000 feet elevation; habitat use varies seasonally.	No	No	No	Yes
Fisher *Pekania pennanti*	–/ST	In California, fishers occupy low- to mid-elevation conifer and hardwood forests from 902 feet to 7,208 feet elevation. Fishers are typically found in forest habitats with dense	No	No	No	Yes

Common Name *Scientific Name*	Legal Status[a] Federal/ State	Habitat and Distribution in California	Potential for Occurrence in Potential Growth Area (Yes/No)			
			Roseville	Loomis/Newcastle	Auburn/Bowman	Eastern County
		canopy closure and multiple canopy layers, large-diameter live and dead trees with cavities, and large-diameter down wood.				
Pallid bat *Antrozous pallidus*	–/SSC	Deserts, grasslands, shrublands, woodlands, and forests; most common in open, dry habitats; typically roosts in rock crevices, also in tree hollows, bridges, and buildings, in colonies ranging from 1 to more than 200 individuals. Year-round range spans nearly all of California.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Townsend's big-eared bat *Corynorhinus townsendii*	–/SSC	This species may use several alternate roost sites (Woodruff and Ferguson 2005). Typically roosts in colonies of fewer than 100 individuals in caves or mines; occasionally roosts in buildings or bridges, and rarely, hollow trees; forages in all habitats except alpine and subalpine, although most commonly in mesic forests and woodlands. Year-round range spans most of California except the highest elevations of the Sierra Nevada south of Lake Tahoe.	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Spotted bat *Euderma maculatum*	–/SSC	Roosts primarily in rock crevices; uses arid deserts and open pine forests set in rocky terrain; females may favor ponderosa pine forests during reproduction. Occurs throughout eastern and southern California, the central Sierra Nevada, and the Sierra Nevada foothills bordering the San Joaquin Valley; probably occurs in other portions of the state where habitat is suitable.	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Western red bat *Lasiurus blossevillii*	–/SSC	Mature riparian broadleaf forest in the Central Valley is primary summer breeding habitat for the species in California (females and pups). Riverside orchards may also be used as maternity roosts. Roosts alone or in small family groups in tree foliage, occasionally shrubs; prefers habitat edges and mosaics with trees that are protected from above and open below with open areas for foraging, including	Yes	Yes	Yes	No

Common Name *Scientific Name*	Legal Status[a] Federal/ State	Habitat and Distribution in California	Potential for Occurrence in Potential Growth Area (Yes/No)			
			Roseville	Loomis/Newcastle	Auburn/Bowman	Eastern County
		grasslands, shrublands, and open woodlands. Unsubstantiated records of hibernation in leaf litter during the winter. Year-round range spans the Central Valley, Sierra Nevada foothills, Coast Ranges, and coast except Humboldt and Del Norte Counties.				
Fish						
Central Valley steelhead *Oncorhynchus mykiss*	FT/SSC	Occurs in Sacramento and San Joaquin Rivers and their major tributaries. Small to large perennial rivers and creeks with cold water flows and suitable spawning gravel.	Yes	Yes	No	No
Central Valley fall-/late fall-run Chinook salmon *Oncorhynchus tshawytscha*	–/SSC	Occurs in Sacramento and San Joaquin Rivers and their major tributaries. Large perennial rivers and creeks with cold water flows and suitable spawning gravel.	Yes	Yes	No	No
Lahontan cutthroat trout *Oncorhynchus clarkia henshawi*	FT/–	In California species occurs within the Lahontan Basin on east side of the Sierra Nevada occupying cold, high-elevation alkaline lakes, alpine lakes, mountain rivers and small headwater tributary streams.	No	No	No	Yes
Hardhead *Mylopharodon conocephalus*	–/SSC	Occurs in the Sacramento and San Joaquin River systems. Undisturbed portions of larger streams at low and middle elevations where they prefer large, deep, rock or sand-bottomed pools.	No	Yes	Yes	No
Pacific lamprey *Lampetra ayresii*	–/SSC	Occurs in Sacramento and San Joaquin Rivers and their associated tributaries. Adults live in the ocean and migrate into fresh water to spawn. Juveniles (ammocoetes) live in fresh water for 5–7 years before migrating downstream to the ocean. (Moyle 2002)	No	Yes	Yes	No

Source: California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CNDDB) 2020.

[a] Status

Federal Listing Categories:

FE = Listed as endangered under the federal Endangered Species Act (ESA).
FT = Listed as threatened under the ESA.
PFT = Proposed for listing as threatened under the ESA.
FC = Candidate for listing under the ESA.
UR = Species under review for listing under ESA.
– = No status.

State Listing Categories:

SE = Listed as endangered under the California Endangered Species Act (CESA).
ST = Listed as threatened under CESA.
FP = Fully protected under the California Fish and Game Code.
SSC = California species of special concern.
– = No status.

3.4.2 Environmental Impacts

The environmental analysis in this section focuses on the two main components of the project: (1) amendments to the Land Use Element in the County's General Plan, Zoning Ordinance, and Community Design Manual, and (2) the potential locations for the new dwelling units that could be constructed as a result of changes to the Zoning Ordinance (a total of 194 units distributed throughout the county).

The general land use pattern allowed by the housing-related code amendments is evaluated in the following discussions for its potential to adversely affect existing biological resources. An adverse effect would be assumed to occur if development would result in a substantial change to existing resources.

The analysis in this section also considers the impacts from the potential development of dwelling units in targeted areas throughout the county. As a result of project implementation, a total of 194 units could be constructed, noted below. While these units could be developed as a result of project implementation, the project itself does not propose any site-specific development.

- 50 units in the Roseville area (South Placer County)
- 13 units in the Loomis/Newcastle area (foothill region)
- 49 units in the Auburn/Bowman area (foothill region)
- 82 units in the eastern county (High Sierra region), including:
    - 31 units near Sugar Bowl
    - 4 units near Squaw Valley
    - 42 units near SR 89
    - 5 units near Northstar

Methods for Analysis

The biological resource impact analysis is qualitative and is based primarily on information available in the General Plan, PCCP and associated geographic information system (GIS) habitat data, location data for special-status species from CNDDB, Google Earth aerial imagery of the potential growth areas, and other available reports and literature. Additional environmental analysis will likely be required upon identification of specific sites for developments. It is anticipated that future development under the proposed updates to the General Plan and Zoning Ordinance could directly or indirectly affect biological resources from the following types of activities.

- Removal of special-status plants in construction areas.
- Disturbance of special-status wildlife from construction-related noise and activities.
- Removal or disturbance of land cover types that provide habitat for special-status species.
- Removal of riparian and wetland vegetation along waterways during construction of new development.
- Stream dewatering or installation of temporary or permanent water-diversion structures.

- Degradation of water quality in wetlands and waterways, resulting from construction activities that occur within or near waterways.
- Introduction or spread of invasive plant species.

The mitigation measures described for potential impacts on sensitive biological resources are consistent with the General Plan policies. For future development projects associated with implementation of the project, the County would require coordination with relevant agencies, as applicable, to determine specific compensatory mitigation for impacts on federally and state-listed species, riparian habitats, and aquatic resources. Additional mitigation measures also may be identified as part of project permits (e.g., CWA § 404 and 401; California Fish and Game Code § 1602 LSAA).

Thresholds of Significance

In accordance with Appendix G of the State CEQA Guidelines, the proposed project would be considered to have a significant effect if it would result in any of the conditions listed below.

- A substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special-status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by CDFW or USFWS.
- A substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by CDFW or USFWS.
- A substantial adverse effect on state- or federally protected wetlands (e.g., marshes, vernal pools, coastal wetlands) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means.
- Substantial interference with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impedance of the use of native wildlife nursery sites.
- Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance.
- Conflict with the provisions of an adopted HCP, NCCP, or other approved local, regional, or state HCP.

Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Impact BIO-1: Potential disturbance or loss of special-status plant populations as a result of construction made possible by proposed General Plan and Zoning Ordinance updates (less than significant with mitigation)

Future development and construction activities associated with implementation of the project could result in the indirect disturbance or direct loss of special-status plants (or those identified as special status in the future) that are known to occur or that have potential to occur in the project area (see Table 3.4-2). Loss of special-status plants could result from development, potentially leading to a substantial reduction in local population size, lowered reproductive success, or habitat fragmentation. The project also involves General Plan Amendments and changes to zoning related to density and encouraging of a mix of land uses. These changes primarily affect previously developed areas but, depending on the exact location of future development, could still result in indirect

disturbances of special-status plants. This impact would be considered significant because special-status plants may be protected by state and/or federal agencies.

General Plan Policy 6.C.11 requires evaluation of parcels prior to development to determine the presence or absence of special-status species and implementation of feasible measures to mitigate impacts on special-status species. This, and other habitat protection policies, would reduce significant impacts on special-status plants but are not detailed enough to ensure reduction to a less-than-significant level. Implementation of the following mitigation measures would reduce this impact to a ***less than significant*** level.

Mitigation Measure BIO-1a: Identify and Document Special-Status Plant Populations

For proposed development in previously undeveloped areas, prior to design or construction, the County will require documentation of the presence or absence of special-status plant populations. A qualified botanist will be retained to survey the affected area before project design and construction. To document special-status plant populations, the following steps will be undertaken before construction. At any point during implementation of this mitigation measure, a proposed project may be re-designed or modified to avoid direct and indirect impacts on special-status plants, and will not need to complete the remaining steps identified in this mitigation measure.

- **Review Existing Information.** The botanist will review existing information to develop a list of special-status plants that could grow within the affected area. Sources of information consulted will include the CNDDB; USFWS list of endangered, threatened, and proposed species for the project region; previously prepared environmental documents; City and County general plans; HCPs; and the CNPS inventory.
- **Conduct Field Surveys.** The botanist will evaluate existing habitat conditions in each affected area and determine what level of botanical surveys may be required. The type of botanical survey will depend on species richness, habitat type and quality, and the probability of special-status species occurring in a particular habitat type. Depending on these factors and the proposed extent of construction, one or both of the following levels of survey will be required:
    - **Habitat Assessment**. A habitat assessment determines whether suitable habitat is present. This type of assessment can be conducted at any time of year and is used to assess and characterize habitat conditions and determine whether return surveys are necessary. If no suitable habitat is present, no additional surveys will be required.
    - **Floristic Protocol-Level Surveys.** Floristic surveys that follow the CDFW protocols for surveying native plant species (California Department of Fish and Wildlife 2018) will be conducted in areas that are relatively undisturbed or have moderate to high potential to support multiple special-status plants. The CDFW Survey Guidelines require that all species be identified to the level necessary to determine whether they qualify as special-status plants. The guidelines also require that field surveys be conducted when special-status plants that could occur in the area are evident and identifiable. To account for different special-status plant identification periods, one or more series of field surveys may be required in spring and summer.
- **Document Survey Results.** If special-status plants are found during the field survey, they will be mapped and documented, Mitigation Measure BIO-1b will be implemented in

conjunction with this mitigation measure to avoid or minimize significant impacts on special-status plants.

Mitigation Measure BIO-1b: Avoid or Minimize Impacts on Special-Status Plant Populations

Where development in an affected area would have potential to result in direct loss or indirect disturbance to special-status plants, the following measures to avoid or minimize impacts on special-status plants will be implemented:

- Redesign or modify the proposed development during future site design to avoid direct and indirect impacts on special-status plants, if feasible.
- During construction, protect special-status plants by installing environmentally sensitive area fencing (orange construction barrier fencing) around special-status plant populations. The environmentally sensitive area fencing will be installed at least 20 feet from the edge of the population. The location of the fencing will be marked in the field with stakes and flagging and shown on the construction drawings. The construction specifications will contain clear language that prohibits construction-related activities, vehicle operation, material and equipment storage, and other surface-disturbing activities within the fenced environmentally sensitive area.
- If population avoidance is not possible, coordinate with the appropriate resource agencies and local experts to determine whether transplantation is feasible. If the agencies concur that transplantation is a feasible mitigation measure, the botanist will develop and implement a transplantation plan through coordination with the appropriate agencies. The special-status plant transplantation plan will involve identifying a suitable transplant site; moving the plant material and seed bank to the transplant site; collecting seed material and propagating it in a nursery; and monitoring the transplant sites to document recruitment and survival rates.
- If transplantation of special-status plants is not feasible, the effects of the project on special-status plants will be compensated for by offsite preservation at a ratio to be negotiated with the resource agencies. Suitable habitat for affected special status–plant species will be purchased in a conservation area, preserved, and managed in perpetuity. Detailed information will be provided to the agencies on the location and quality of the preservation area, the feasibility of protecting and managing the area in perpetuity, and the responsible parties. Other pertinent information also will be provided, to be determined through future coordination with the resource agencies.

Impact BIO-2: Potential disturbance or loss of special-status wildlife species and their habitat as a result of construction made possible by proposed General Plan and Zoning Ordinance updates (less than significant with mitigation)

Future development and construction activities associated with project implementation could result in the disturbance or loss of special-status wildlife (or those identified as special status in the future) that are known to occur or that have potential to occur in the project area (see Table 3.4-3). Loss or disturbance of special-status wildlife could result from development, potentially leading to a substantial reduction in local population size, lowered reproductive success, or habitat fragmentation. The project also involves General Plan Amendments and changes to zoning related to density and encouraging of a mix of land uses. These changes primarily affect previously developed

areas but, depending on the exact location of future development, could still result in indirect disturbances of special-status wildlife species and their habitat.

Potential significant impacts on special-status wildlife associated with future potential development actions include (but are not limited to):

- Direct mortality from the collapse of underground burrows resulting from soil compaction
- Direct mortality resulting from the movement of equipment and vehicles through the development area
- Loss of breeding and foraging habitat resulting from the filling of seasonal or perennial wetlands
- Loss of breeding, foraging, and refuge habitat resulting from the permanent removal of woodland and riparian vegetation
- Abandoned eggs or young and subsequent nest failure for special-status nesting birds, including raptors, as a result of construction-related noise and disturbance

General Plan Policy 6.C.11 requires evaluation of parcels prior to development to determine the presence or absence of special-status species habitat and implementation of feasible measures to mitigate impacts on special-status species. General Plan Policies 6.C.1 through 6.C.9 promote the protection of special-status wildlife and their habitat through reasonable and prudent conservation measures. Implementation of these habitat protection policies would reduce significant impacts on special-status wildlife but are not detailed enough to ensure reduction to a less-than-significant level. Implementation of the following mitigation measures would reduce potentially significant impacts on special-status wildlife to a ***less than significant*** level.

Mitigation Measure BIO-2a: Document Special-Status Wildlife Species and Their Habitats

Prior to design or construction for future development in previously undeveloped areas, the County will require documentation of the presence or absence of special-status wildlife populations or suitable habitat for these species. A qualified wildlife biologist will be retained to survey the affected area before project design and construction. To document special-status wildlife and habitats, the following steps will be undertaken before construction. At any point during implementation of this mitigation measure, a proposed project may be re-designed or modified to avoid direct and indirect impacts on special-status wildlife, and will not need to complete the remaining steps identified in this mitigation measure.

- **Review Existing Information.** The wildlife biologist will review existing information to develop a list of special-status wildlife species that could occur in the affected area. The following information will be reviewed as part of this process: the USFWS IPaC species list for the affected area, CNDDB occurrences within the vicinity of the affected area, NMFS species lists, previously prepared environmental documents, City and County general plans, PCCP, and USFWS-issued biological opinions for previous projects in the vicinity of the affected area.
- **Coordinate with State and Federal Agencies, as Necessary.** The wildlife biologist will coordinate with the County and appropriate agencies (CDFW, USFWS, NMFS), as necessary, to discuss wildlife resource issues in the region and determine the appropriate level of surveys necessary to document special-status wildlife and their habitats.

- **Conduct Field Studies.** The wildlife biologist will evaluate existing habitat conditions and determine what level of biological surveys may be required. The type of survey required will depend on species richness, habitat type and quality, and the probability of special-status species occurring in habitat types present in the affected area. Depending on the existing conditions in the area and the proposed construction activity, one or more of the following levels of survey may be required:
    - **Habitat Assessment.** A habitat assessment determines whether suitable habitat is present. This type of assessment can be conducted at any time of year and is used to assess and characterize habitat conditions and to determine whether return surveys are necessary. If no suitable habitat is present, no additional surveys will be required.
    - **Species-Focused Surveys.** Species-focused surveys (or target species surveys) will be conducted if suitable habitat is present for special-status wildlife and if it is necessary to determine the presence or absence of the species in the affected area or immediate vicinity. The surveys will focus on special-status wildlife species that have the potential to occur in the affected area (Table 3.4-3). The surveys will be conducted during a period when the target species are present and/or active.
    - **Protocol-Level Wildlife Surveys.** The County will require compliance with protocols and guidelines issued by responsible agencies for certain special-status species. USFWS and CDFW have issued survey protocols and guidelines for several special-status wildlife species that could occur in the affected areas, including valley elderberry longhorn beetle, California red-legged frog, foothill yellow-legged frog, Sierra Nevada yellow-legged frog, California spotted owl, northern goshawk, and great grey owl. In some cases, the County may choose to require the assumption of the presence of a species rather than conduct a protocol-level survey. The protocols and guidelines may require that surveys be conducted during a particular time of year or time of day when the species is present and active. Many survey protocols require that only a USFWS- or CDFW-approved biologist perform the surveys. Because some species can be difficult to detect or observe, multiple field techniques may be used during a survey period and additional surveys may be required in subsequent seasons or years as outlined in the protocol or guidelines for each species.

Special-status wildlife or suitable habitat identified during the field surveys will be mapped and documented. If surveys determine that special-status wildlife species are present or assumed to be present in or near the affected area, the County will require implementation of Mitigation Measure BIO-2b to avoid or minimize significant impacts on special-status wildlife.

Mitigation Measure BIO-2b: Avoid and Minimize Impacts on Special-Status Wildlife Species through Redesign, Protection, or Monitoring

Where development in an affected area would have potential to result in direct or indirect loss or disturbance to special-status wildlife, the County will implement the following measures to avoid or minimize impacts on special-status wildlife:

- Redesign or modify program elements to avoid direct and indirect impacts on special-status wildlife or their habitats, if feasible.
- During ground-disturbing construction activities, protect special-status wildlife and their habitats by installing environmentally sensitive area fencing or staking around habitat

features, such as wetlands, streams, burrows, and/or active nests. The environmentally sensitive area fencing or staking will be installed at a minimum distance from the edge of the resource as determined by a qualified biologists and through coordination with state and federal agency biologists (USFWS and CDFW), as applicable. The location of the fencing will be marked in the field with stakes and flagging and shown on the construction drawings. The construction specifications will contain clear language that prohibits construction-related activities, vehicle operation, material and equipment storage, and other surface-disturbing activities within the fenced environmentally sensitive area.

- Restrict construction-related activities to the non-breeding season for special-status wildlife species that could occur in the affected area. Timing restrictions may vary depending on the species and could occur during any time of the year.
- Coordinate with the appropriate resource agencies to determine whether a monitoring plan for special-status wildlife is necessary during construction. If a monitoring plan is required, it will be developed and implemented in coordination with appropriate agencies and will include:
    - A description of each of the wildlife species and suitable habitat for species that could occur in the affected area
    - The location and size of no-disturbance zones in and adjacent to environmentally sensitive areas for wildlife
    - Directions on the handling and relocating of special-status wildlife species found on the site that are in immediate danger of being injured or killed
    - Notification and reporting requirements for special-status species that are identified in the affected area

Mitigation Measure BIO-2c: Coordinate with Resource Agencies and Develop Appropriate Compensation Plans

In the event that, despite implementation of Mitigation Measure BIO-2b: Avoid and Minimize Impacts on Special-Status Wildlife Species through Redesign, Protection, or Monitoring, construction activities would result in significant impacts on state- or federally listed wildlife species, the County will require development of a compensation plan in coordination with the appropriate resource agency (CDFW, USFWS, NMFS), and/or their compensation guidelines followed, to reduce the impact to a less-than-significant level. The amount of compensation will vary depending on the amount of habitat loss or degree of habitat disturbance anticipated. The compensation plan will be developed and implemented in coordination with the appropriate state or federal agency and compensatory mitigation would be accomplished through one or a combination of the following options.

- Purchase the appropriate number and type of habitat credits at a USFWS and/or CDFW-approved mitigation bank or conservation area.
- Establish a conservation easement on a parcel(s) containing a sufficient amount of preserved or restored habitat and adaptively mange the mitigation lands consistent with the most current information on the species habitat requirements.

- Mitigate through an approved habitat conservation plan (i.e., PCCP) by contributing applicable mitigation fees based on the special-status wildlife habitat type that is affected by the project.

If the PCCP is the permitting mechanism used to address impacts associated with listed species and their habitats, waters of the State, and waters of the U.S., the PCCP's mitigation fees and conditions on covered activities may be used to address this resource impact and avoidance minimization measures as set forth in the PCCP implementation document to the extent compliance with the PCCP provides equal or greater mitigation or reduction in the significance of impacts. If PCCP enrollment is chosen and/or required by the State and federal agencies as mitigation for one or more biological resource area impacts, then the PCCP avoidance, minimization, and mitigation measures shall apply to those species, habitat types, and waters that are covered by the PCCP.

As applicable, compensatory mitigation for special-status wildlife species would be coordinated with compensatory mitigation for other local, state and federally regulated habitats, such as waters of the United States, riparian, and oak woodlands.

Impact BIO-3: Potential loss or disturbance of riparian habitat as a result of construction of proposed General Plan and Zoning Ordinance updates (less than significant with mitigation)

Construction activities associated with project implementation in the Loomis/Newcastle and eastern county areas could result in the disturbance or removal of riparian habitat. This impact could result in long-term degradation of a sensitive natural community, fragmentation or isolation of an important wildlife habitat, and disruption of natural wildlife movement corridors. Because riparian habitats are protected by CDFW and native riparian trees are protected under the Placer County tree preservation ordinance, this impact would be considered significant.

General Plan Policy 6.A.1 requires sensitive habitat buffers around streams and riparian zones, and General Plan Policy 6.C.11 requires evaluation of parcels prior to development for the presence of valley foothill and montane riparian habitats. These and other habitat protection policies would reduce significant impacts on riparian habitats. As part of the required LSAA permit from CDFW, compensatory mitigation for loss of riparian habitat would be required. General Plan policies and CDFW requirements would reduce the level of this potential impact to a ***less than significant*** level. Implementation of the following mitigation measure for temporary impacts on riparian habitat would further reduce the significance of this impact.

Mitigation Measure BIO-3a: Avoid and minimize disturbance of riparian habitats

To the extent possible, the County will require avoidance of impacts on riparian habitats by implementing the following measures:

- Redesign or modify the proposed development to avoid direct and indirect impacts on riparian habitats, if feasible.
- Protect riparian habitats that occur near the project site by installing environmentally sensitive area fencing at least 20 feet from the edge of the riparian vegetation, if feasible. Depending on site-specific conditions, this buffer may be narrower or wider than 20 feet. The location of the fencing will be marked in the field with stakes and flagging and shown on the construction drawings. The construction specifications will contain clear language that

prohibits construction-related activities, vehicle operation, material and equipment storage, and other surface-disturbing activities within the fenced environmentally sensitive area.

- Minimize the potential for long-term loss of riparian vegetation by trimming vegetation, rather than removing the entire shrub. Shrub vegetation will be cut at least 1 foot above ground level to leave the root systems intact and allow for more-rapid regeneration of the species. Cutting will be limited to a minimum area necessary within the construction zone.

Mitigation Measure BIO-3b: Compensate for the Loss of Riparian Habitat

If riparian habitat is removed as part of future development associated with project implementation, the County will require compensation for the loss of riparian vegetation to ensure no net loss of habitat functions and values. Compensation ratios will be based on site-specific information and determined through coordination with state and federal agencies (including CDFW, USFWS, USACE, and NMFS). Compensation will be provided at a minimum 1:1 ratio (1 acre restored or created for every 1 acre removed) and may be a combination of onsite restoration/creation, offsite restoration, and mitigation credits. The County will require the development of a restoration and monitoring plan that describes how riparian habitat will be enhanced or recreated and monitored over a minimum period of time, as determined by the appropriate state and federal agencies. The County will require implementation the restoration and monitoring plan.

Impact BIO-4: Potential loss or disturbance of oak woodlands as a result of construction of proposed General Plan and Zoning Ordinance updates (less than significant with mitigation)

Construction activities associated with project implementation in the Loomis/Newcastle and Auburn/Bowman areas could result in the disturbance or removal of oak woodlands. This impact could result in long-term degradation of a sensitive natural community, fragmentation or isolation of an important wildlife habitat, and disruption of natural wildlife movement corridors. Because oak woodlands may be considered sensitive natural communities and are protected by General Plan policies and CDFW and oak trees greater than 6 inches dbh are protected under the Placer County tree preservation ordinance, this impact would be considered significant.

General Plan Policy 6.A.1 requires sensitive habitat buffers around old growth woodlands, and General Plan Policy 6.C.11 requires evaluation of parcels prior to development for the presence of blue oak and valley oak woodlands. These and other habitat protection policies would reduce significant impacts on oak woodlands. As part of the Placer County tree preservation ordinance, projects would be required to replace individual native oak trees that are 6 inches or larger dbh based on an inch-to-inch replacement standard. CDFW may require additional compensation for oak woodland habitat. General Plan policies, the oak ordinance, and potential CDFW requirements would reduce the level of this potential impact, but possibly not to a less than significant level. Implementation of the following mitigation measure for impacts on oak woodland habitat would reduce this impact to a ***less than significant*** level.

Mitigation Measure BIO-4a: Avoid and Minimize Disturbance of Oak Woodlands

To the extent possible, the County will require avoidance of impacts on oak woodlands by implementing the following measures:

- Redesign or modify the proposed development to avoid direct and indirect impacts on oak woodlands, if feasible.

- Protect oak woodlands that occur near the project site by installing environmentally sensitive area fencing at least 20 feet from the edge of oak trees. Depending on site-specific conditions, this buffer may be narrower or wider than 20 feet. The location of the fencing will be marked in the field with stakes and flagging and shown on the construction drawings. The construction specifications will contain clear language that prohibits construction-related activities, vehicle operation, material and equipment storage, and other surface-disturbing activities within the fenced environmentally sensitive area.
- Minimize the potential for long-term loss of woody vegetation by pruning vegetation rather than removing entire trees or shrubs in areas where complete removal is not required. Any trees or shrubs that need to be trimmed will be cut at least 1 foot above ground level to leave the root systems intact and allow for more rapid regeneration. Cutting will be limited to the minimum area necessary within the construction zone. To protect nesting birds, no pruning or removal of woody vegetation will be performed between February 1 and August 31 without pre-construction bird surveys conducted in accordance with CDFW and/or USFWS requirements.
- Operation or parking of vehicles, digging, trenching, slope cuts, soil compaction, grading, paving, or placement of fill will be prohibited within at least 6 feet outside the driplines of retained trees.
- All construction, staging (including vehicle parking), and access areas will be restricted to the direct impact areas.
- Runoff from the development area will be directed in such a way as to prevent drainage into any adjacent open space area. Drainage systems will be designed to prevent runoff from flowing into oak woodlands and direct it into a storm drainage system, which will discharge runoff into existing drainages. Retaining walls will be installed at the edge of development areas where fill is placed to avoid ponding of water around adjacent retained oak trees.

Mitigation Measure BIO-4b: Compensate for the Loss of Oak Woodlands

Where future development associated with implementation of the project would have potential to result in the loss of oak woodland, the County will require compensation for the loss of oak woodland to ensure no net loss of habitat functions and values. Compensation ratios will be based on site-specific information and determined through coordination with CDFW. Compensation will be provided at a minimum 1:1 ratio (1 acre restored or created for every 1 acre removed). Compensation for loss of oak woodlands can be accomplished using one or more of the following options:

- Offsite deed restriction or conservation easement acquisition and/or acquisition in fee title by a land conservation organization for purposes of off-site oak woodland conservation
- In-lieu fee payment
- Replacement planting onsite within an area subject to deed restriction or conservation easement
- Replacement planting offsite within an area subject to a conservation easement
- A combination of the options 1 through 4

In accordance with requirements of the California Public Resources Code Section 21083.4(b), replacement planting will not account for more than 50 percent of the oak woodland mitigation requirement. The replacement planting area must be suitable for tree planting, will not conflict with current or planned land uses, and will be large enough to accommodate replacement plantings at a density equal to the density of oak woodlands affected, up to a maximum density of 200 trees per acre. The County will require development a mitigation and monitoring plan that describes how replacement planting will be installed and monitored over a minimum period of time, as determined by CDFW. The County will require implementation of the restoration and monitoring plan. The remaining portion of the project's oak woodland impact mitigation requirement would be implemented in the form of an in-lieu fee payment to the County.

Impact BIO-5: Disturbance or loss of waters of the United States and waters of the state (less than significant with mitigation)

Construction activities associated with project implementation in the Loomis/Newcastle, Auburn/Bowman, and eastern County areas could result in the disturbance or loss of waters of the United States and waters of the state, potentially including fresh emergent wetland, wet meadow, pond, riverine, and canal. Wetlands and non-wetland waters could be affected through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption (including dewatering), alteration of bed and bank, and other construction-related activities. This impact could result in long-term degradation of sensitive natural communities, fragmentation or isolation of an important wildlife habitat, and disruption of natural wildlife movement corridors. Because waters of the United States and waters of the state are protected under the CWA and Porter-Cologne Act, respectively, and impacts on these features require permits from USACE and the State Water Board, this impact would be considered significant.

General Plan Policy 6.A.1 requires sensitive habitat buffers around streams and wetlands, and General Plan Policy 6.C.11 requires evaluation of parcels prior to development for the presence of wetlands and streams. These and other habitat protection policies would reduce significant impacts on waters of the United States and waters of the state. As part of the required CWA Sections 401 and 404 permits from the State Water Board and USACE, compensatory mitigation for loss of wetlands and non-wetland waters could be required. General Plan policies and permitting requirements for compensation of loss would reduce the level of this potential impact to a less than significant level. Implementation of the following mitigation measure for temporary impacts on waters of the United States and waters of the state would further reduce the significance of this impact. This impact is ***less than significant with mitigation***.

Mitigation Measure BIO-5a: Identify and Delineate Waters of the United States and Waters of the State

Prior to design or construction of future projects resulting from implementation of the project, a qualified botanist will be retained to identify areas that could qualify as waters of the United States, including wetlands and non-wetland waters, and waters of the state, assuming such features exist in the affected area. Wetlands will be identified using both the current USACE and State Water Board definitions of wetlands and the current required methods, most likely the USACE Wetlands Delineation Manual (Environmental Laboratory 1987), Arid West or Western Mountains, Valleys, and Coast regional supplements (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers 2008, 2010). The jurisdictional boundary of non-wetland waters will be identified based on the ordinary high water mark (33 CFR § 328.3(e)) using current methods, most likely the Arid West and Western

Mountains, Valleys, and Coast field guides (Lichvar and McColley 2008; Mersel and Lichvar 2014).

This information will be mapped and documented as part of aquatic resources delineation reports according to current USACE minimum standards and mapping standards. Mitigation Measures BIO-5b and BIO-5c will be implemented as necessary to avoid, minimize, or compensate for impacts on waters of the United States and waters of the state.

Mitigation Measure BIO-5b: Avoid and Minimize Disturbance of Waters of the United States and Waters of the State

To the extent possible, the County will require avoidance and minimization of impacts on wetlands and non-wetland waters (creeks, streams, rivers, and canals) by implementing the following measures:

- Redesign or modify the proposed development to avoid direct and indirect impacts on wetland habitats, if feasible. For underground components, this may be accomplished through the use of trenchless installation methods (e.g., jack and bore).
- Protect wetland habitats that occur near the project site by installing environmentally sensitive area fencing at least 20 feet from the edge of the wetland. Depending on site-specific conditions and permit requirements, this buffer may be wider than 20 feet. The location of the fencing will be marked in the field with stakes and flagging and shown on the construction drawings. The construction specifications will contain clear language that prohibits construction-related activities, vehicle operation, material and equipment storage, and other surface-disturbing activities within the fenced environmentally sensitive area.
- Avoid installation activities in saturated or ponded wetlands during the wet season (spring and winter) to the maximum extent possible. Where such activities are unavoidable, protective practices, such as use of padding or vehicles with balloon tires, will be used.
- Where determined necessary by resource specialists, use geotextile cushions and other materials (e.g., timber pads, prefabricated equipment pads, or geotextile fabric) in saturated conditions to minimize damage to the substrate and vegetation.
- Stabilize exposed slopes and streambanks immediately on completion of installation activities. Non-wetland waters will be restored in a manner that encourages vegetation to re-establish to its pre-construction condition and that reduces the effects of erosion on the drainage system.
- In highly erodible stream systems, stabilize banks using a non-vegetative material that will bind the soil initially and break down within a few years. If the project engineers determine that more aggressive erosion control treatments are needed, use geotextile mats, excelsior blankets, or other soil stabilization products.
- During construction, remove trees, shrubs, debris, or soils that are inadvertently deposited below the ordinary high water mark of drainages in a manner that minimizes disturbance of the drainage bed and bank.

These measures will be incorporated into contract specifications and implemented by the project contractor. In addition, the County will ensure that the contractor incorporates all permit conditions into construction specifications.

Mitigation Measure BIO-5c: Compensate for the Loss of Wetlands and Non-wetland Waters of the United States and Waters of the State

Where development associated with project implementation would have potential to result in the loss of wetlands or non-wetland waters of the United States or waters of the state, the County will require compensation for the loss of wetlands and/or non-wetland waters to ensure no net loss of habitat functions and values. Compensation ratios will be based on site-specific information and determined through coordination with state and federal agencies, including USACE and the Regional Water Board. The compensation will be at a minimum 1:1 ratio (1 acre restored or created for every 1 acre filled) and may be a combination of onsite restoration/creation, offsite restoration, and mitigation credits. A restoration and monitoring plan will be developed and implemented that describes how wetlands and non-wetland waters will be restored or created and monitored over a minimum period of time.

Impact BIO-6: Potential introduction or spread of noxious weeds (less than significant with mitigation)

Development and construction activities associated with project implementation could introduce or spread noxious weeds into currently uninfested areas, possibly resulting in the displacement of special-status plant species and degradation of habitat for special-status wildlife. Plants or seeds may be dispersed on construction equipment if the appropriate measures are not implemented. This impact is considered significant because the introduction or spread of noxious weeds could result in a substantial reduction or elimination of species diversity or abundance. Implementation of the following mitigation measure would reduce this impact to a ***less than significant*** level.

Mitigation Measure BIO-6: Avoid the Dispersal of Invasive Plants into Uninfested Areas

During the evaluation of biological resources on parcels prior to development, a qualified biologist will determine whether invasive plant species present a risk to native plants on the site and whether they could displace native plants. If invasive plant species are present, and to avoid the introduction or spread of invasive plants into uninfested areas, the County will require the incorporation of the following measures into construction project plans and specifications:

- Use certified, weed-free, imported erosion-control materials (or rice straw in upland areas).
- Educate construction supervisors and managers about weed identification and the importance of controlling and preventing the spread of invasive plants.
- The invasive plant avoidance measures will be reflected in contract documents and implemented by the construction contractor.

3.4.3 References Cited

California Department of Fish and Wildlife. 2018. *Protocols for Surveying and Evaluating Impacts to Special Status Native Plant Populations and Sensitive Natural Communities*. March 20, 2018. Available: https://nrm.dfg.ca.gov/FileHandler.ashx?DocumentID=18959&inline.

California Department of Fish and Wildlife. 2020. California Natural Diversity Database—GIS Dataset (includes RareFind searches), May 1, 2020 update.

California Native Plant Society. 2020. Inventory of Rare and Endangered Plants (online edition, v8-03 0.39). California Native Plant Society, Sacramento, CA. http://www.rareplants.cnps.org.

Environmental Laboratory. 1987. *Corps of Engineers Wetlands Delineation Manual*. (Technical Report Y-87-1.) Vicksburg, MS: U.S. Army Waterways Experiment Station.

Google Earth. 2020. Imagery date: September 12, 2019.

Lichvar, R.W. and S.M. McColley. 2008. *A Field Guide to the Identification of the Ordinary High Water Mark in the Arid West Region of the Western United States*. ERDC/CRREL TR-08-12. Hanover, NH: U.S. Army Engineer Research and Development Center. Available:<http://el.erdc.usace.army.mil/elpubs/pdf/trcrrel08-12.pdf>.

Mersel, M.K. and R.W. Lichvar. 2014. *A Guide to Ordinary High Water Mark (OHWM) Delineation for Non-Perennial Streams in the Western Mountains, Valleys, and Coast Region of the United States*. Available: http://acwc.sdp.sirsi.net/client/search/asset/1036027.

National Invasive Species Council. 2008. *2008–2012 National Invasive Species Management Plan*. Washington, DC.

Natural Resources Conservation Service. 2019. Soil Survey Western Placer County. Last updated: September 16, 2019. Available: https://websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov/app/WebSoilSurvey.aspx.

Placer County. 2013. *Placer County General Plan*. Adopted August 16, 1994. Updated May 21, 2013. Auburn, CA.

Placer County. 2018. *Western Placer County Habitat Conservation Plan and Natural Community Conservation Plan*. Working Draft. December 2018.

Placer County 2020. *Placer County Conservation Program Final Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Report.* Prepared by ICF. Sacramento, CA.

Placer County Planning Department. 2004. *Placer County Natural Resources Report. A Scientific Assessment of Watersheds, Ecosystems, and Species of the Phase I Planning Area*. Prepared Jones & Stokes Associates. Sacramento, CA.

State Water Resources Control Board. 2019. State wetland definition and procedures for discharges of dredged or fill material to waters of the State. Adopted April 2, 2019.

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. 2008. *Regional Supplement to the Corps of Engineers Wetlands Delineation Manual: Arid West Region (Version 2.0)*. J. S. Wakeley, R. W. Lichvar, and C.V. Noble (eds.). ERDC/EL TR-08-28. Vicksburg, MS: U.S. Army Engineer Research and Development Center.

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. 2010. *Regional Supplement to the Corps of Engineers Wetlands Delineation Manual: Western Mountains, Valleys, and Coast Region (Version 2.0)*. ed. J. S. Wakeley, R. W. Lichvar, and C.V. Noble. ERDC/EL TR-10-3. Vicksburg, MS: U.S. Army Engineer Research and Development Center.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. 2020. Information for Planning and Consultation Trust Resource Report. List of Federal Endangered and Threatened Species That Occur in or May Be Affected by the Project. Sacramento Fish and Wildlife Office. Sacramento, CA. Available: http://ecos.fws.gov/ipac.

3.5 Cultural Resources

This section addresses the potential impacts of Placer County's (County) proposed General Plan amendments, Zoning Ordinance update, and the development of design standards and guidelines for mixed-use development (project) on cultural resources. It describes the existing historic and cultural context of the project area and identifies the applicable federal and state plans, policies, and laws and local plans, policies, and regulations. The analysis identifies the potential im

pacts of the project on cultural resources and identifies mitigation measures to reduce the level of impacts.

Comments received on the Notice of Preparation regarding cultural resources included a recommendation for tribal consultation and concerns regarding how the proposed project could affect cultural and tribal resources.

3.5.1 Existing Conditions

Regulatory Setting

This section summarizes key federal, state, and regional and local regulations, laws, and policies relevant to cultural resources.

Federal

National Historic Preservation Act

Among those statutes enacted by Congress that affect cultural resources, the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (NHPA) is the most significant law that addresses cultural resources. An important provision of the NHPA is the National Register of Historic Places (National Register). The National Register is the nation's master inventory of historic property designations and is administered by the National Park Service. The National Register lists buildings, structures, objects, sites and districts that possess historic, architectural, engineering, archaeological, and/or traditional significance. All historic properties listed in the National Register are also listed in the California Register of Historical Resources (California Register), and thus are considered historical resources for the purposes of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

The NHPA also contains provisions that require federal agencies to consider the effects of their undertakings on historic properties. Future projects resulting from implementation of the proposed project may have federal funding or require federal approvals, and thus would be a federal undertaking subject to Section 106 of the NHPA.

State

California Environmental Quality Act

CEQA requires public agencies to consider the effects of their actions on both "historical resources" and "unique archaeological resources." Pursuant to California Public Resources Code (PRC) Section 21084.1, a "project that may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an historical

resource is a project that may have a significant effect on the environment." Section 21083.2 requires agencies to determine whether proposed projects would have effects on unique archaeological resources.

Historical Resources

Historical resource is a term with a defined statutory meaning (PRC § 21084.1; determining significant impacts to historical and archaeological resources is described in the State CEQA Guidelines §§ 15064.5(a) and (b)). Under State CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(a), historical resources include the following:

1. A resource listed in or determined to be eligible by the State Historical Resources Commission for listing in, the California Register (PRC § 5024.1).
2. A resource included in a local register of historical resources, as defined in PRC Section 5020.1(k) or identified as significant in a historical resource survey meeting the requirements of PRC Section 5024.1(g), will be presumed to be historically or culturally significant. Public agencies must treat any such resource as significant unless the preponderance of evidence demonstrates that it is not historically or culturally significant.
3. Any object, building, structure, site, area, place, record, or manuscript that a lead agency determines to be historically significant or significant in the architectural, engineering, scientific, economic, agricultural, educational, social, political, military, or cultural annals of California may be considered to be a historical resource, provided the lead agency's determination is supported by substantial evidence in light of the whole record. Generally, a resource will be considered by the lead agency to be historically significant if the resource meets the criteria for listing in the California Register (PRC § 5024.1), including the following:
    a. Is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of California's history and cultural heritage
    b. Is associated with the lives of persons important in our past
    c. Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction, or represents the work of an important creative individual, or possesses high artistic values
    d. Has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory (i.e., before European contact) or history
4. The fact that a resource is not listed in or determined to be eligible for listing in the California Register, not included in a local register of historical resources (pursuant to PRC § 5020.1(k)), or identified in a historical resources survey (meeting the criteria in PRC § 5024.1(g)) does not preclude a lead agency from determining that the resource may be an historical resource as defined in PRC Section 5020.1(j) or 5024.1.

California Register of Historical Resources

The California Register is a statewide program of similar scope and with similar criteria for inclusion as those used for the National Register. The California Register is tied to CEQA because any resource that meets the California Register criteria is considered a historical resource under CEQA. All resources listed in the National Register are automatically listed in the California Register.

A historic resource must be significant at the local, state, or national level under one or more of the criteria defined in the California Code of Regulations Title 15, Chapter 11.5, Section 4850. The California Register uses four associative criteria for evaluating the significance of a resource:

- **Criterion 1.** A resource is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of local or regional history, or the cultural heritage of California or the United States.
- **Criterion 2.** A resource is associated with the lives of persons important to local, California, or national history.
- **Criterion 3.** A resource embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction, or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values.
- **Criterion 4.** A resource has yielded, or has the potential to yield, information important to the prehistory or history of the local area, California, or the nation.

The California Register also applies seven integrity criteria to analyze a resource's ability to convey its significance found under the four associative criteria. A project is considered to have a significant impact when the effect on a historical resource may diminish any of these aspects of integrity:

- **Location**. Integrity of location refers to whether a property remains where it was originally constructed or was relocated.
- **Design.** Integrity of design refers to whether a property has maintained its original configuration of elements and style that characterize its plan, massing, and structure. Changes made after original construction can acquire significance in their own right.
- **Setting.** Integrity of setting refers to the physical environment surrounding a property that informs the characterization of the place.
- **Materials**. Integrity of materials refers to the physical components of a property, their arrangement or pattern, and their authentic expression of a particular time period.
- **Workmanship**. Integrity of workmanship refers to whether the physical elements of a structure express the original craftsmanship, technology and aesthetic principles of a particular people, place or culture at a particular time period.
- **Feeling.** Integrity of feeling refers to the property's ability to convey the historical sense of a particular time period.
- **Association.** Integrity of association refers to the property's significance defined by a connection to a particular important event, person or design.

Unique Archaeological Resources

CEQA also requires lead agencies to consider whether projects would affect unique archaeological resources. PRC Section 21083.2(g) states that unique archaeological resource means an archaeological artifact, object, or site about which it can be clearly demonstrated that, without merely adding to the current body of knowledge, there is a high probability that it meets any of the following criteria:

1. Contains information needed to answer important scientific research questions and that there is a demonstrable public interest in that information.

2. Has a special and particular quality such as being the oldest of its type or the best available example of its type.
3. Is directly associated with a scientifically recognized important prehistoric or historic event or person.

Assembly Bill 52

CEQA was amended in 2014 by Assembly Bill 52. Refer to Section 3.18, *Tribal Cultural Resources*, for information regarding Assembly Bill 52.

Public Resources Code Sections 5024 and 5024.5

The California State Legislature enacted PRC Sections 5024 and 5024.5 as part of a larger effort to establish a state program to preserve historical resources. These sections of the code require state agencies to take actions to ensure preservation of state-owned historical resources under their jurisdictions. These actions include evaluating resources for National Register and California Historical Landmark eligibility, maintaining an inventory of eligible and listed resources, and managing these historical resources so that that they will retain their historic characteristics.

PRC Section 5024(f) requires state agencies to submit to the State Historic Preservation Officer for comment documentation for any project having the potential to affect historical resources under its jurisdiction which are listed in or potentially eligible for inclusion in the National Register, or are registered or eligible for registration as California Historical Landmarks. The State Historic Preservation Officer has 30 days after receipt of the notice for review and comment.

Health and Safety Code Sections 7052 and 7050.5

Section 7050.5(b) of the California Health and Safety code specifies protocol when human remains are discovered. The code states:

> In the event of discovery or recognition of any human remains in any location other than a dedicated cemetery, there shall be no further excavation or disturbance of the site or any nearby area reasonably suspected to overlie adjacent remains until the coroner of the county in which the human remains are discovered has determined, in accordance with Chapter 10 (commencing with Section 27460) of Part 3 of Division 2 of Title 3 of the Government Code, that the remains are not subject to the provisions of Section 27492 of the Government Code or any other related provisions of law concerning investigation of the circumstances, manner and cause of death, and the recommendations concerning treatment and disposition of the human remains have been made to the person responsible for the excavation, or to his or her authorized representative, in the manner provided in PRC Section 5097.98.

California Native American Historical, Cultural, and Sacred Sites Act

Refer to Section 3.18 for information regarding the California Native American Historical, Cultural, and Sacred Sites Act.

Public Resources Code Section 5097

PRC Section 5097 specifies the procedures to be followed in the event of the unexpected discovery of human remains on non-federal land. The disposition of Native American burial falls within the jurisdiction of the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC). PRC Section 5097.5 states the following:

No person shall knowingly and willfully excavate upon, or remove, destroy, injure, or deface any historic or prehistoric ruins, burial grounds, archaeological or vertebrate paleontological site, including fossilized footprints, inscriptions made by human agency, or any other archaeological, paleontological or historical feature, situated on public lands, except with the express permission of the public agency having jurisdiction over such lands. Violation of this section is a misdemeanor.

Local

Placer County General Plan

The Placer County General Plan establishes goals and policies regarding the preservation of historical, archaeological, and cultural resources in Section 5, *Recreation and Cultural Resources*. The General Plan specifies that no cultural resources mitigation measures have been adopted. Those goals and policies pertinent to the County's cultural resources planning responsibilities are listed below (Placer County 2013).

Goal

5.D. To identify, protect, and enhance Placer County's important historical, archaeological, paleontological, and cultural sites and their contributing environment.

Policies

5.D.1. The County shall assist the citizens of Placer County in becoming active guardians of their community's cultural resources.

5.D.2. The County shall solicit the cooperation of the owners of cultural and paleontological resources, encourage those owners to treat these resources as assets rather than liabilities, and encourage the support of the general public for the preservation and enhancement of these resources.

5.D.3. The County shall solicit the views of the Native American Heritage Commission, State Office of Historic Preservation, North Central Information Center, and/or the local Native American community in cases where development may result in disturbance to site containing evidence of Native American activity and/or to sites of cultural importance.

5.D.4. The County shall coordinate with the cities and municipal advisory councils in the County to promote the preservation and maintenance of Placer County's paleontological and archaeological resources.

5.D.5. The County shall use, where feasible, incentive programs to assist private property owners in preserving and enhancing cultural resources.

5.D.6. The County shall require that discretionary development projects identify and protect from damage, destruction, and abuse, important historical, archaeological, paleontological, and cultural sites and their contributing environment. Such assessments shall be incorporated into a Countywide cultural resource data base, to be maintained by the Division of Museums.

5.D.7. The County shall require that discretionary development projects are designed to avoid potential impacts to significant paleontological or cultural resources whenever possible. Unavoidable impacts, whenever possible, shall be reduced to a less than significant level and/or shall be mitigated by extracting maximum recoverable data. Determinations of impacts, significance, and mitigation shall be made by qualified archaeological (in consultation with recognized local Native American groups), historical, or paleontological consultants, depending on the type of resource in question.

5.D.8. The County shall, within its power, maintain confidentiality regarding the locations of archaeological sites in order to preserve and protect these resources from vandalism and the unauthorized removal of artifacts.

5.D.9. The County shall use the State Historic Building Code to encourage the preservation of historic structures.

5.D.10. The County will use existing legislation and propose local legislation for the identification and protection of cultural resources and their contributing environment.

5.D.11. The County shall support the registration of cultural resources in appropriate landmark designations (i.e., National Register of Historic Places, California Historical Landmarks, Points of Historical Interest, or Local Landmark). The County shall assist private citizens seeking these designations for their property.

5.D.12. The County shall consider acquisition programs (i.e. Placer Legacy Open Space and Agricultural Conservation Program) as a means of preserving significant cultural resources that are not suitable for private development. Organizations that could provide assistance in this area include, but are not limited to, the Archaeological Conservancy, the Native American community, and local land trusts.

Implementation Programs

5.4. The County shall prepare, adopt, and implement procedures for review and approval of all County-permitted projects involving ground disturbance and all building and/or demolition permits that will affect buildings, structures, or objects 45 years of age or older.

5.5. The County shall develop preservation incentive programs for owners of important cultural and paleontological resources, using such mechanisms as the Mills Act, the Historic Preservation Easement program, the Certified Local Government program, and the Heritage Tourism program.

5.6. The County shall establish a formal Placer County Register of Historical Properties to facilitate preservation of the locally significant historical properties that do not qualify for State or Federal listings.

5.7. The County shall consider pursuing the following cultural resources management programs and shall explore possible funding sources to support these programs:

a. Pursuit of status as a Certified Local Government to facilitate state funding and technical assistance from the State Office of Historic Preservation;

b. Preparation, adoption, and implementation of a cultural resources ordinance that provides definitions and standards for identification and protection of cultural resources and provides penalties for their disturbance; and,

c. Establishment of the staff position of cultural resources coordinator. The coordinator would provide archaeological and architectural historian expertise to the activities outlined above and would maintain a countywide cultural resource database. The coordinator would also provide assistance to the public in understanding cultural resource concerns and in fulfilling cultural resource legislative requirements.

Placer County Cultural and Historic Resources Preservation Ordinance

The Placer County Zoning Ordinance includes regulations for Cultural and Historic Resources Preservation (Ord. 5034-B, 2000: prior code § 45.001). The following sections are relevant to planning responsibilities regarding cultural resources.

15.60.040 Responsibilities and duties of the historical advisory board.

The historical advisory board shall act in an advisory capacity to the board of supervisors, the department of facility services/museums division and the Placer County planning commission in all matters relating to the identification, protection, retention and preservation of historical resources within the county and shall include the following:

F. Advise and make recommendations to the board of supervisors on the formulation, implementation, and review of all programs, policies, services, facilities, and other matters relating to the preservation of the cultural and historic resources of the county, including matters subject to review pursuant to the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the provisions of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act.

15.60.050 Responsibilities and duties of the department of facility services/museums division.

The following responsibilities and duties shall be carried out by the director of the county department of facilities services or his/her authorized museums administrator or other authorized designee:

G. Review and comment on the decisions and documents (including environmental assessments, environmental impact reports, environmental impact statements, development applications, building permits and other similar documents) of the county and other public agencies when such decisions or documents may affect cultural and/or historic resources, cultural/historic districts, or other resources within the county using as guidelines the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Archaeology and Historic Preservation. (Ord. 5353-B, 2005; Ord. 5034-B, 2000: prior code § 45.030)

15.60.060 Official register of cultural and historic resources.

Those sites and areas officially designated by the board of supervisors as cultural/historic resources and cultural/historic districts shall collectively be known as the Placer County Official Register of Cultural and Historic Resources ("official register"). The official register shall be kept on file with the director of the department of museums, who shall transmit copies to the county clerk-recorder-registrar for recordation in the official records of the county, the director of the planning department, the director of the county library, and to other such entities as the director of museums deems appropriate. The county clerk-recorder registrar shall record the document pursuant to the requirements of this code. The process to designate a cultural/historic resource and/or a cultural/historic district in the official register may be initiated by the property owner, as provided by Section 15.60.070. (Ord. 5034-B, 2000: prior code § 45.035)

15.60.150 Approval of permits.

Except as provided in Section 15.60.160, no permit or entitlement shall be issued for any construction work on a cultural/historic resource, its site, or within any cultural/historic district that is designated in the official register, unless and until the issuance of an appropriate permit occurs pursuant to the procedures set forth in Section 15.60.180 of this article. (Ord. 5034-B, 2000: prior code § 45.120)

15.60.180 Demolition or destruction of cultural/historic resources, including sites in a cultural/historic district.

A. The alteration, reconstruction, demolition, or destruction in whole or part, of a designated cultural/historic resource or a site in a designated cultural/historic district is prohibited unless permission is granted by the planning director or his designee pursuant to this section. The property owner of such structure, or an authorized agent, must give the planning director ninety (90) days prior written notice that such act is planned for such structure. Subject to the provisions of this subsection, no application for a permit to carry out such alteration, reconstruction or demolition will be deemed complete until the notice has been provided and the ninety (90) day period has been completed. Following the receipt of such notice, the planning director may take such steps as are deemed to be necessary to preserve the structure concerned. The planning director and/or the director of facility services or his/her authorized museums administrator or other authorized designee may, among other things:

1. Seek local trusts and other financial sources that may be willing to purchase the resource for restoration;

2. Publicize the availability of the resource for purchase for restoration purposes;

3. Make recommendations to the board of supervisors concerning the acquisition of development rights or facade easements and the imposition or negotiation of other restrictions for the preservation of the resource;

4. Investigate possible sites for relocation of the resource; and/or

5. Recommend to the board of supervisors that the county purchase the resource where it does not appear that private preservation is feasible.

B. The planning director may extend the required ninety (90) day period for good cause, not to exceed a total of one hundred twenty (120) days, unless a longer period of time is agreed to, in writing, by the property owner.

C. The prohibitions of subsection A of this section shall not apply:

1. To the demolition of a structure that has been damaged due to a natural disaster and the structure presents an imminent threat to the public of bodily harm or damage to adjacent property, as determined by one of the public officials listed in Section 15.60.160; or when the State Office of Historic Preservation determines, pursuant to California Public Resources Code § 5028, as amended, that the structure may be demolished, destroyed, or significantly altered. (Ord. 5353-B, 2005; Ord. 5034-B, 2000: prior code § 45.150)

Environmental Setting

Regional Prehistoric History

The large geographic extent of Placer County means that it was home to multiple Native American groups throughout history and prehistory. There are significant differences in the prehistory of regions of Placer County; the floor of the Sacramento Valley, the Sierra Nevada foothills, and areas near Lake Tahoe were all utilized at different times and in different ways by prehistoric Californians.

There is evidence of occupation of the areas surrounding Lake Tahoe beginning around 8,000 years before present (BP). These early peoples had a subsistence economy largely focused on big game hunting rather than intensive exploitation of plant resources. Over time, plant resources became more central to Tahoe-area subsistence strategies; presence of plant-processing tools appear in the record more frequently between 8,000 and 4,000 BP, and evidence of more intensive gathering of small seeds appears in the archaeological record approximately 4,000 BP (Elsasser 1978:52–54; Kowta 1988:58–67; Moratto 1984:294–297). This intensification would continue, and around 1,500 BP, native peoples began to occupy Tahoe year-round, rather than seasonally, and began to intensively exploit piñon and acorn resources (Kowta 1988:134–144; Moratto 1984:294–297).

Exploitation of resources on the Sacramento Valley floor followed a similar pattern of intensification over time, but began much earlier, with evidence of occupation by Paleo-Indian groups as early as 13,500 BP. These groups, as with the earliest peoples of Tahoe, were largely focused on hunting big game. Population pressures appear to increase in the valley starting around 10,550 BP, as evidenced by dietary stress (Moratto 1984:203–204). This led to the development of more specialized tools, the exploitation of smaller game, and the exploitation of increasingly diverse plant species over time. This also led to flourishing of trade networks between 7,550 BP and 2,550 BP. This included the development of trans-Sierra trade routes which transported foodstuffs like acorn and lithic materials like obsidian (Rosenthal et al. 2007:155). This corresponds with the earliest evidence of widespread occupation of the Sierra Nevada foothills in about 5,000 BP. This pattern of increasing specialization, exchange, and spatial circumscription continued through to the historic period,

accompanied by increasingly intensive exploitation of acorn as a staple resource, as evidenced by the appearance of shaped mortars and pestles and hopper mortars between 2,550 BP and the historic period (Moratto 1984:209–210).

Ethnography

Refer to Section 3.17 for information regarding the Native American ethnographic setting.

Regional History

Placer County was established on April 25, 1851, from portions of Sutter and Yuba Counties. The American and Bear Rivers form the county's northern and southern boundaries. The county seat is the city of Auburn, located at the confluence of the North Fork and Middle Fork of the American River. Auburn was founded 12 miles northwest of the town of Coloma, that is located on the South Fork of the American River and is the site of the January 1848 gold discovery that initiated the California Gold Rush (Thompson and West 1882:66–68; Placer County 1994:7.8–7.12).

Placer County lies on a rich ore vein that extends through several counties in the western Sierra Nevada foothills, and for many years during and after the Gold Rush, gold mining was the dominant industry. Following late-19th-century mandates restricting mining operations, the county's farming, livestock ranching, timber harvest and water management industries eclipsed mining. Water conveyance systems that originated to support mining throughout the county were rapidly converted for agricultural and community development purposes and, by the early 20th century, had been adapted for hydroelectric power generation. The Drum Spaulding system connects numerous 19th- and 20th-century canals and reservoirs along the Yuba, Bear and American Rivers to supply water and electricity (Thompson and West 1882:150–152; Placer County 1994:7.8–7.12).

Early roadways through the region connected mining communities with commercial hubs such as Sacramento, Marysville, and Folsom, and stage stops along these routes provided amenities and lodging for travelers. The First Transcontinental Railroad was built through Placer County in 1864, and lower foothill towns such as Auburn, Rocklin, and Roseville quickly adapted rail transport for marketing its agricultural and mineral resources. In contrast, the county's Sierran adaptation focused on timber harvest and livestock ranching (Thompson and West 1882:150–152; Placer County 1994:7.8–7.12).

3.5.2 Environmental Impacts

The environmental analysis in this section focuses on the two main components of the project: (1) amendments to the Land Use Element in the County's General Plan, Zoning Ordinance, and Community Design Manual, and (2) the potential locations for the new dwelling units that could be constructed as a result of changes to the Zoning Ordinance (a total of 194 units distributed throughout the county).

The general land use pattern allowed by the housing-related code amendments is evaluated in the following discussions for its potential to adversely affect existing cultural resources.

The analysis in this section also considers the impacts from the potential development of dwelling units in certain areas throughout the county. As a result of project implementation, a total of 194 units could be constructed (Figure 2-3 in Chapter 2, Project Description), as noted below. While

these units could be developed as a result of project implementation, the project itself does not propose any site-specific development.

- 50 units in the Roseville area (South Placer County)
- 13 units in the Loomis/Newcastle area (foothill region)
- 49 units in the Auburn/Bowman area (foothill region)
- 82 units in the eastern county (High Sierra region), including:
    - 31 units near Sugar Bowl
    - 4 units near Squaw Valley
    - 42 units near SR 89
    - 5 units near Northstar

Methods for Analysis

This analysis identifies the potential impacts of implementation of the project on historical resources. The impact analysis considers the range of known historical resources in the project area, as well as the potential for previously undocumented historical resources, including human remains, and physical effects (i.e., disturbance, material alteration, demolition) on known and previously undocumented historical resources that could result from implementation of the project. The analysis is also informed by the provisions and requirements of federal, state, and local laws and regulations that apply to historical resources.

Because the project does not propose any site-specific development activities, this analysis focuses on the potential impacts of future development that could occur as a result of the project.

Known and Potential Historical Resources

All resources that are eligible for listing in the National Register or California Register would be considered historic resources for the purposes of CEQA. As of May 2020, public records indicate that more than 2,000 historic resources had been documented and evaluated in Placer County, and over 500 of those resources have been evaluated as eligible for listing, individually or as part of a district or landscape. Additional historic resources records contain sensitive information and are held by Tribal groups, the NAHC, Placer County, and the California Office of Historic Preservation and its California Historic Resources Inventory System. Confidential historic resources include archaeological and Tribal cultural resources, and the total number of these resources and their eligibility status is not publicly available.

Thirty historic resources in Placer County, including archaeological and built environment resources, are currently listed in the National Register and, by default, the California Register. Placer County's local register of historic resources includes all 30 of the National Register and California Register resources, and one resource (the Halbom House) that is currently registered locally. All 31 resources would be considered historic resources for the purposes of CEQA.

Table 3.5-1. Placer County Historical Resources

Resource Name	Area	Placer County Register	California Register	National Register
Auburn City Hall and Fire House	Auburn	Yes	Yes	Yes
Auburn Fire House #1	Auburn	Yes	Yes	Yes
Auburn Fire House #2	Auburn	Yes	Yes	Yes
Auburn Grammar School	Auburn	Yes	Yes	Yes
Auburn Masonic Temple	Auburn	Yes	Yes	Yes
Carnegie Library	Roseville	Yes	Yes	Yes
Carnegie Public Library	Auburn	Yes	Yes	Yes
Colfax Freight Depot	Colfax	Yes	Yes	Yes
Colfax Passenger Depot	Colfax	Yes	Yes	Yes
DeWitt Government Center	Auburn	Yes	Yes	Yes
Dutch Flat Historic District	Dutch Flat	Yes	Yes	Yes
El Toyon	Auburn	Yes	Yes	Yes
Fiddyment Ranch Complex	Roseville	Yes	Yes	Yes
Griffith House	Penryn	Yes	Yes	Yes
Griffith Quarry	Penryn	Yes	Yes	Yes
Haman House	Roseville	Yes	Yes	Yes
Irene Burns House	Auburn	Yes	Yes	Yes
Lake Tahoe Dam	Tahoe City	Yes	Yes	Yes
Lincoln Public Library	Lincoln	Yes	Yes	Yes
Michigan Bluff to Last Chance Trail	Michigan Bluff	Yes	Yes	Yes
Mt. Quarries Bridge	Auburn	Yes	Yes	Yes
Newcastle Portuguese Hall	Newcastle	Yes	Yes	Yes
Odd Fellows Hall	Auburn	Yes	Yes	Yes
Old Auburn Historic District	Auburn	Yes	Yes	Yes
Outlet Gates and Gatekeeper's Cabin	Tahoe City	Yes	Yes	Yes
PCWA Heritage House (Halbom House)	Ophir	Yes	No	No
Steven's Trail	Colfax	Yes	Yes	Yes
Strap Ravine Nisenan Maidu Indian Site	Roseville	Yes	Yes	Yes
Summit Soda Springs	Soda Springs	Yes	Yes	Yes
Watson Log Cabin	Tahoe City	Yes	Yes	Yes
Women’s Club of Lincoln	Lincoln	Yes	Yes	Yes

Source: Placer County 2020.

Historic resources that predate European contact in California, or prior to written historical records, are associated with Native American histories and are part of the heritage of modern California Tribes. These resources may include village sites, resource harvest and processing sites, bedrock mortar features, and other sites and features; however, the character and location of archaeological resources is generally confidential. For instance, the Strap Ravine Nisenan Maidu Indian Site is listed in the National and California Registers, and descriptive information about the resource is restricted

from public records. To help explain the potential for archaeological sites to be located in the project area, this section discusses the distribution of archaeological resources throughout Placer County's foothills and at higher Sierra elevations in terms of archaeological sensitivity models.

Few Gold Rush–era buildings are left in Placer County because early miners and immigrants generally lived in buildings and structures constructed of insubstantial materials such as canvas. Rare stone buildings survive in rural parts of the region. Archaeological sites from the early and mid-19th century are similarly rare and underrepresented in the historic record (Placer County 1994:7.8–7.12).

A greater number of buildings, structures, sites and features are left from mining activities during the second half of the 19th century, along with resources reflecting quarrying, agriculture, timber harvest, water conveyance, hydroelectric utilities, and rail and road resources. These include Griffith's granite quarry and office in Penryn (now a state landmark), the clay pits northwest of Lincoln, an abandoned kiln in the middle of the Black Oak Golf Course, the Sisley mine industrial mill outside of Penryn, and the Big Ben Mine buildings north of Lincoln. Other mining-era buildings include an adobe or rammed earth building on Virginiatown Road, a few abandoned mines like the Hathaway Mine in the Ophir District, and the Whiskey Diggings Ditch that still carries water through the foothills of western Placer County (Placer County 1994:7.8–7.12).

Many other buildings, structures, sites and features are associated with later phases of mining activity, including mine workers' and owners' residences, warehouses, old mining buildings, gold camp sites, stamp mills, mining structures, mining ditches, and miles of streambank dredge tailings (Placer County 1994:7.8–7.12).

Historical resources in the upper Sierra portion of the county are related to early timber harvest operations, fire lookouts, water management, and recreation. Structures associated with early lumber mills include railroad trestles and tunnels, water flumes, and wooden bridges. Several buildings from this period on the Cal Ida Lumber Company property are considered locally significant (Placer County 1994:7.8–7.12).

An important early rancher, J. Parker Whitney, established the 18,100-acre Spring Valley Ranch, now known as Stanford Ranch, north of Roseville. Original rock walls, a hand-hewn granite bridge, and a mausoleum in which Whitney is buried are located at Stanford Ranch. Buildings and other features and structures are associated with the fruit-growing industry of the county. Some of these properties include early fruit stands; the Citrus Colony House on Del Mar Avenue west of Penryn; fruit sheds in Loomis, Newcastle, Auburn, and Colfax; orchard remnants; and the palm trees that line area roads (Placer County 1994:7.8–7.12).

Numerous Depression-era concrete bridges built by laborers from the Work Projects Administration are located throughout the county. Other historical resources include early schoolhouses, 19th- and early 20th-century residences, commercial buildings and districts, community halls, churches and cemeteries. The DeWitt Center, north of Auburn, was a U.S. Army hospital built in 1944 that was later bought by the State of California and converted to a mental hospital (Placer County 1994:7.8–7.12).

Archaeological Sensitivity

Sensitivity for the presence of archaeological resources is not static across space; in Placer County, the chance of encountering archaeological resources is heightened in areas that were more likely to

be exploited for food or as a living space prehistorically, or for mineral wealth during the historic period.

Areas near perennial sources of water, especially near major waterways or at the confluence of multiple drainages may have been used residentially in prehistory, and occupation sites on these landforms are common. Figure 3.5-1 shows all major waterways within the county; areas within 500 feet of these waterways have a heightened sensitivity for the presence of prehistoric archaeological

resources. Areas near major rivers or lakes, such as the American River and Lake Tahoe, are highly sensitive for the presence of prehistoric archaeological resources.

Depositional environment is also important in regard to archaeological sensitivity. Older landforms with minimal soil development and erosional landforms have lower sensitivity for buried archaeological resources, relative to younger landforms with a depositional environment. Areas of the foothills and mountains within Placer County that are old, with thin soils, are less likely to contain archaeological deposits than Pleistocene-Holocene era alluvial deposits. Meyer and Rosenthal, in their geoarchaeological analysis of California Department of Transportation District 3 include a detailed assessment of which landforms within Placer County are most likely to contain buried archaeological resources (Meyer and Rosenthal 2008).

Given the history of extensive mining operations throughout Placer County, much of the areas of the county within the foothills are sensitive for the presence of historic mining operations. The U.S. Geological Survey tracks mineral resource reports worldwide through its Mineral Resources Data System (MRDS). The MRDS tracks both modern and historic mining activity, and may be helpful in characterizing the sensitivity of a given area for the presence of historic mining sites (Mineral Resources Data System 2020).

Thresholds of Significance

In accordance with Appendix G of the State CEQA Guidelines, the proposed project would be considered to have a significant effect if it would result in any of the conditions listed below.

- A substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to Section 15064.5.
- A substantial adverse change in the significance of a unique archaeological resource pursuant to Section 15064.5.
- Disturbance of any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries.

Impacts and Mitigation Measures

This section describes categories of impacts on known historical resources, and provides appropriate measures for mitigating impacts. The Placer County General Plan and the Placer County Cultural and Historic Resources Preservation Ordinance do not include specific measures to mitigate potential impacts on historic resources.

Impact CUL-1: Potential to cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource (significant and unavoidable)

The project does not include site-specific projects, and thus this analysis does not identify specific historic resources that may be affected. Future projects resulting from implementation of the project

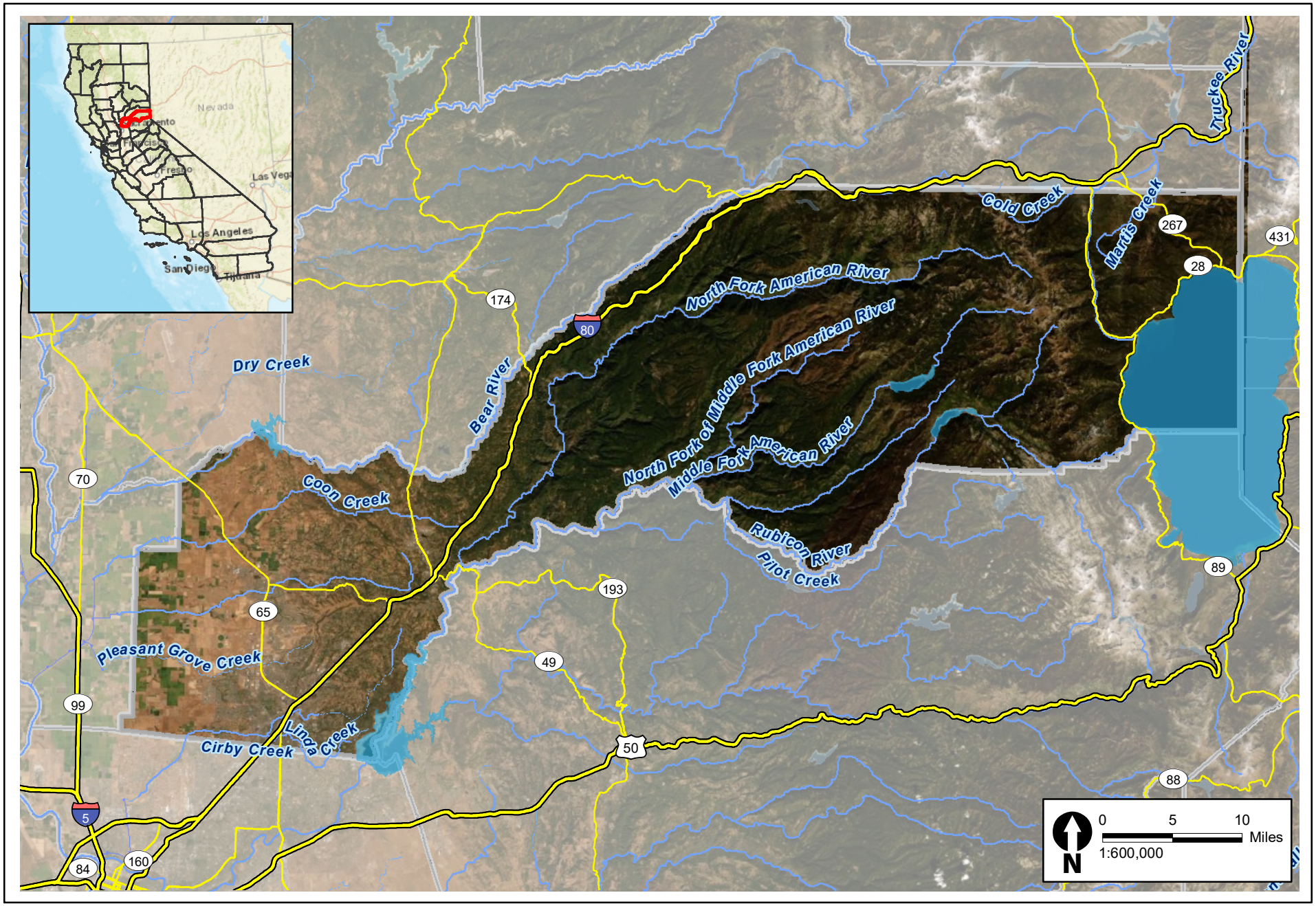


Figure 3.5-1
Major Natural Waterways in Placer County

would be required to undergo a site-specific CEQA analysis to evaluate potential impacts to historical resources.

Specifically, CEQA requires the identification and characterization of any historic resources before a development project could be considered for approval. General Plan Policies 5.D.6 (identification and protection of historical resources), 5.D.7 (unavoidable impacts shall be reduced to a less than significant level and/or shall be mitigated by extracting maximum recoverable data) and Ordinances 15.60.150 (approval of permits) and 15.60.180 (demolition or destruction of cultural/historic resources, including sites in a cultural/historic district) also require identification and avoidance as part of project design. All future projects would be required to comply with these policies and ordinances.

It is reasonable to assume that future projects could result in a significant and unavoidable effect on one or more historical resources. Due to lack of specificity on specific development sites, it cannot be stated with certainty that future project would avoid all impacts. If a significant effect associated with a future project were to be identified, CEQA requires the adoption of mitigation measures to reduce or avoid the effect. The General Plan policies and ordinances mentioned above would largely duplicate CEQA's requirements to avoid or reduce the impacts. If a future project would permanently destroy a historic resource, however, mitigation measures would not reduce the impact to a less-than-significant level thereby requiring an environmental impact report which would include (among other things) consideration of alternatives to the project. Due to the uncertainty of future impacts to historic resources and the requirement that destruction of a historic resource would result in a significant and unavoidable impact, implementation of the proposed project is considered to have a ***significant and unavoidable*** impact on historic resources. Since the General Plan policies and ordinances cited above are duplicative of typical CEQA mitigation measures, no further mitigation measures are recommended.

Impact CUL-2: Potential to cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource (less than significant with mitigation)

Site-specific information regarding future projects resulting from project implementation is not known at this time. Thus, it is not possible to identify specific archaeological resources that may be affected. Future projects resulting from implementation of the project would be required to undergo a site-specific CEQA analysis to evaluate potential impacts to archaeological resources.

Specifically, CEQA requires the identification and characterization of any archaeological resources before a development project could be considered for approval. General Plan Policies 5.D.6 (identification and protection of historical resources), 5.D.7 (unavoidable impacts shall be reduced to a less than significant level and/or shall be mitigated by extracting maximum recoverable data) and Ordinances 15.60.150 (approval of permits) and 15.60.180 (demolition or destruction of cultural/historic resources, including sites in a cultural/historic district) also require identification and avoidance as part of project design. All future projects with the potential to affect archaeological resources would be required to comply with these policies and ordinances.

Despite these protections, it is reasonable to assume that future projects resulting from project implementation could result in a significant effect on one or more archaeological resources since future development could occur in areas (particularly those that are rural) where the potential for encountering archaeological resources is relatively high. Generally, given the richness of archaeological resources in Placer County, it is likely that there are many unknown archaeological resources, many of which could be in areas affected by future growth associated with the project.

The destruction of a significant archaeological resources as a result of one of the conditional land uses would be a significant impact.

The project does not include site-specific development projects. Therefore, it is not possible to predetermine the presence of archaeological resources. As site-specific development projects are proposed, implementation of the following mitigation measure, in combination with the General Plan policies and ordinances noted above, would reduce impacts to ***less than significant with mitigation***.

Mitigation Measure CUL-2: Implement Avoidance Measures to Avoid Direct or Indirect Impacts on Archaeological Resources

If a previously unknown archaeological resource were encountered during construction activity, implementation of inadvertent discovery procedures, as are provided below will help minimize or eliminate direct or indirect impacts on archaeological resources.

If cultural resources are discovered during project-related ground disturbance, all ground-disturbing activities will immediately stop within 100 feet (30 meters) of the discovery, the location of the discovery will be marked for avoidance, and efforts will be made to prevent inadvertent destruction of the find. The contractor must notify the County. The County will evaluate the resource to determine whether it is a historical resource or unique archaeological resource under CEQA. If the County determines that the discovery is not a historical resource, the discovery will be documented, and construction may proceed at the direction of the County.

Treatment will be implemented where necessary to resolve significant effects on inadvertently discovered California Register–eligible cultural resources. The County will consider preservation in place as the preferred mitigation, as required under CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.4(b), for all California Register–eligible resources and non-eligible resources that would be subject to significant effects; the County will prepare a discussion that documents the basis for the selection of treatment consistent with this section.

Impact CUL-3: Disturbance of any human remains, including those interred outside of dedicated cemeteries (less than significant with mitigation)

This project does not include any site-specific development. Consequently, its effect on any specific resource cannot be determined. However, state regulations requiring the reporting and proper, respectful handling of human remains uncovered during construction activities would avoid this impact (California Health and Safety Code § 7050.5; PRC § 5097.98). Impacts due to future development resulting from project implementation would be reduced to less than significant through the implementation of Mitigation Measure CUL-3.

Mitigation Measure CUL-3: Implement Human Remains Discovery Procedures

If human remains are discovered during project implementation, work will cease in the immediate vicinity and within 100 feet of the find to avoid further disturbance. The County will coordinate with the Placer County Coroner to make determinations and perform the management steps prescribed in California Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 and PRC Section 5097.98. This coordination requires the following steps:

- Once notified by the County, the coroner will determine if an investigation regarding the cause of death is required.
- If the coroner determines that the remains are of prehistoric Native American origin, the coroner will then notify the NAHC.
- The NAHC will designate and contact the most likely descendant, who must make recommendations for treatment of the remains within 48 hours from completion of the commission's examination of the finds.
- If the NAHC fails to identify a most likely descendant or if the parties cannot reach agreement as to how to reinter the remains, as described in PRC Section 5097.98(e), the landowner will reinter the remains at a location not subject to further disturbance.
- If the remains are found not to be Native American in origin and do not appear to be in an archaeological context, ground disturbance will proceed at the direction of the coroner and the County.

3.5.3 References Cited

Elsasser, A.B. 1978. Development of Regional Prehistoric Cultures. Pages 37-57 in Robert F. Heizer (ed.), *Handbook of North American Indians*, *California*. Volume 8. Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution.

Kowta, M. 1988. *The Archaeology and Prehistory of Plumas and Butte Counties, California: an Introduction and Interpretive Model.* California Archaeological Site Inventory, Northeast Information Center, California State University, Chico, California.

Meyer and Rosenthal 2008. A Geoarchaeological Overview and Assessment of Caltrans District 3 – Cultural Resources Inventory of Caltrans District 3 Rural Conventional Highways. Prepared by Far Western Anthropological Research Group. Prepared for The California Department of Transportation, District 3, North Region, Marysville, California.

Mineral Resources Data System 2020. "MRDS records graded". Available: https://mrdata.usgs.gov/mrds/map-graded.html. Accessed August 25, 2020.

Moratto, M.J. 1984. *California Archaeology.* Academic Press, New York.

Placer County. 1994. *Placer County General Plan Update: Countywide General Plan Final Environmental Impact Report. Volume 1*. Chapter 7: Recreational and Cultural Resources; pages 7.8–7.12.

Placer County. 2013. *Placer County General Plan.* Section 5: Recreational and Cultural Resources; pages 7.8-7.12.

Placer County. 2020. *Placer County Register of Cultural and Historic Resources.* Information on file with the County of Placer.

Rosenthal, J. S., G. G. White, and M. Q. Sutton. 2007. The Central Valley: A View from the Catbird's Seat. In *California Prehistory: Colonization, Culture, and Complexity*, edited by Terry L. Jones and Kathryn A. Klar, pp. 147-163. AltaMira Press, Lanham, Maryland.

Thompson and West. 1882. *History of Placer County, California with Illustrations and Biographical Sketches of its Prominent Men and Pioneers*. Thompson and West Publishers; San Francisco.

3.6 Energy

This section describes the existing setting for energy and the applicable regulations that govern energy use, supply and distribution, and performance. This section addresses the potential impacts of Placer County's (County) proposed General Plan amendments, Zoning Ordinance update, and the development of design standards and guidelines for mixed-use development (project) related to energy use.

Comments received on the Notice of Preparation included concerns over energy consumption. This analysis considers the project's impacts relating to energy use throughout the County.

3.6.1 Existing Conditions

Regulatory Setting

State Regulations

Clean Energy and Pollution Reduction Act of 2015

Senate Bill (SB) 350 (De Leon, also known as the "Clean Energy and Pollution Reduction Act of 2015") was approved by the California Legislature in September 2015 and signed by Governor Brown in October 2015. Its key provisions are to require the following by 2030: (1) a Renewables Portfolio Standard (RPS) of 50 percent and (2) a doubling of efficiency for existing buildings.

Energy Building Regulations and Energy Conservation Standards

New buildings constructed in California must comply with the standards contained in California Code of Regulations (CCR) Title 20, Energy Building Regulations, and Title 24, Energy Conservation Standards. Title 20 contains standards ranging from power plant procedures and siting to energy efficiency standards for appliances to ensuring reliable energy sources are provided and diversified through energy efficiency and renewable energy resources.

Energy Conservation Standards for new residential and nonresidential buildings were adopted by the California Energy Resources Conservation and Development Commission in June 1977 and most recently revised in 2008 (24 CCR § 6). Title 24 requires the design of building shells and building components that conserve energy. The standards are updated periodically to allow for consideration and possible incorporation of new energy efficiency technologies and methods.

On July 17, 2008, the California Building Standards Commission adopted the nation's first green building standards. The California Green Building Standards Code (CALGreen; proposed Part 11, Title 24) was adopted as part of the California Building Standards Code (24 CCR). Part 11 establishes voluntary standards that became mandatory in the 2010 edition of the code, including planning and design for sustainable site development, energy efficiency (in excess of the California Energy Code requirements), water conservation, material conservation, and internal air contaminants.

California Energy Code

Title 24, Part 6 of the CCR describes California's energy efficiency standards for residential and nonresidential buildings. These standards were established in 1978 in response to a legislative mandate to reduce California's energy consumption and have been updated periodically to include new energy efficiency technologies and methods. The California Energy Code requires compliance with energy efficiency standards for all new construction, including new buildings, additions, alterations, and, in nonresidential buildings, repairs.

California Energy Efficiency Standards for Residential and Nonresidential Buildings—Green Building Code (2011), Title 24 Updates (2013, 2015, 2019)

CALGreen applies to the planning, design, operation, construction, use, and occupancy of newly constructed buildings and requires the installation of energy- and water-efficient indoor infrastructure for all new projects permitted after January 1, 2011. CALGreen also requires newly constructed buildings to develop a waste management plan and divert at least 50 percent of the construction materials generated during construction.

Administrative regulations for CALGreen Part 11 and the California Building Energy Efficiency Standards were adopted in 2013 and took effect on January 1, 2014. The 2013 Building Energy Efficiency Standards are 30 percent more efficient than previous standards for commercial construction. Part 11 also established voluntary standards that became mandatory in the 2010 edition of the code, including planning and design for sustainable site development, energy efficiency, water conservation, material conservation, and internal air contaminants.

The 2016 Building Energy Efficiency Standards were adopted in 2015 and took effect on January 1, 2017. The 2019 standards, which took effect January 1, 2020, take the final step toward achieving zero net energy for newly constructed residential buildings throughout California with requirements such as solar voltaic systems for new homes and encouraging demand responsive technologies (e.g., battery storage, heat pump water heaters) to improve energy savings. The California Energy Commission estimates that the current 2019 standards will result in approximately 30 percent less energy use from nonresidential buildings than those designed in compliance with the 2016 standards. These energy savings are due primarily to the required lighting upgrades with the current standards. Future standards are expected to require zero net energy for newly constructed commercial buildings.

California Renewable Resources Act and the Clean Energy and Pollution Reduction Act of 2015

SB X1-2 (also known as the California Renewable Resources Act) was signed by Governor Grown in April 2011 and revised California's RPS to a goal of 33 percent by 2020. As noted above, SB 350 increased the renewable procurement goal to 50 percent by 2030 and also requires the state to double energy efficiency savings. SB 100 (discussed under *The 100 Percent Clean Energy Act of 2018*) increased the RPS goal to 60 percent by 2030 and includes a 100 percent zero-carbon goal by 2045.

Climate Change Scoping Plan of 2017

Executive Order (EO) B-30-15 and SB 32 extended the goals of AB 32 and set a 2030 goal of reducing emissions 40 percent from 2020 levels. The 2017 Scoping Plan established a proposed framework to implement programs to meet the 2030 greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction goal, focusing on zero and near-zero technologies for moving freight; continuing investment in renewables; overseeing further efforts to create walkable communities with expanded mass transit and other alternatives to

traveling by car. These measures are provided in the Scoping Plan with the expressed intention of reducing carbon emissions; however, there would be a co-benefit of reduced energy use as well.

The 100 Percent Clean Energy Act of 2018

SB 100 builds on SB 350 by increasing the renewable procurement target set in SB 350 to 60 percent by 2030 and requires 100 percent zero-carbon energy production and consumption by 2045.

Local Regulations

Placer County General Plan Update

The Placer County General Plan Update (General Plan) was adopted in May 2013 and includes goals and policies related to energy conservation. The energy-specific goals and policies from the General Plan are outlined below.

Goal H. To increase the efficiency of energy use in new and existing homes with a concurrent reduction in housing costs for Placer County resident

Policy G-1. The County shall require that all new dwelling units meet current State requirements for energy efficiency, and encourage developers to exceed Title 24 requirements. Retrofitting of existing units shall be encouraged.

Policy G-2. The County shall promote land use patterns that encourage energy efficiency, to the extent feasible, and encourage efficient energy use in new development, including but not limited to access to non-auto transit, use of traffic demand management, and water-efficient landscaping.

Policy G-3. The County shall continue to implement provisions of the Subdivision Map Act that require subdivisions to be oriented for solar access, to the extent practical.

Policy G-4. The County shall encourage participation in weatherization and energy efficiency programs sponsored by utility companies.

Placer County Sustainability Plan

Placer County (County) adopted the *Placer County Sustainability Plan: A Greenhouse Gas Emission Reduction Plan and Adaptation Strategy* (PCSP) in January 2020. The PCSP includes an inventory of baseline (2015) and forecasted emissions in 2020, 2030, and 2050 and identifies reduction targets and strategies to reach those targets. The reduction strategies and measures included in the PCSP apply to both municipal operations and community activities within the unincorporated county. The reduction measures address GHG emissions from agriculture and forestry, off-road equipment, solid waste, water and wastewater, transportation, and energy.

Strategies included in the PCSP specific to energy include the following.

Strategy E-1: Facilitate a transition to electricity as the primary energy source for residential, mixed-use, commercial, and office buildings.

Strategy E-2: Provide increased awareness and resources for homeowners to replace old appliances with energy-efficient models.

Strategy E-3: Increase awareness and financing opportunities for nonresidential property owners to conduct retrofits to building HVAC and shell/envelope systems.

Strategy E-4: Encourage new residential, office, and commercial development, as mitigation for discretionary projects exceeding applicable CEQA GHG thresholds, to implement CALGreen Tier 1 standards and accelerate ZNE in new construction.

Strategy E-5: Provide increased financing for home retrofits involving insulation, HVAC systems, fenestration, and other shell and envelope retrofits.

Strategy E-6: Encourage on-site renewable energy generation and storage systems for existing residential units.

Strategy E-7: Create incentives to construct new nonresidential buildings to ZNE energy efficiency standards in advance of the 2030 mandate, and a second class of incentives to support new nonresidential construction that does not achieve ZNE but exceeds minimum standards.

Strategy E-8: Encourage businesses, nonprofits, and other nonresidential property owners and tenants to replace old equipment with more energy-efficient models.

Strategy E-9: Work with Liberty Utilities and Southwest Gas to expand participation in low-income home weatherization programs in the Tahoe Basin.

Strategy E-10: Work with landlord groups and property management groups to increase adoption of modern appliances in residential rental properties.

Strategy E-11: Partner with APCD to develop and implement programs to replace old wood- and propane-burning space heaters with modern, efficient, and low-carbon appliances where feasible, while ensuring that access to alternative heating is maintained.

Strategy E-12: Support increases in renewable energy generation and storage systems for existing nonresidential structures.

Strategy E-13: Work with the California Department of Housing and Community Development to provide increased awareness and incentive programs for mobile home park owners and tenants to reduce costs of mobile home weatherization.

Strategy E-14: In partnership with housing councils, encourage vacation and short-term and seasonal rental properties to replace all major appliances with energy-efficient models and to replace any incandescent light bulbs with more efficient bulbs.

Strategy E-15: Incentivize new homes to install renewable energy generation and energy storage systems that can fully supply the home's energy needs, in cases where the required size of the renewable energy system is insufficient to fully meet on-site demand.

Strategy E-16: Incentivize residential swimming pool efficiency actions, including installation of variable frequency-drive pool pumps and insulated covers.

Strategy E-17: Promote onsite renewable energy generation and energy storage for new small- and medium-sized nonresidential structures.

Strategy E-18: Encourage electrical customers to participate in demand-reduction programs.

Strategy E-19: Encourage nonresidential pool facilities to install variable-frequency-drive pool pumps and insulated covers.

Strategy E-20: Work with agricultural organizations to improve the energy efficiency of agricultural and food-processing facilities to increase profitability.

Strategy E-21: Encourage onsite solar PV systems and/or energy storage as mitigation for discretionary projects exceeding applicable GHG thresholds, for new nonresidential buildings exceeding 20,000 square feet.

Strategy E-22: Request that the Pioneer Governing Board consider increasing the proportion of renewable and carbon-free energy supplied by Pioneer's CCA program and expanding Pioneer's service territory to cover all parts of Placer County currently served by private utilities.

Strategy E-23: Support efforts on suitable land to increase renewable and carbon-free energy generation, including, wind, solar, and biomass, to supply the needs of Pioneer Community Energy, Liberty Utilities., and other local providers.

Strategy E-24: Provide incentives and opportunities to have residential property owners conduct an energy audit when conducting energy efficiency improvements.

Environmental Setting

State Energy Resources and Use

California has a diverse portfolio of resources that produced 2,408.2 trillion British thermal units (BTU)[1] of energy in 2018 (U.S. Energy Information Administration 2020a).[2] Excluding offshore areas, the state ranked sixth in the nation in crude oil production in 2018, producing the equivalent of 992.4 trillion BTUs of energy. The state also ranked first in the nation for energy production from renewable resources. Other energy sources in the state include natural gas (240.2 trillion BTUs), nuclear (187.2 trillion BTUs), and biofuels (29.8 trillion BTUs) (U.S. Energy Information Administration 2020b).[3]

According to the U.S. Energy Information Administration, California consumed approximately 7,967 trillion BTUs of energy in 2018. Per capita energy consumption (i.e., total energy consumption divided by the population) in California is among the lowest in the country, with 202 million BTU in 2018, which ranked 48th among all states. Natural gas accounted for the majority of energy consumption (28 percent); followed by motor gasoline (21 percent); renewable energy, including nuclear electric power, hydroelectric power, biomass, and other renewables (17 percent); distillate and jet fuel (16 percent); and interstate electricity (11 percent); with the remaining 7 percent coming from a variety of other sources (U.S. Energy Information Administration 2020c). The transportation sector consumed the highest quantity of energy (40 percent), followed by the industrial (23 percent), commercial (19 percent), and residential (18 percent) sectors (U.S. Energy Information Administration 2020c).

Per capita energy consumption, in general, is declining due to improvements in energy efficiency and design. However, despite this reduction in per capita energy use, the state's total overall energy consumption (i.e., non-per-capita energy consumption) is expected to increase over the next several decades due to growth in population, jobs, and vehicle travel.

Regional Energy Resources and Use

Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) provides natural gas and electricity services to the vast majority of Northern California, including Placer County and the project area. PG&E's service extends from Eureka to Bakersfield (north to south) and from the Sierra Nevada to the Pacific Ocean (east to west). PG&E purchases gas and power from a variety of sources, including other utility companies. PG&E also obtains energy supplies from power plants and natural gas fields in Northern California. PG&E operates a grid distribution system that channels all power produced at the various generation sources into one large energy pool for distribution throughout the service territory. PG&E provides natural gas and electric infrastructure in Placer County.[4] PG&E has two plan options,

[1] One BTU is the amount of energy required to heat 1 pound of water by 1°F at sea level. BTU is a standard unit of energy that is used in the United States and is on the English system of units (foot-pound-second system).

[2] Note that 2017 data are the most recent available.

[3] No coal production occurs in California; however, imported coal made up approximately 4 percent of California's energy mix as of 2017.

[4] Pioneer Community Energy offers a community choice aggregation program in Placer County, which acts as an alternative electricity supplier to PG&E. Pioneer serves approximately 93,000 residents in Placer County.

known as Solar Choice options, in addition to its base plan, which gives customers the option to purchase energy from solar resources. The first Solar Choice option provides up to 50 percent of a customer's energy from solar resources, while the other option provides up to 100 percent of customer's energy from solar resources.

In 2018, 39 percent of the electricity PG&E supplied through their Base Plan was from renewable sources, followed by 69 percent under the 50 percent Solar Choice Plan, and 100 percent renewable with the 100 percent Solar Choice Plan. Table 3.6-1 outlines the PG&E power mix compared to the power mix for the state in 2018. In 2018, PG&E customers used 80,369 gigawatt hours of electricity and 4,794 million therms of natural gas. Table 3.6-2 outlines the breakdown of electricity and natural gas usage by sector in the PG&E service area. Residential and commercial uses, account for 77 percent of electricity use and 58 percent of natural gas use within the PG&E service area.

In Placer County, a total of 91 million therms of natural gas were consumed in 2018 (the most recent year for which data are available). In 2018, natural gas in Placer County was consumed primarily by the residential sector (68 percent), followed by the nonresidential sector (32 percent). In 2018, Placer County consumed a total of 2,910 million kilowatts of electricity. Electricity was consumed fairly evenly between the non-residential sector (51 percent), and the residential sector (48 percent). Electricity usage for different land uses varies substantially by the type of uses in a building, the types of construction materials used, and the efficiency of the electricity-consuming devices. Table 3.6-3 outlines Placer County's electricity and natural gas consumption from 2015 to 2018.

Table 3.6-1. PG&E and the State of California Power Mix in 2018

Energy Resources	PG&E Option: Base Plan	PG&E Option: 50% Solar Choice	PG&E Option: 100% Solar Choice	California Power Mix 2018
Eligible Renewable:	39%	69%	100%	31%
Biomass and Waste	4%	2%	0%	2%
Geothermal	4%	2%	0%	5%
Small Hydroelectric	3%	1%	0%	2%
Solar	18%	59%	100%	11%
Wind	10%	5%	0%	11%
Coal	0%	0%	0%	3%
Large Hydroelectric	13%	6%	0%	11%
Natural Gas	15%	7%	0%	35%
Nuclear	34%	17%	0%	9%
Other	0%	0%	0%	< 1%
Unspecified[1]	0%	0%	0%	11%
Total	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

Source: Pacific Gas and Electric Company 2019.

[a] Electricity from transactions that are not traceable to specific generation sources are classified as unspecified sources of power.

Table 3.6-2. Electricity and Natural Consumption in the PG&E Service Area in 2018

Energy Resources	Electricity (GWh)	Natural Gas (million therms)
Agriculture and Water Pump	5,832	37
Commercial	34,414	958
Industry	10,519	1,776
Mining and Construction	1,594	190
Residential	27,700	1,833
Streetlight	311	-
Total	**80,369**	**4,794**

Source: California Energy Commission 2020a, 2020b.
GWh = gigawatt hours

Table 3.6-3. Electricity and Natural Gas Consumption in Placer County, 2015–2018

Energy Resources	2015	2016	2017	2018
Electricity (GWh)				
Residential	1,366	1,536	1,505	1,496
Non-Residential	1,530	1,402	1,468	1,415
Total	**2,895**	**2,939**	**2,973**	**2,910**
Natural Gas (millions of therms)				
Residential	53	57	63	62
Non-Residential	25	27	29	29
Total	**79**	**84**	**92**	**91**

Source: California Energy Commission 2020c, 2020d.
GWh = gigawatt hours

3.6.2 Environmental Impacts

The environmental analysis in this section focuses on the two main components of the project: (1) amendments to the Land Use Element in the County's General Plan, Zoning Ordinance, and Community Design Manual, and (2) the potential locations for the new dwelling units that could be constructed as a result of changes to the Zoning Ordinance (a total of 194 units distributed throughout the county).

The general land use pattern allowed by the housing-related code amendments is evaluated in the following discussions for its potential to adversely affect existing energy use.

The analysis in this section also considers the impacts from the potential development of dwelling units at specific sites throughout the county. As a result of project implementation, a total of 194 units could be constructed, as noted below. While these units could be developed as a result of project implementation, the project itself does not propose any site-specific development.

- 50 units in the Roseville area (South Placer County)
- 13 units in the Loomis/Newcastle area (foothill region)
- 49 units in the Auburn/Bowman area (foothill region)

- 82 units in the eastern county (High Sierra region), including:
  - 31 units near Sugar Bowl
  - 4 units near Squaw Valley
  - 42 units near SR 89
  - 5 units near Northstar

Methods for Analysis

Impacts related to energy would be significant if the proposed project were to (1) result in potentially significant environmental impacts due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation; or (2) conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency.

Energy Use during Construction

The 194 units that could be developed as a result of project implementation would result in energy use from construction. Energy use associated with construction activities includes equipment use, and employee, delivery, and haul truck vehicle travel.

For the purposes of this analysis, it is assumed that buildout of the proposed project would be 2030. With an anticipated buildout year of 2030, implementation of various projects associated with the proposed project would occur over an extended period and would depend on factors such as economic conditions, market and housing demands, and other considerations. Since the project does not directly propose development, it is not possible to know with certainty how many units would be constructed within a single year. As such, it was conservatively assumed that up to 25 percent (49 units) of the potential 194 units would be constructed in a single year. This approach is recommended by the Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District (SMAQMD) in their guidance for plan-level analyses (Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District 2016).

Energy use for construction of the 49 units was estimated using a combination of methods and energy factors from published best available documentation. Energy usage associated with fuel consumption was calculated by converting GHG emissions estimated for the GHG analysis using the rate of CO_2 emissions per gallon of combusted gasoline (8.76 kilograms/gallon) and diesel (10.21 kilograms/gallon) (Climate Registry 2018). The estimated fuel consumption was converted to BTUs, assuming an energy intensity of 113,927 BTUs per gallon of gasoline and 129,488 per gallon of diesel, and electricity was converted to BTUs assuming an energy intensity of 3,416 BTUs per kWh (Argonne National Laboratory 2015). A full list of assumptions and emission and energy calculations for project construction can be found in Appendix C.

Energy Use during Operation

The 194 units that could be developed under the proposed project would result in energy use from mobile, off-road equipment, natural gas, electricity, water, and waste sources. Mobile sources are vehicle trips to and from the residences. Off-road sources include landscaping equipment used to maintain the residences. Natural gas combustion is associated with space and water heating requirements. Building electricity, water, and waste consumption would also result in energy use. Operational energy use was quantified for buildout (2030) conditions.

Fuel consumption for mobile and off-road sources during operation was calculated by converting GHG emissions estimated for the GHG analysis using the rate of carbon dioxide emissions per gallon of combusted gasoline and diesel. Fuel consumption was then converted to energy using industry standard emission factors for BTUs per gallon of gasoline and diesel. Energy use associated with area sources, such as natural gas consumption (for space and water heating), water consumption, electricity, wastewater, and solid waste removal was estimated based on the methods, assumptions, and data sources within the California Emissions Estimator Model for the proposed land uses. A full list of assumptions and energy calculations for project operations can be found in Appendix C. Similarly, changes associated with the General Plan and Zoning Ordinance are discussed qualitatively.

Thresholds of Significance

In accordance with Appendix G of the State CEQA Guidelines, the proposed project would be considered to have a significant effect if it would result in any of the conditions listed below.

- Wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources during project construction or operations.
- Conflict with or obstruction of a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency.

Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Impact EN-1: Wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources during project construction or operation (less than significant with mitigation)

Construction

Project construction would require gasoline and diesel fuel for transportation of employees and haul trucks to and from the project site, and diesel fuel for operation of off-road equipment. Table 3.6-4 outlines the construction energy use by source. As shown, the majority of energy use during construction would be attributed to use of diesel-powered construction equipment. Total energy consumed during the construction period represents a small demand on local and regional fuel supplies; however, while the project may not require a significant amount of energy during construction relative to regional demand, it could still result in the wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources during project construction if measures are not taken to ensure energy is used efficiently. Therefore, potential impacts from wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary energy use during construction of the proposed project would be potentially significant.

Table 3.6-4. Estimated Annual Construction Energy Consumption by Source

Source	Gallons	MMBTU
Diesel		
Trucks	1,332	172
Equipment	32,614	4,223
Total Diesel	*33,946*	*4,396*
Gasoline		
Workers	1,759	200
Total Gasoline	*1,759*	*200*
Total		**4,596**

Source: Appendix C.
MMBTU = million BTUs/year

Mitigation Measure EN-1a would require contractors for future development projects to incorporate best management practices (BMP) during construction to reduce the inefficient use of energy. These BMPs could include use of local building materials, recycling of construction waste, and proper maintenance of construction equipment, among others. With implementation of **Mitigation Measure EN-1a**, the impacts related to the wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources during construction of the proposed project would be ***less than significant with mitigation***.

Regarding changes to the General Plan and Zoning Ordinance, none of the project components in Table 2-3 in Chapter 2, Project Description, would directly result in development of new units and would serve primarily to facilitate new uses in certain areas in order to promote mixed-use development and change density controls. Construction of future development associated with these changes, beyond the anticipated 194 units implicitly discussed here, would also be subject to **Mitigation Measures EN-1a**, similar to what is specified for the 194 new potential units.

Operation

Since future construction of units could occur in multiple phases, it is possible that operation of future develop could overlap with construction activities. Therefore, operational energy requirements could include overlapping construction energy usage. However, quantified analysis of potential energy usage during construction is not possible and only quantified analysis of operational energy usage was completed.

Buildout of the 194 units under the proposed project has the potential to result in increased energy requirements during operations from motor vehicle travel and building-related energy consumption for lighting; cooling and heating; and conveyance, treatment, and distribution of water. The methodology used to calculate the estimated energy consumption from implementation of the proposed project is discussed under *Methods for Analysis*.

Table 3.6-5 summarizes annual consumption (in kilowatt hours for electricity, thousand BTU for natural gas, and gallons of gasoline and diesel for motor vehicles) and energy (in million BTU) associated with operation of the 194 residential units in the buildout year (2030).

Table 3.6-5. Estimate of Utility and Fuel Consumption and Energy Associated with Full Buildout of the Proposed Project

	Consumption	Energy (MMBTU)
Electricity	1,568,280 kWh	5,357
Natural Gas	2,631,880 kBTU	2,632
Off-Road Equipment (diesel)	228 gallons	30
Mobile		
Gasoline	217,657 gallons	24,797
Diesel	20,953 gallons	2,713
Total	**--**	**35,529**

Source: Appendix C.
kBTU = thousand British thermal units; MBTU = million British thermal units; kWh = kilowatt-hour.

As shown in Table 3.6-5, implementation of the proposed project would result in increased energy consumption in the county. This increase in energy consumption would increase regional energy demand, increase reliance on fossil fuels, and potentially increase per capita energy consumption. Most of the energy use with the addition of the 194 units is associated with increased motor vehicle travel. It is possible that operation of the future residences could still result in the wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources if measures are not taken to ensure energy is used efficiently. Therefore, potential impacts for wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary energy use during operation would be potentially significant.

Mitigation Measure EN-1b would require new developments under the proposed project implement the relevant energy-reducing measures from the County's General Plan and PCSP. These measures include incorporating energy efficiency design features that exceed Title 24 standards, use of water-efficient landscaping, and implementation of onsite renewable energy, among others. With implementation of **Mitigation Measure EN-1b**, the impacts related to the wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources during operation of the proposed project would be ***less than significant with mitigation***.

Regarding changes to the General Plan and Zoning Ordinance, none of the project components in Table 2-3 in Chapter 2, Project Description, would directly result in development of new units and would serve primarily to facilitate new uses in certain areas in order to promote mixed-use development and change density controls. Operation of future development associated with these changes, beyond the anticipated 194 units implicitly discussed here, would also be subject to **Mitigation Measure EN-1b**, similar to what is specified for the 194 new potential units.

Table 3.6-6 outlines the applicability and analysis of the potential energy impact considerations from Appendix F, *Energy Conservation,* of the State CEQA Guidelines.

Table 3.6-6. Proposed Project Comparison to State CEQA Guidelines Appendix F

Project Impact Considerations from Appendix F	Project Applicability and Analysis
Energy requirements and energy use efficiencies by amount and fuel type for each stage of the project	**Applies.** See Table 3.6-4, which breaks down energy use by the amount and fuel type associated with operation of future development. As indicated, future operation of new development could result in an increase in the use of gasoline and diesel due to new mobile trips, and an increase in electricity and natural gas use associated with the new residential units. During construction future development there would also be a temporary increase in the use of fossil fuels, such as diesel fuel for the operation of off-road equipment and trucks, and gasoline for construction worker trips.
Effects on local and regional energy supplies and the need for additional capacity	**Applies.** There would be no adverse effects on local or regional energy supplies. Nearly all project-related energy demands would be accommodated by existing infrastructure, without the need to expand capacity.
Effects of the project on peak- and base-period demands for electricity and other forms of energy	**Applies.** Energy load would vary over time, but the current supply and infrastructure would be able to accommodate the additional demand associated with future construction, without interruptions or issues for existing customers and without the need for new infrastructure. The project does not propose demand that would affect peak- and base-period demand.
Degree to which the project complies with existing energy standards	**Applies.** Development associated with implementation of the proposed project would be fully compliant with all existing energy standards, including the Clean Energy and Pollution Reduction Act of 2015, Energy Building Regulations and Energy Conservation Standards, and California Energy Code. The proposed program would include energy-efficient lighting and building materials within the project sites and would reduce greenhouse gas emissions by implementing sustainability measures.
Effects of the project on energy resources	**Applies.** Development associated with implementation of the proposed project would be fully compliant with all existing energy standards, including the Clean Energy and Pollution Reduction Act of 2015, Energy Building Regulations and Energy Conservation Standards, and California Energy Code. The proposed program would include energy-efficient lighting and building materials within the project site and would reduce GHG emissions by implementing sustainability measures.
Projected transportation energy use requirements and overall use of efficient transportation alternatives	**Applies.** Development associated with implementation of the proposed project would increase the need for fossil fuels compared to baseline conditions due to increased vehicle miles traveled during operation, with the additional 194 units throughout the county. However, as discussed in Section 3.16, *Transportation* and Chapter 2, *Project Description*, project objectives include reduced vehicle miles traveled per capita by shortening commute distances for those who commute within Placer County for education or work.

Mitigation Measure EN-1a: Construction Best Management Practices

During construction of the residential units, the County will require the contractor to incorporate BMPs to reduce the inefficient use of energy, as applicable. BMPs may include but are not limited to the following.

- Use of local building materials.
- Recycling construction waste.
- Implementing employee carpool programs.
- Maintaining all construction equipment in proper working condition according to manufacturer's specifications. The equipment must be checked by a certified mechanic and be determined to be running in proper condition before it is operated.

Mitigation Measure EN-1b: Comply with Energy Efficiency Measures in the Placer County General Plan (2013) and Placer County Sustainability Plan (2020)

Prior to approval of the final design plans for development under the proposed project, the County will require the contractor to list all the energy-efficiency measures that will be implemented and demonstrate in the plans where these measures will be located.

The following is a list of proposed sustainability measures from the County's General Plan, and PCSP that will be required for project approval.

- Reduce building energy consumption through one or more of the following methods, where feasible.
    - Incorporate energy efficiency design features that exceed 2019 Title 24 California Energy Efficiency Standards by at least 15 percent.
    - Prioritize use of electricity as the primary energy source in new developments.
    - Implement CALGreen Tier 1 standards.
    - Use of zero net energy design in new developments, where feasible.
- Orient development for solar access, to the extent practicable.
- Implement onsite renewable energy on new buildings, where feasible.
- Prioritize development that is within proximity of non-auto public transit.
- Use native, drought-tolerant plantings in landscaping.

Impact EN-2: Conflict with or obstruction of a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency (less than significant with mitigation)

State and local renewable energy and energy efficiency plans that are applicable to the proposed project are discussed in Section 3.6.1, *Existing Conditions: Regulatory Setting.* State plans, California Title 24 energy efficiency standards, SB 350, and SB 100 contain required standards related to energy efficiency and renewable energy development. Development associated with implementation of the proposed project is required to comply with the state and local plans and regulations, all of which are aimed at increasing energy efficiency and renewable energy development. Some plans and regulations are statewide and do not require local or project action to implement. Applicable local plans that address energy efficiency include the County's General Plan and the PCSP. Table 3.6-

7 provides a consistency analysis with state and local energy plans and regulations. As shown, prior to mitigation, the proposed project would potentially conflict with local plans for energy efficiency. **Mitigation Measure EN-1b** would require new developments under the proposed project implement the relevant energy-reducing measures from the County's General Plan and PCSP. With implementation of **Mitigation Measure EN-1b**, the impacts related to conflict with a state or local energy efficiency plan would be ***less than significant with mitigation***. This mitigation measure also applies to future development that could result from changes to the General Plan and Zoning Ordinance.

Table 3.6-7. Proposed Project Consistency with State and Local Energy Plans and Regulations

Regulation, Plan, or Policy	Project Consistency
Clean Energy and Pollution Reduction Act of 2015 (SB 350)	**Consistent**. The Clean Energy and Pollution Reduction Act of 2015 requires the following by 2030: (1) an RPS of 50% and (2) a doubling of efficiency for existing buildings. The RPS is dependent on the utility provider and the project does not impede reaching a goal of 50%. In addition, implementation of **Mitigation Measure EN-1b** would encourage the use of renewable energy on new buildings where feasible.
Energy Building Regulations and Energy Conservation Standards (Title 20, Energy Building Regulations; Title 24, Energy Conservation Standards)	**Consistent.** Development associated with implementation of proposed project would result in the construction of energy-efficient buildings that would comply with existing building codes. At a minimum, new construction occurring under the proposed project would be required to comply with the current Title 24 building standards, which includes a broad set of requirements for energy conservation and green design. Moreover, **Mitigation Measure EN-1b** would encourage buildings to exceed Title 24 building standards.
The 100 Percent Clean Energy Act of 2018	**Consistent.** SB 100 increases the RPS target set in SB 350 to 60% by 2030. It also requires all retail sales of electricity to California end-users and electricity procured to serve state agencies to be provided by zero-carbon resources by 2045. Building energy efficiency is expected to increase as a result of compliance with Title 24 building codes, which are expected to move toward zero net energy for newly constructed buildings. The project would not hinder implementation of SB 100, and in addition, implementation of **Mitigation Measure EN-1b** would encourage buildings to exceed Title 24 building standards.
Placer County General Plan	**Consistent After Mitigation.** The 2013 Placer County General Plan includes goals and policies related to energy conservation. Development associated with implementation of the proposed project would be consistent with these goals and policies through implementation of **Mitigation Measure EN-1b**, which requires future projects to comply with the relevant measures of the General Plan. These include the incorporation of energy efficiency design features that exceed the 2019 Title 24 California Building Energy Efficiency Standards, access to non-auto transit, use of water-efficient landscaping, and orienting developments for solar access. Implementation of **Mitigation Measure EN-1b** would reduce the proposed project's energy demand and ensure consistency with the General Plan.

Regulation, Plan, or Policy	Project Consistency
Placer County Sustainability Plan (PCSP)	**Consistent After Mitigation.** The PCSP was adopted in 2020 and includes baseline and forecasted GHG emissions and identifies reduction targets and strategies to reach those targets. Of those strategies, several are related to the efficient use of energy. Development associated with implementation of the proposed project would be consistent with the applicable energy-related strategies after implementation of **Mitigation Measure EN-1b**. **Mitigation Measure EN-1b** would require that projects implement PCSP strategies such as encouraging on-site renewable energy generation, use of modern appliances, use of electricity as primary energy source in residential units, and encourage zero-net-energy development, among others. Implementation of **Mitigation Measure EN-1b** would reduce energy demand from the proposed project and ensure consistency with the PCSP.

PCSP = Placer County Sustainability Plan
RPS = Renewables Portfolio Standard
SB = Senate Bill

3.6.3 References Cited

California Energy Commission. 2020a. *Electricity Consumption by Entity*. Available: https://ecdms.energy.ca.gov/elecbyutil.aspx. Accessed May 26, 2020.

California Energy Commission. 2020b. *Gas Consumption by Entity*. Available: https://ecdms.energy.ca.gov/gasbyutil.aspx. Accessed May 26, 2020.

California Energy Commission. 2020c. *Electricity Consumption by County*. Available: https://ecdms.energy.ca.gov/elecbycounty.aspx. Accessed May 26, 2020.

California Energy Commission. 2020d. *Gas Consumption by County*. Available: https://ecdms.energy.ca.gov/gasbycounty.aspx. Accessed May 26, 2020.

Pacific Gas and Electric Company. 2019. *Where Your Electricity Comes From*. Available: https://www.pge.com/pge_global/common/pdfs/your-account/your-bill/understand-your-bill/bill-inserts/2019/1019-Power-Content-Label.pdf. Accessed April 22, 2020.

U.S. Energy Information Administration 2020a. *Rankings: Total Energy Production, 2018 (trillion Btu)*. Available: https://www.eia.gov/state/rankings/?sid=CA#series/101. Accessed: August 2020.

U.S. Energy Information Administration 2020b. *California State Energy Profile*. Available: https://www.eia.gov/state/print.php?sid=CA. Accessed: August 2020.

U.S. Energy Information Administration 2020c. *Profile Overview*: Available: https://www.eia.gov/state/?sid=CA#tabs-3. Accessed: August 2020.

3.7 Geology, Soils, and Paleontological Resources

This section addresses the potential impacts of Placer County's (County) proposed General Plan amendments, Zoning Ordinance update, and the development of design standards and guidelines for mixed-use development (project) on geology, soils, and paleontological resources. It describes the existing conditions of the project area and identifies the applicable federal and state plans, policies, and laws and local plans, policies, and regulations. The analysis identifies the potential impacts of the project on geology, soils, and paleontological resources and identifies mitigation measures where appropriate to reduce the level of impacts to less than significant.

No comments on the Notice of Preparation were received regarding geology, soils, or paleontological resources.

3.7.1 Existing Conditions

Regulatory Setting

Federal

Earthquake Hazard Reduction Act of 1977

Federal laws codified in United States Code Title 42, Chapter 86, were enacted to reduce risks to life and property from earthquakes in the United States through the establishment and maintenance of an effective earthquake hazards reduction program. Implementation of the requirements are regulated, monitored, and enforced at the state and local levels.

State

The Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act of 1972

The Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act of 1972 (Alquist-Priolo Act) (California Public Resources Code [PRC] § 2621 et seq.) is intended to reduce the risk to life and property from surface fault rupture during earthquakes. The Alquist-Priolo Act prohibits the location and construction of most types of structures intended for human occupancy[1] over active fault traces and strictly regulates construction in corridors along active faults. The California state geologist has established regulatory zones along active faults,[2] called "earthquake fault zones," and published maps that identify areas where surface traces of active faults are present (California Geological Survey 2020a).

Seismic Hazards Mapping Act

The Seismic Hazards Mapping Act of 1990 (PRC §§ 2690–2699.6) directs the California Geological Survey to identify and map areas that are prone to liquefaction and landslides resulting from seismic evens. The Act mandates project sponsors to have a site-specific geotechnical investigation

[1] With reference to the Alquist-Priolo Act, a structure for human occupancy is defined as one "used or intended for supporting or sheltering any use or occupancy that is expected to have a human occupancy rate of more than 2,000 person-hours per year" (14 California Code of Regulations, Division 2, § 3601(e)).

[2] An active fault, for the purposes of the Alquist-Priolo Act, is one that has ruptured in the past 11,000 years.

performed to identify potential seismic hazards and formulate mitigation measures prior to permitting most developments within specific zoned areas.

California Building Standards Code

The California Building Standards Code, or state building code, is codified in California Code of Regulations Title 24. The state building code provides standards that must be met to safeguard life and limb, health, property, and public welfare by regulating and controlling the design, construction, quality of materials, use and occupancy, location, and maintenance of all buildings and structures within the state. The state building code generally applies to all occupancies in California, with modifications adopted in some instances by state agencies or local governing bodies. The current state building code incorporates, by adoption, the 2018 edition of the International Building Code of the International Code Council, with California amendments. These amendments include building design and construction criteria that have been tailored for California earthquake conditions.

Chapter 16 of the state building code deals with structural design requirements governing seismically resistant construction (Section 1604), including, but not limited to, factors and coefficients used to establish a seismic site class and seismic occupancy category appropriate for the soil/rock at the building location and the proposed building design (Sections 1613.5 through 1613.7). Chapter 18 includes, but is not limited to, the requirements for foundation and soil investigations (Section 1803); excavation, grading, and fill (Section 1804); allowable load-bearing values of soils (Section 1806); foundations and retaining walls (Section 1807); and foundation support systems (Sections 1808 through 1810). Chapter 33 includes, but is not limited to, requirements for safeguards at work sites to ensure stable excavations and cut-and-fill slopes (Section 3304) as well as the protection of adjacent properties, including requirements for noticing (Section 3307). Appendix J of the state building code includes, but is not limited to, grading requirements for the design of excavation and fill (Sections J106 and J107), specifying maximum limits on the slope of cut-and-fill surfaces and other criteria, required setbacks and slope protection for cut-and-fill slopes (Section J108), and erosion control through the provision of drainage facilities and terracing (Sections J109 and J110).

California Division of Occupational Safety and Health Regulations

Construction activities are subject to occupational safety standards pertaining to excavation, shoring, and trenching, as specified in California Division of Occupational Safety and Health regulations (Title 8).

State Historic Significance Criteria

As discussed in Section 4.7.5.2, Significance Criteria, Appendix G of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines includes the following question: “Would the project directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site?” Although CEQA does not define what constitutes “a unique paleontological resource or site,” Section 21083.2 defines *unique archaeological resources* as

> any archaeological artifact, object, or site about which it can be clearly demonstrated that, without merely adding to the current body of knowledge, there is a high probability that it meets any of the following criteria:
>
> - Contains information needed to answer important scientific research questions and show that there is a demonstrable public interest in that information.

- Exhibits a special and particular quality, such as being the oldest of its type or the best available example of its type.
- Is directly associated with a scientifically recognized important prehistoric or historic event or person.

This definition is equally applicable to recognizing a unique paleontological resource or site. CEQA Section 15064.5(a)(3)(D) provides additional guidance, indicating that, generally, a resource is considered historically significant if it has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in history before or after European contact.

The CEQA lead agency having jurisdiction over a project is responsible for ensuring that paleontological resources are protected in compliance with CEQA and other applicable statutes. PRC Section 21081.6 requires the CEQA lead agency to demonstrate project compliance with the mitigation measures developed during the environmental impact review process.

Local

Geology, Soils, and Seismicity

Placer County General Plan

The 2013 Placer County General Plan Update provides an overall framework for development of Placer County (County) and protection of its natural and cultural resources. The General Plan contains a Health and Safety Element, which describes health and safety impacts related to geologic hazards on development, focusing on how development could be affected by potential earthquake faulting, groundshaking, liquefaction, slope instability, expansion and shrinking of soils, soils erosion, and snow avalanche conditions. It contains policies and implementation measures to address seismic and geologic impacts on development including the following:

Placement of Structures in Areas of Seismic Risk

Policies

Policy 8.A.1. The County shall require the preparation of a soils engineering and geologic-seismic analysis prior to permitting development in areas prone to geological or seismic hazards (i.e., groundshaking, landslides, liquefaction, critically expansive soils, avalanche).

Policy 8.A.7. In areas subject to severe groundshaking, the County shall require that new structures intended for human occupancy be designed and constructed to minimize risk to the safety of occupants.

Policy 8.A.9. The County shall require that the location and/or design of any new buildings, facilities, or other development in areas subject to earthquake activity minimize exposure to danger from fault rupture or creep.

Policy 8.A.10. The County shall limit development in areas of steep or unstable slopes to minimize hazards caused by landslides or liquefaction.

Programs

Policy 8.1. The County shall continue to enforce provisions of the Uniform Building Code which address seismic concerns, including masonry building design requirements.

Policy 8.2. The County shall assess the need for an ordinance requiring evaluation of unreinforced masonry structures and the repair or replacement of identified hazardous structures.

Policies

Policy 8.A.1. The County shall require the preparation of a soils engineering and geologic-seismic analysis prior to permitting development in areas prone to geological or seismic hazards (i.e., groundshaking, landslides, liquefaction, critically expansive soils, avalanche).

Policy 8.A.2. The County shall require submission of a preliminary soils report, prepared by a registered civil engineer and based upon adequate test borings, for every major subdivision and for each individual lot where critically expansive soils have been identified or are expected to exists.

Policy 8.A.3. The County shall prohibit the placement of habitable structures or individual sewage disposal systems on or in critically expansive soils unless suitable mitigation measures are incorporated to prevent the potential risks of these conditions.

Risks of Slope Instability and Avalanche

Policies

Policy 8.A.1. The County shall require the preparation of a soils engineering and geologic-seismic analysis prior to permitting development in areas prone to geological or seismic hazards (i.e., groundshaking, landslides, liquefaction, critically expansive soils, avalanche)

Policy 8.A.4. The County shall ensure that areas of slope instability are adequately investigated and that any development in these areas incorporates appropriate design provisions to prevent landsliding.

Policy 8.A.5. In landslide hazard areas, the County shall prohibit avoidable alteration of land in a manner that could increase the hazard, including concentration of water through drainage, irrigation, or septic systems; removal of vegetative cover; and steepening of slopes and undercutting the bases of slopes.

Policy 8.A.6. The County shall require the preparation of drainage plans for development in hillside areas that direct runoff and drainage away from unstable slopes.

Policy 8.A.11. The County shall limit development in areas of steep or unstable slopes to minimize hazards caused by landslides or liquefaction.

Policy 8.A.12. The County shall not issue permits for new development in potential avalanche hazard areas (PAHA) as designated in the Placer County Avalanche Management Ordinance unless project proponents can demonstrate that such development will be safe under anticipated snow loads and conditions of an avalanche.

Policy 8.H.1. The County shall maintain maps of potential avalanche hazard areas.

Policy 8.H.2. The County shall require new development in areas of avalanche hazard to be sited, designed, and constructed to minimize avalanche hazards.

Program

8.17. The County shall amend local ordinances as necessary to reflect updated avalanche hazard information.

Placer County Municipal Code

County of Placer Building Codes and Standards

The County of Placer Building Services Division uses several model codes to evaluate building plans and permit applications before granting building permits. The Division uses the codes, along with a series of onsite inspections, to help assure that buildings in Placer County are built safely and meet current generally accepted construction standards. In particular, the County adopted by reference

the 2019 Triennial Edition of Title 24, California Code of Regulations, which include the California Building Code.[3]

County of Placer Grading Ordinance

Grading is subject to the Placer County Code, Chapter 15, Article 15.48 (Grading, Erosion and Sediment Control), which regulates grading on property within the unincorporated areas of Placer County to safeguard life, limb, health, property and public welfare; to avoid pollution of watercourses with hazardous materials, nutrients, sediments, or other earthen materials generated on or caused by surface runoff on or across the permit area; and to ensure that the intended use of a graded site is consistent with the Placer County General Plan, any applicable adopted specific plans, and applicable Placer County ordinances. Construction activities that have cuts or fills greater than 4 feet in vertical depth or excavate more than 250 cubic yards of graded material in a single area within a 2-year period are required to obtain a grading permit.

Paleontological Resources

Placer County General Plan

Excerpted below are the relevant goals and policies from the Placer County General Plan that pertain to paleontological resources (Placer County 2013).

Goal 5.D. To identify, protect, and enhance Placer County's important historical, archaeological, paleontological, and cultural sites and their contributing environment.

Policies

5.D.2. The County shall solicit the cooperation of the owners of cultural and paleontological resources, encourage those owners to treat these resources as assets rather than liabilities, and encourage the support of the general public for the preservation and enhancement of these resources.

5.D.6. The County shall require that discretionary development projects identify and protect from damage, destruction, and abuse, important historical, archaeological, paleontological, and cultural sites and their contributing environment. Such assessments shall be incorporated into a Countywide cultural resource data base, to be maintained by the Division of Museums.

5.D.7. The County shall require that discretionary development projects are designed to avoid potential impacts to significant paleontological or cultural resources whenever possible. Unavoidable impacts, whenever possible, shall be reduced to a less than significant level and/or shall be mitigated by extracting maximum recoverable data. Determinations of impacts, significance, and mitigation shall be made by qualified archaeological (in consultation with recognized local Native American groups), historical, or paleontological consultants, depending on the type of resource in question.

Placer County Municipal Code

Chapter 15, Article 15 intends to protect and preserve cultural and historic resources. According to 15.60.230 Definitions, these resources include paleontological resources. According to 15.60.020, the protection, enhancement, perpetuation, and use of cultural resources in the county are of cultural and aesthetic benefit to its communities. Preservation includes the identification and resolution of conflicts between the preservation of cultural resources and alternative land uses, as early as possible in the planning process.

[3] 15.04.210 Adoption of the California Building Standards Code.

Environmental Setting

Geology, Soils, and Seismicity

Physiography

Placer County is situated in the Sierra Nevada and Great Valley geologic provinces and encompasses approximately 1,500 square miles. The county contains suburban, rural, agricultural, and forest landscapes, stretching from the Sacramento suburb of Roseville in the west to the Nevada border in the east. Placer County has a complex topography made of rolling hills, steep valleys, and mountainous terrain. From west to east across the county, the elevation steadily rises and the natural landscape transitions from oak woodlands to coniferous forest. Elevations range from 45 feet above mean sea level (amsl) in the western rolling foothills, adjacent to Sacramento County, to almost 9,000 feet amsl along the Sierra Nevada crest on the edge of the Lake Tahoe Basin.

Subsurface Conditions

Placer County consists of three geographic regions referenced in this section: South Placer County, the foothill region, and the High Sierra region. South Placer County lies in the Great Valley geologic province and is underlain with sedimentary deposits, composed of material eroded from the Sierra Nevada and carried westward by a system of rivers (California Department of Conservation 2006) and interbedded with layers of clays, sands, silts, and gravels. The foothill region is underlain by Mesozoic-age, metamorphosed marine sedimentary and volcanic rocks. The High Sierra region is located within the Sierra Nevada geologic province and dominated by plutonic (dominantly quartz monzonite and granodirorite) rocks of Mesozoic age, otherwise known as the Sierra Nevada batholith (High Sierra Resource Conservation and Development Council 2005; City of Auburn General Plan Citizens Advisory Committee 1993).

Seismicity and Seismic Hazards

Primary Seismic Hazards

Surface Fault Rupture

Placer County lies in a seismically active area of the United States; however, in the historical period, earthquakes in Placer County have not caused any known surface ruptures (Placer County 1994). Figure 3.7-1 shows the Latest Quaternary faults (faults that have moved in the past 15,000 years years) in Placer County as well as the parcels the proposed project would affect. As shown on the figure, the most recent fault movement occurred in the eastern county near Lake Tahoe. In a seismically active area, the potential of future faulting occurring in areas where faults have not been mapped exists; however, as surface ruptures have not occurred within the historical period, the risk of surface fault rupture in Placer County is considered low.

Seismic Ground Shaking

Ground shaking is the most widespread hazardous phenomenon associated with seismic activity. In general, South Placer County and the foothill region are considered to have low seismicity. However, the High Sierra region, near Lake Tahoe, is considered to have high seismicity (Placer County 1994). A U.S. Geological Survey study concluded that the Tahoe-Sierra Frontal Fault Zone could potentially generate earthquakes with magnitudes ranging from 6.3 to 6.9 in the Lake Tahoe region (Geological

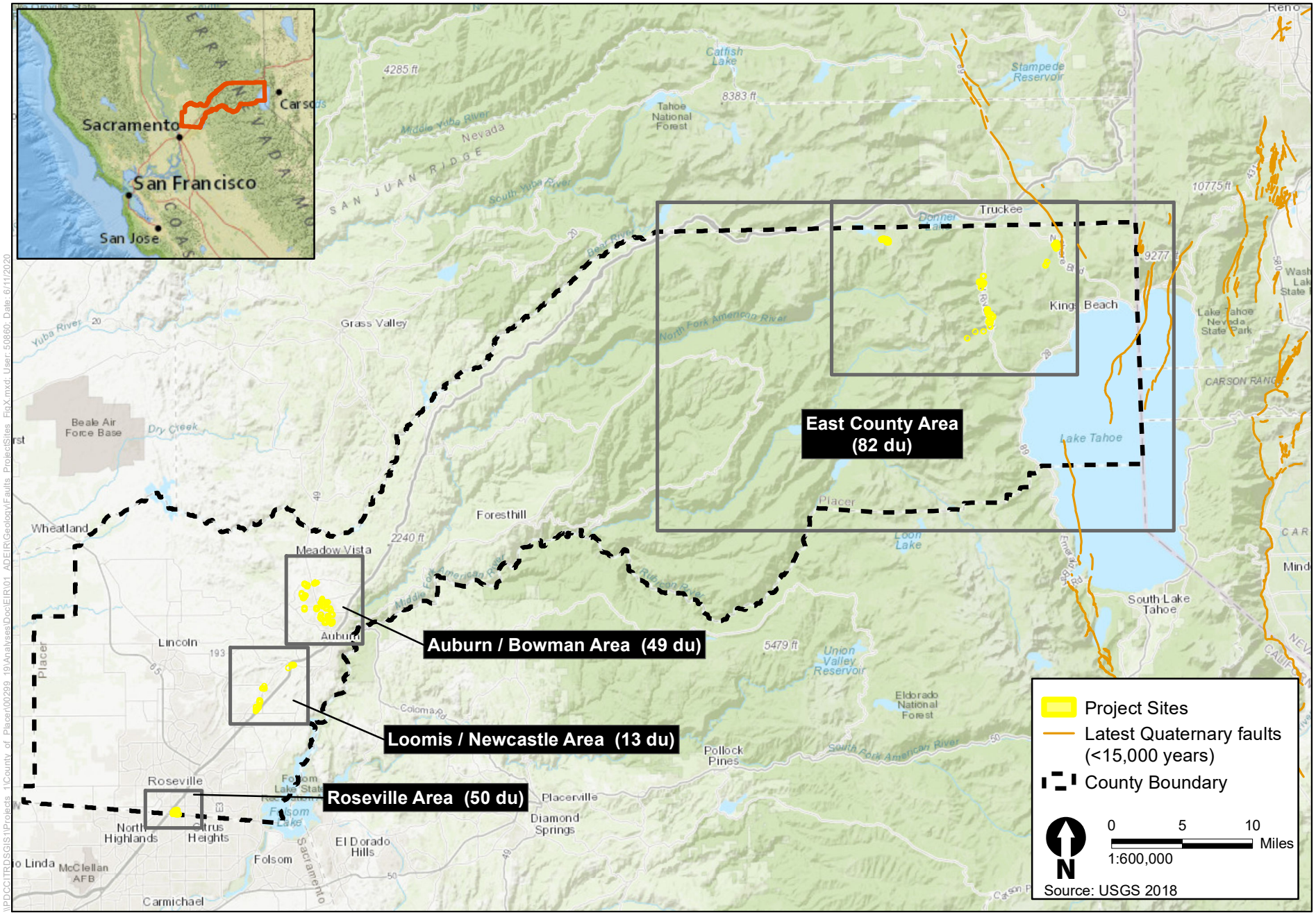


Figure 3.7-1
Regional Faults

Society of America 2012). Seismic events have occurred in the eastern area in 1966, 1998, and 2004 (North Fork Associates 2010). The California Earthquake Authority forecasts that there is a 76 percent probability of one or more magnitude 7.0 earthquakes striking Northern California over the next 30 years (California Earthquake Authority 2020). Therefore, the risk of seismic ground shaking in the area is moderate in South Placer County and the foothill region, and high in the High Sierra.

Secondary Seismic Hazards

Liquefaction

Liquefaction occurs when saturated soils lose cohesion, strength, and stiffness with applied shaking, such as that from an earthquake. The lack of cohesion causes solid soil to behave like a liquid, resulting in ground failure. When a load such as a structure is placed on ground that is subject to liquefaction, ground failure can result in the structure sinking and soil being displaced. Seismic-related ground failure can take on many forms, including flow failures, lateral spreading, lowering of the ground surface, ground settlement, loss of bearing strength, ground fissures, and sand boils. Liquefaction within subsurface layers, which can occur during ground shaking associated with an earthquake, can also result in ground settlement.

The majority of Placer County has not been evaluated for liquefaction by the California Geological Survey (California Geological Survey 2020b). However, soils prone to liquefaction are located throughout Placer County (Placer County 1994). In general, liquefaction has not been a significant problem in South Placer County (City of Roseville 2016). The eastern part of the county near Lake Tahoe is assumed to pose a greater risk of liquefaction than South Placer County or the foothill region (Placer County 1994).

Lateral Spreading

Lateral spreading is a phenomenon in which a surficial soil displaces along a shear zone that formed within an underlying liquefied layer. The surficial blocks are transported downslope or in the direction of a free face, such as a streambank, by earthquake and gravitational forces. Lateral spreading is generally the most damaging type of liquefaction-induced ground failure generated by earthquakes. In general, for lateral spreading to occur, soils must consist of saturated, cohesionless sandy sediments in an area where there is a high groundwater table and an open face such as a cliff or streambank. As soil type, geography, and groundwater level vary across the county, the potential for lateral spreading also varies across the county but is greatest in areas near a cliff, stream bank, or other open face.

Weak Soils, Seismic Densification, and Expansive Soils

Weak soils composed of loose, clean granular deposits, can densify, collapse, or spread laterally under the weight of buildings and fill. Weak soils can also amplify shaking during an earthquake and, depending on the level of the water table, be susceptible to liquefaction. Weak soils are potentially present in areas of the county where soil deposits contain a high amount of organic material (such as near the mouths of rivers) or in areas of loose dry sands. Seismic densification can occur when soils that are dry, unconsolidated, and loosely packed settle during an earthquake as a result of seismic ground shaking.

Expansive soils that contain a high clay content may shrink or expand under different moisture condition. Soils considered to have moderate to high shrink-swell potential are mostly concentrated

in the low-lying areas in western Placer County, from Rocklin to the county line (Placer County 1994). Studies in the High Sierra have found low levels of clay and therefore have low shrink-swell potential (SE Group & Assent 2018). Therefore, the highest risk of impacts resulting from expansive soils are expected to be in the western part of the county, though other areas may be affected as well.

South Placer County

The soils underlying parcels near Roseville are County Holland-Clallam, deep-Coboc families associations, which are well drained and formed of material weathered from granitic rock. In general, the soils in South Placer County are very deep, well or moderately well drained, and loamy or clayey (High Sierra Resource Conservation and Development Council 2005).

Foothill Region

The soils underlying parcels near the Newcastle/Loomis area are Bluesprin family-Lithic Mollic Haploxeralfs association, Clallam family, Deetz family, Gilligan-Holland families association, Goldridge, gravelly-Clallam, deep-Prather families association, Lithic Mollic Haploxeralfs-Dubakella family association, Skalan family-Lithic Haploxeralfs association, Weitchpec family-Lithic Haploxeralfs association, and Woodseye family-Rock outcrop association. The soils underlying parcels in the Auburn/Bowman area are mostly Clallam, deep-Goldridge, gravelly families association or Deadfall family-Lithic cryobolls association. Other soils include Holland-Skalan families association, Jayar family, Toadlake family-Lithic Argixerolls association, Weitchpec family-Lithic Haploxeralfs association, and Woodseye family-Rock outcrop association. In general, the soils in the foothill region are very shallow to deep, well drained or somewhat excessively drained, and loamy (High Sierra Resource Conservation and Development Council 2005).

High Sierra

The soils underlying parcels in the High Sierra region are Aquolls and Borolls, Kyburz-Trojan complex, Jorge-Cryumbrepts, Jorge-Tahoma complex, Jorge-Rubble land complex, Kyburz-Rock outcrop-Trojan complex, Meiss-Waca complex, Tallac very gravelly sandy loam, Waca-Cryumbrepts, Rubble land-Rock outcrop complex, and Waca-Meiss complex. In general, soils in the High Sierra are very shallow to deep, well drained or somewhat excessively drained, and loamy or sandy (High Sierra Resource Conservation and Development Council 2005). Soils in the eastern portion of Placer County often have high erosion potential (Placer County 1994).

Landslides

Landslides occur when the stability of a slope changes from a stable to an unstable condition. The stability of a slope is affected by the following primary factors: inclination, material type, moisture content, orientation of layering, and vegetative cover. In general, steeper slopes are less stable than more gently inclined ones. While most natural slopes in Placer County are stable, excavations can expose planes of weakness and remove support which increases the risk of landslide (City of Auburn General Plan Citizens Advisory Committee 1993).Therefore, the risk of landslide is considered high in hilly and mountainous parts of the county, particularly in the High Sierra, and lower among the gently rolling hilly or relatively flat areas in South Placer County and the foothill region (Placer County 1994).

Paleontological Resources

Fossils preserve information about ancient animals and plants (University of California Museum of Paleontology n.d.). There are two types of fossils: body fossils (remains of an organism) and trace fossils (e.g., footprints, burrows, trails). Fossils can add to the scientific record by providing information about the anatomy of an organism and clues to its life processes, successive evolutional evolution of organisms, and successive colonization of habitats. Fossils are a nonrenewable resources; that is, once destroyed, a fossil cannot be replaced. Fossils represent irreplaceable evidence of past life on the planet (National Park Service n.d.).

Geologic units that preserve significant fossils exist throughout Placer County (Placer County 1994). These include the Mehrten Formation in the Roseville area, which has produced fossils of terrestrial vertebrates. Geologic units exposed at and below at ground surface in the project area are the following (Saucedo and Wagner 1992; Wagner et al. 1991):

- Geologic Map of the Chico Quadrangle, California, 1:250,000 (Saucedo and Wagner 1992 [northern portion of project area])
    - Alluvium (Q)—Alluvium of the Quaternary (Holocene)
    - Landslide deposits (Qls)—Landslide deposits of the Quaternary (Holocene)
    - Miocene-Pliocene volcanic rocks (MPv)—Volcanic rock (basalt, andesite, dacitic tuff-breccia) of the Tertiary (Miocene-Pliocene)
    - Granite, granodiorite (KJgr)—Plutonic rock of the Mesozoic
    - Metavolcanic rocks (mv)—Metavolcanic rock of the Mesozoic
    - Paleozoic rocks of uncertain age and correlation (Pzu)—Quartzite, pelite, and conglomerate; marine rock of the Paleozoic
- Geologic Map of the Sacramento Quadrangle, California, 1:250,000 (Wagner et al. 1991 [southern portion of project area])
    - Riverbank Formation (Qr)—Alluvium from the Quaternary (Pleistocene)
    - Turlock Formation (Qtl)—Sedimentary rock from the Quaternary composed of sand, silt, and gravel
    - Mehrten Formation (Tm)—Sedimentary rock from the Tertiary composed of andesitic conglomerate, sandstone, and breccia
    - Copper Hill Volcanics (Jch?)—Volcanic rock from the Jurassic
    - Metasedimentary rocks (ms)—Metasedimentary rock from the Paleozoic
    - Metavolcanic rocks (mv)—Metavolcanic rock from the Paleozoic
    - Mesozoic dioritic rocks (Mzd)—Plutonic rock from the Mesozoic
    - Ultramafic rocks (um)—Ultramafic rock

Of these geologic units underlying the parcels comprising the project area, the Riverbank Formation, Turlock Formation, and Mehrten Formation have a record of containing fossils important to the scientific record (Marchand and Allwardt 1981; University of California Museum of Paleontology 2020a, 2020b).

Riverbank Formation is composed primarily of arkosic sediments from the interior of the Sierra Nevada (Marchand and Allwardt 1981). It underlies the Modesto Formation and overlies the Turlock Lake Formation. The Riverbank Formation has yielded fossils of mammals, amphibians, birds, bony fish, and reptiles (University of California Museum of Paleontology 2020a). Fossils of mammals include *Bison*; *Camelops*; *Canis latrans*, a species of wolf, and *C. armbrusteri* and *C. dirus*, extinct species of wolf; *Capromeryx*, an extinct genus of dwarf pronghorns; *Dipodomys*, a genus of kangaroo rat; *Equus*, a genus including horses, donkeys, and zebras; *Glossotherium harlani*, a large extinct species of ground sloth; *Hemiauchenia*, an extinct genus of lamine camelis; *Homotherium serum*, an extinct species of scimitar-toothed cats; *Lepus*, a genus of hares and rabbits; *Mammuthus columbi*, an extinct species of mammoth; *Megalonyx wheatleyi*, an extinct species of ground sloth, *Microtus*, a genus of voles; *Miracinonyx*, an extinct genus of cheetah; *Neotoma*, a genus of packrat; *Nothriotheriops shastensis*, a species of ground sloth; *Odocoileus*, a genus of deer; *Paramylodon harlani*, an extinct species of ground sloth; *Reithrodontomys*, a genus of harvest mouse; *Scapanus latimanus*, a species of mole; *Smilodon fatalis*, an extinct species of saber-toothed tiger; *Sorex*, a genus of shrew; *Spermophilus*, a genus of ground squirrel; *Sylvilagus*, a genus of cottontail rabbit; *Taxidea taxus*, a species of badger; *Tertameryx irvingtonensis*, an extinct species of pronghorn; *Thomomys*, a genus of pocket gopher; *Vulpes velox*, a species of fox; and other unspecified genus of mammals.

In addition, the Riverbank Formation has yielded fossils of amphibians (University of California Museum of Paleontology 2020a): *Rana*, a genus of frogs, and *Scaphiopus*, a genus of spadefoot toads; fossils of birds: *Aythya*, a genus of diving ducks, and *Tadorna tadorna*, a species of shelduck, as well as other unspecified genus of birds; fossils of bony fish: *Archoplites*, a genus of sunfish, and *Orthodon*, a genus of cyprinid fish, as well as other unspecified genus of bony fish; and fossils of reptile: *Actinemys marmorata*, a species of pond turtle; *Clemmys*, a genus of semi-aquatic turtle; *Gopherus agassizii*, a species of tortoise; and *Thamnophis*, a genus of garter snake.

The Turlock Lake Formation is composed primarily of arkosic alluvium (Marchand and Allwardt 1981). It generally overlies the Mehrten Formation. The Turlock Lake Formation is known to have produced vertebrate fossils (Marchand and Allwardt 1981; Dundas and Chatters 2013). Fossils of mammals include *Smilodon* and *Miracinonyx*, extinct genera of cat; *Panthera*, a genus of cat; and *Lynx rufus*, bobcat; *Taxidea taxus*, a species of badger; *Arctodus*, an extinct genus of bear; *Spermophilus*, a genus of ground squirrel; *Neotoma*, a genus of woodrat; *Peromyscus*, a species of deer mouse; *Microtus*, a species of vole; *Geomydae*, a genus of pocket gopher; and *Dipodomys*, a genus of kangaroo rat; *Lepus*, an extinct genus of rabbit; *Mammuthus columbii*, Columbian mammoth; *Equus*, a genus of horse; *Camelops*, a genus of camel; *Hemiauchenia*, a genus of llama; *Tetrameryx irvingtonensis*, Irvington pronghorn; *Capromeryx*, small-sized pronghorn; *Odocoileus*, a genus of deer; and *Platygonus vetus*, a species of peccary.

The Mehrten Formation consists of conglomerate, sandstone, siltstone, and claystone derived from andesitic source material (Marchand and Allwardt 1981). The Mehrten Formation was deposited over a long period of time, possibly as much as over a period of 10 million years. The Mehrten Formation has yielded fossils of mammals, amphibians, birds, bony fish, and reptiles (University of California Museum of Paleontology 2020b). Fossils of mammals include *Altomeryx*, an extinct genus of camel; *Aphelops*, an extinct genus of hornless rhinoceros; *Borophagus parvus*, an extinct species of canid (bear/dog); *Castor*, a genus of beaver; *Copemys*, an extinct genus of cricetid rodent; *Cupidinimus*, an extinct genus of pocket mouse; *Dinohippus coalingensis*, an extinct species of horse; *Dipodomys*; *Dipoides williamsi*, an extinct species of beaver; *Felis*, a genus of cat; *Garberoceras*, a genus of pronghorn; *Gomphotherium*, an extinct genus of proboscid; *Hipparion mohavense*, an extinct

species of horse; *Machairodus coloradensis*, an extinct species of sabertoothed tiger; *Mammut americanum*, an extinct species of mastodon; *Megalonyx mathisi*, a species of sloth; *Merycodus*, an extinct genus of artiodactyl; *Nannippus*, an extinct genus of horse; *Neohipparion*, an extinct genus of horse; *Osteoborus*, an extinct genus of canid; *Otospermophilus argonotus*, a species of ground squirrel; *Paracamelus*, an extinct genus of camel; *Pediomeryx*, an extinct genus of artiodactyl; *Platybelodon*, an extinct genus of proboscid; *Pliauchenia*, an extinct genus of camel; *Pliohippus coalingensis, P. interpolates,* and *P. tantalus*, extinct species of horse, as well as other *Pliohippus* remains; *Pliometanastes protistus*, an extinct species of giant ground sloth; *Pliotaxidea garberi*, an extinct species of badger; *Procamelus*, an extinct genus of camel; *Procyon*, a genus of raccoon; *Prosthennops*, an extinct genus of artiodactyl; *Pseudaelurus*, an extinct genus of cat; *Sphenophalos*, an extinct genus of artiodactyl; *Teleoceras*, an extinct genus of rhinoceros; *Tetrameryx*, an extinct genus of artiodactyl; and *Vulpes*, a genus of canid.

In addition, the Mehrten Formation has yielded fossils of bony fish (University of California Museum of Paleontology 2020b): *Orthodon*, a genus of cyprinid fish; *Smilodonichthyes*, an extinct genus of salmon; and *Smilodonichthys rastrosus*, an extinct species known as the sabertooth salmon; and reptiles: *Actinemys marmorata*, a species of pond turtle; *Clemmys*, a genus of semi-aquatic turtle; *Geochelone orthopygia*, an extinct species of giant tortoise and other species of this genus; and *Hesperotestudo*, an extinct genus of tortoise.

3.7.2 Environmental Impacts

The environmental analysis in this section focuses on the two main components of the project: (1) amendments to the Land Use Element in the County's General Plan, Zoning Ordinance, and Community Design Manual, and (2) the potential locations for the new dwelling units that could be constructed as a result of changes to the Zoning Ordinance (a total of 194 units distributed throughout the county).

The general land use pattern allowed by the housing-related code amendments is evaluated in the following discussions for its potential to adversely affect geology, soils, and paleontology.

The analysis in this section also considers the impacts from the potential development of dwelling units in targeted areas throughout the county. As a result of project implementation, a total of 194 units could be constructed, as noted below. While these units could be developed as a result of project implementation, the project itself does not propose any site-specific development.

- 50 units in the Roseville area (South Placer County)
- 13 units in the Loomis/Newcastle area (foothill region)
- 49 units in the Auburn/Bowman area (foothill region)
- 82 units in the eastern county (High Sierra region), including:
    - 31 units near Sugar Bowl
    - 4 units near Squaw Valley
    - 42 units near SR 89
    - 5 units near Northstar

Because the project does not propose any site-specific development activities, this analysis focuses on the potential indirect and reasonably foreseeable impacts of future development that could occur as a result of the project.

Methods for Analysis

Geology, Soils, and Seismicity

Criteria from Appendix G of the State CEQA Guidelines were used to determine whether the proposed project would have a significant impact related to geology, soils, and seismicity. Impacts were assessed based on review of applicable documents including the Placer County General Plan, the General Plan environmental impact report (EIR), California Geological Survey maps, California Department of Conservation reports, the High Sierra Resource Conservation and Development Council's vegetation establishment guidelines, along with other available reports and studies.

The project would not provide individual project approvals or entitlements for any private or public development project. Accordingly, this project does not provide CEQA coverage for individual development projects but does provide program-level CEQA review of the housing-related code amendments. It is presumed that future projects would tier from the analysis herein in accordance with Section 15168 of the CEQA Guidelines.

Paleontological Resources

- The *Standard Procedures for the Assessment and Mitigation of Adverse Impacts to Paleontological Resources* (Procedures) of the Impact Mitigation Guidelines Revision Committee of the Society of Vertebrate Paleontology include procedures for the investigation, collection, preservation, and cataloging of fossil-bearing sites. This includes the designation of paleontological sensitivity. The Procedures are widely accepted among paleontologists and followed by most investigators. The Procedures identify two key phases of paleontological resource protection: (1) assessment and (2) implementation. Assessment involves identifying the potential for a project site or area to contain significant, nonrenewable paleontological resources that could be damaged or destroyed by project excavation or construction. Implementation involves formulating and applying measures to reduce such adverse effects. *Paleontological potential* refers to the potential for yielding abundant fossils, a few significant fossils, or recovered evidence for new and significant taxonomic, phylogenetic, paleoecologic, taphonomic, biochronologic, or stratigraphic data.
- For the assessment phase, the Society of Vertebrate Paleontology uses one of four sensitivity categories for sedimentary rocks (i.e., high, undetermined, low, no potential) to define the level of potential.
    - **High Potential.** Assigned to geologic units from which vertebrate or significant invertebrate, plant, or trace fossils have been recovered as well as sedimentary rock units suitable for the preservation of fossils (e.g., middle Holocene and older fine-grained fluvial sandstones, fine-grained marine sandstones).
    - **Undetermined Potential.** Assigned to geologic units for which little information is available concerning their paleontological content, geologic age, and depositional environment. In cases where no subsurface data already exist, paleontological potential can sometimes be assessed by subsurface site investigations.

- **Low Potential.** Field surveys or paleontological research may determine that a geologic unit has low potential for yielding significant fossils (e.g., basalt flows). Mitigation is generally not required to protect fossils.
- **No Potential.** Some geologic units have no potential to contain significant paleontological resources (e.g., high-grade metamorphic rocks [gneisses and schists] and plutonic igneous rocks [granites and diorites]). Mitigation is not required.

Thresholds of Significance

In accordance with Appendix G of the State CEQA Guidelines, the proposed project would be considered to have a significant effect if it would result in any of the conditions listed below.

- Potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving: (1) rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault; (2) strong seismic ground shaking; (3) seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction; or (4) landslides.
- Substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil.
- Placement of project-related facilities on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable or that would become unstable as a result of the project and potentially result in an onsite or offsite landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse.
- Placement of project-related facilities on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property.
- Placement of project facilities on soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems in areas where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater.
- Direct or indirect destruction of a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature.

Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Impact GEO-1: Potential substantial adverse effects involving rupture of a known earthquake fault, strong seismic ground shaking, seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction, or landslides (less than significant)

Fault Rupture

As discussed under *Environmental Setting*, *Seismicity and Seismic Hazards*, while Placer County lies within a seismically active area, earthquakes in Placer County have not caused any known surface ruptures within the historical period; therefore, the risk of fault rupture is considered low. As described in Chapter 2, *Project Description*, the proposed project is comprised of targeted amendments, or changes, to the Placer County General Plan, Placer County Zoning Ordinance, Zoning Maps, and Community Design Guidelines Manual. While these changes could provide the framework for the future development of up to 194 units, no specific development projects are proposed as part of these changes. The Placer County General Plan requires the preparation of a geotechnical investigation prior to the permitting of any development in areas prone to

geological or seismic hazards. Tiny homes on wheels are subject to both County requirements and compliance with American National Standards Institute (ANSI) standards which stipulate requirements for, among other things, life safety. As such, any future development occurring as a result of the proposed project would require a geotechnical investigation and/or compliance with County requirements which would address the risk of fault rupture. Further, the proposed project would not exacerbate the risk of surface fault rupture. Therefore, as the risk of fault rupture is considered low in the county, development resulting from the proposed project would be required to prepare a geotechnical investigation disclosing the site-specific risk of fault rupture at the project site, and the proposed project would not exacerbate the risk of surface fault rupture, this impact would be ***less than significant***.

Ground Shaking

As discussed under *Seismicity and Seismic Hazards*, while Placer County is considered a seismically active area, and ground shaking could be felt throughout the county, the eastern part of the county near the Tahoe-Sierra frontal fault zone is most at risk from seismic ground shaking. As described in Chapter 2, the proposed project does not include any specific development, but the changes could provide for the future development of up to 194 units, including up to 82 units in the eastern portion of the county. As such, future developments constructed as a result of the changes included in the proposed project could experience seismic-related ground shaking during an earthquake. However, future development resulting from the proposed project would be required to comply with General Plan policies, California Building Standards Code's requirements, and – for tiny homes on wheels – various County and ANSI requirements, which would reduce risks to life from damage to newly constructed buildings due to seismic ground shaking. Therefore, as the project would not exacerbate the risk of ground shaking, and future developments resulting from the project would be required to comply with General Plan policies and Building Code requirements, this impact would be ***less than significant***.

Soil Liquefaction

As discussed under *Secondary Seismic Hazards*, while soils prone to liquefaction are located throughout the county, in general the risk is assumed to be greater in the eastern part of the county. While the proposed project does not include any specific developments, the changes would provide for the future development of up to 194 units. The potential exists for some of the units proposed on unimproved parcels to be underlain by liquefiable soils. However, the Placer County General Plan requires the submission of a preliminary soils report and a soils engineering analysis, which would identify any liquefiable soils at development sites and provide recommendations to reduce the risk associated with liquefaction at the project site. Foundations and utility hook ups for tiny homes on wheels are subject to County requirements. Because any future development occurring as a result of the proposed project on potentially liquefiable soils would require a soils report and engineering analysis as well as County oversight that would provide recommendations to reduce the risk of liquefaction during a seismic event, the proposed project would result in a ***less than significant*** impact related to liquefaction.

Seismic Densification

As discussed under *Weak Soils, Seismic Densification, and Expansive Soils*, seismic densification can occur when dry, unconsolidated, and loosely packed sandy or silty soils settle during a seismic event. This densification can cause damage to foundations and structures. While the proposed

project does not include any specific developments, the changes would provide for the future development of up to 194 units. However, the majority of the units would be created on already developed parcels, which would be unlikely to be underlain by weak loose soils prone to densification. In addition, the Placer County General Plan requires the submission of a preliminary soils report and a soils engineering analysis, which would identify any weak soils and would provide recommendations to reduce the risk associated with these soils at the project site to a less-than-significant level. Foundations and utility hook ups for tiny homes on wheels are subject to County requirements. As such, any future development occurring as a result of the proposed project on potentially densifiable soils would require a soils report and engineering analysis as well as additional County oversight that would provide recommendations to reduce the risk. As any future development proposed as a result of the changes resulting from the proposed project would comply with the recommendations in the soils report as well as standard regulations required by the California Building Code, the project would result in a ***less than significant*** impact related to densification-induced settlement.

Lateral Spreading

As discussed under *Lateral Spreading*, lateral spreading poses the greatest risk in cohesionless sandy sediments over a high groundwater table in the vicinity of an open face, such as a cliff or a streambank. While soil type and groundwater depth vary across the county, it is assumed that greatest risk of lateral spreading would be in the High Sierra region near Lake Tahoe, where the risk for liquefaction is higher than in the rest of the county. However, as discussed under *Soil Liquefaction*, any future development resulting from the proposed project would be required to submit a soils report and engineering analysis, which would identify any saturated sandy soils susceptible to lateral spreading and would provide recommendations to reduce the risk associated with these soils at the project site. Any development resulting from the proposed project would also be required to comply with standard regulatory requirements of the California Building Code and the County of Placer Building Code, which would require construction and foundations to be designed in a way that would minimize risk resulting from lateral spreading. The development of future foundations and utility hook ups for tiny homes on wheels would be subject to County oversight. Therefore, the proposed project would result in a ***less than significant*** impact related to lateral spreading.

Landslide

As discussed under *Landslides*, most of the natural slopes in Placer County are stable and pose a low risk of landslide. However, the risk of landslide is present in hilly and mountainous areas, and construction-related excavation has the potential to remove downslope support which could increase the risk of landslide. While the proposed project does not include any specific developments, it would provide for the future development of up to 194 units. However, the Placer County General Plan includes policies that limit development on steep or unstable slopes and prohibit the alteration of land (including through the concentration of water, removal of vegetative cover, and undercutting the bases of slopes) in a way that would increase the risk of landslides. Because future projects resulting from the proposed project would comply with policies in the Placer County General Plan, the proposed project would result in a ***less than significant*** impact related to landslides.

Impact GEO-2: Potential to result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil (less than significant with mitigation)

The project site consists of parcels in unincorporated parts of Placer County with a variety of slopes and grades where erosion could occur, especially when soils are disturbed. As discussed under *Weak Soils, Seismic Densification, and Expansive Soils*, soils in the eastern portion of Placer County have a high potential for erosion. While the proposed project does not itself include any specific developments, the amendments and changes to the Placer County General Plan, Placer County Zoning Ordinance, Zoning Maps, and Community Design Guidelines Manual that comprise the proposed project could result in the future development of up to 194 units, including up to 82 units in the eastern portion of the county. Development facilitated by the proposed project could therefore require excavation, stockpiling of spoil materials, and grading at these parcels, which could expose soils to erosion or lead to the loss of topsoil. Therefore, the project could result in potentially significant impacts related to soil erosion or the loss of topsoil.

However, implementation of **Mitigation Measure GEO-2** would reduce significant impacts related to soil erosion and loss of top soil to ***less than significant with mitigation*** by requiring the applicant to prepare and submit Improvement Plans, specifications, and cost estimates to the Engineering and Surveying Division (ESD) for review and approval. The approval of plans is contingent on the inclusion of erosion control measures, including the revegetation of disturbed areas; the maintenance of erosion control/winterization of area prior, during, and after construction; the securing of soil stockpiles; along with other measures.

Mitigation Measures GEO-2: Obtain Approval from Engineering and Surveying Division

- The applicant will prepare and submit Improvement Plans, specifications and cost estimates (per the requirements of Section II of the Land Development Manual (LDM) that are in effect at the time of submittal) to the Engineering and Surveying Division (ESD) for review and approval. The plans will show all physical improvements as required by the conditions for the project as well as pertinent topographical features both on and off site. All existing and proposed utilities and easements, on site and adjacent to the project, which may be affected by planned construction, will be shown on the plans. All landscaping and irrigation facilities within the public right-of-way (or public easements), or landscaping within sight distance areas at intersections, will be included in the Improvement Plans. The applicant will pay plan check and inspection fees and, if applicable, Placer County Fire Department improvement plan review and inspection fees with the 1st Improvement Plan submittal. (NOTE: Prior to plan approval, all applicable recording and reproduction costs will be paid). The cost of the above-noted landscape and irrigation facilities will be included in the estimates used to determine these fees. It is the applicant's responsibility to obtain all required agency signatures on the plans and to secure department approvals. If the Design/Site Review process and/or Development Review Committee (DRC) review is required as a condition of approval for the project, said review process will be completed prior to submittal of Improvement Plans.

  Conceptual landscape plans submitted prior to project approval may require modification during the Improvement Plan process to resolve issues of drainage and traffic safety.

  The Final Map(s) will not be submitted to the ESD until the Improvement Plans are submitted for the second review. Final technical review of the Final Subdivision Map(s) will not conclude until after the Improvement Plans are approved by the ESD.

Any Building Permits associated with this project will not be issued until, at a minimum, the Improvement Plans are approved by the Engineering and Surveying Division.

Prior to the County's final acceptance of the project's improvements, submit to the Engineering and Surveying Division one copy of the Record Drawings in digital format (on compact disc or other acceptable media) along with one blackline hardcopy (black print on bond paper) and one PDF copy. The digital format is to allow integration with Placer County's Geographic Information System (GIS). The final approved blackline hardcopy Record Drawings will be the official document of record.

- The Improvement Plans will show all proposed grading, drainage improvements, vegetation and tree removal and all work will conform to provisions of the County Grading Ordinance (Ref. Article 15.48, Placer County Code) and Stormwater Quality Ordinance (Ref. Article 8.28, Placer County Code) that are in effect at the time of submittal. No grading, clearing, or tree disturbance will occur until the Improvement Plans are approved and all temporary construction fencing has been installed and inspected by a member of the Development Review Committee (DRC). All cut/fill slopes will be at a maximum of 2:1 (horizontal: vertical) unless a soils report supports a steeper slope and the ESD concurs with said recommendation.

  The applicant will revegetate all disturbed areas. Revegetation, undertaken from April 1 to October 1, will include regular watering to ensure adequate growth. A winterization plan will be provided with project Improvement Plans. It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure proper installation and maintenance of erosion control/winterization before, during, and after project construction. Soil stockpiling or borrow areas, will have proper erosion control measures applied for the duration of the construction as specified in the Improvement Plans. Provide for erosion control where roadside drainage is off of the pavement, to the satisfaction of the ESD.

  The applicant will submit to the ESD a letter of credit or cash deposit in the amount of 110 percent of an approved engineer's estimate using the County's current Plan Check and Inspection Fee Spreadsheet for winterization and permanent erosion control work prior to Improvement Plan approval to guarantee protection against erosion and improper grading practices. For an improvement plan with a calculated security that exceeds $100,000, a minimum of $100,000 will be provided as letter of credit or cash security and the remainder can be bonded. One year after the County's acceptance of improvements as complete, if there are no erosion or runoff issues to be corrected, unused portions of said deposit will be refunded or released, as applicable, to the project applicant or authorized agent.

  If, at any time during construction, a field review by County personnel indicates a significant deviation from the proposed grading shown on the Improvement Plans, specifically with regard to slope heights, slope ratios, erosion control, winterization, tree disturbance, and/or pad elevations and configurations, the plans will be reviewed by the DRC/ESD for a determination of substantial conformance to the project approvals prior to any further work proceeding. Failure of the DRC/ESD to make a determination of substantial conformance may serve as grounds for the revocation/modification of the project approval by the appropriate hearing body.

- If project ground disturbance exceeds one acre, prior to any construction commencing, the applicant will provide evidence to the Engineering and Surveying Division of a WDID

number generated from the State Regional Water Quality Control Board's Stormwater Multiple Application & Reports Tracking System (SMARTS). This serves as the Regional Water Quality Control Board approval or permit under the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) construction storm water quality permit.

Impact GEO-3: Placement of project-related facilities on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable or that would become unstable as a result of the project and potentially result in an onsite or offsite landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse (less than significant with mitigation)

While the proposed project does not include any specific developments, the changes would provide for the future development of up to 194 units, some of which could potentially be on parcels underlain by liquefiable soils. Liquefaction is discussed in Impact GEO-1.

Liquefaction-related sand boils and ground fissures can occur when surface layers above liquefiable soils are thin. Most parcels affected by the proposed project are previously developed, reducing the likelihood that they are underlain by liquefiable soils. However, the potential exists for new developments to be placed on liquefiable soils, which could result in liquefaction-related sand boils and ground fissures.

Soil type and groundwater depth vary across the county, but it is assumed that greatest risk of lateral spreading would be in the High Sierra region near Lake Tahoe, where the risk for liquefaction is higher than in the rest of the county.

While the proposed project does not include any specific developments, future developments that could result from the proposed project could potentially be placed on geologic unit or soil that is unstable or that would become unstable as a result of the project.

However, implementation of **Mitigation Measure GEO-3** would reduce significant impacts related to placement of future development resulting from the project on unstable soil to ***less than significant with mitigation*** by requiring future project applicants to submit a final geotechnical engineering report for review and approval by the Engineering and Surveying Division (ESD). The geotechnical report would identify any underlying unstable soils or geologic units which could lead to structural defects and would provide recommendations which would reduce the impacts to a less than significant level.

Mitigation Measures GEO-3: Submit Final Geotechnical Engineering Report for Approval

The Improvement Plan submittal will include a final geotechnical engineering report produced by a California Registered Civil Engineer or Geotechnical Engineer for Engineering and Surveying Division review and approval. The report will address and make recommendations on the following:

- Road, pavement, and parking area design;
- Structural foundations, including retaining wall design (if applicable);
- Grading practices;
- Erosion/winterization;
- Special problems discovered on-site, (i.e., groundwater, expansive/unstable soils, etc.)

- Slope stability

Once approved by ESD, two copies of the final report will be provided to the ESD and one copy to the Building Services Division for its use. It is the responsibility of the developer to provide for engineering inspection and certification that earthwork has been performed in conformity with recommendations contained in the report.

If the geotechnical engineering report indicates the presence of critically expansive or other soil problems that, if not corrected, could lead to structural defects, a certification of completion of the requirements of the soils report will be required for subdivisions, prior to issuance of Building Permits. This certification may be completed on a lot-by-lot basis or on a Tract basis. This will be so noted on the Improvement Plans, in the Development Notebook (if required), in the Conditions, Covenants and Restrictions (CC&Rs), and on the Informational Sheet filed with the Final Subdivision Map(s).

Impact GEO-4: Placement of project-related facilities on expansive soil, creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property (less than significant with mitigation)

Soils that contain high clay content and have moderate to high shrink-swell potential are present in Placer County, particularly in the low-lying areas in the western part of the county. While the proposed project does not itself include any specific developments, it could provide for the future development of up to 194 units, including up to 50 units in the western part of the county. While the majority of these parcels are previously developed and would therefore be unlikely to be underlain by expansive soils, the potential exists for new structures to be placed on parcels underlain by expansive soils.

However, as discussed above under GEO-3, implementation of **Mitigation Measure GEO-3** would require future project applicants to submit a final geotechnical engineering report for review and approval by the Engineering and Surveying Division (ESD). The geotechnical report would identify any expansive soils underlying site of a future development project and would provide recommendations which would reduce impacts related to expansive soils to a less-than-significant level. In addition, this mitigation measure requires the project applicant to complete a certification of completion of the requirements of the soils report. Therefore, impacts related to expansive soils resulting from the project would be ***less than significant with mitigation***.

Impact GEO-5: Placement of facilities on soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems in areas where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater (no impact)

The proposed project would provide a framework for the future development of up to 194 units in areas where infrastructure and development already exist. As discussed in Section 3.15, *Public Services, Recreation, and Utilities and Service Systems*, all project-related development would occur in areas that already have suitable infrastructure, including wastewater treatment. Therefore, development resulting from the proposed project would not use a septic or alternative water disposal system and would have ***no impact***.

Impact GEO-6: Direct or indirect destruction of a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature (less than significant with mitigation)

Three geologic units underlying the parcels comprising the project are known to have yielded significant fossils—the Riverbank Formation, Turlock Formation, and Mehrten Formation. The units underlying the project parcels therefore have potential to contain significant fossils; accordingly, the paleontological sensitivity of these units is high.

Because paleontological resources are located below the ground surface, ground disturbances such as excavating, grading, and resurfacing can affect any paleontological resources that may be present. Destruction of any paleontological resources present at the project site would constitute a significant impact. Further, the General Plan EIR found that impacts on paleontological resources in the county from implementation of the General Plan would be significant even with implementation of policies contained in the General Plan.

Implementation of **Mitigation Measure GEO-6** would reduce this significant impact on paleontological resources to ***less than significant with mitigation*** by providing training for construction personnel related to the possibility of encountering fossils. Construction personnel would learn the required actions to take in response to fossil discoveries, such as ceasing all earthmoving activities within 25 feet of any potential fossil find and providing for the recovery of fossils at the project site.

Mitigation Measure GEO-6: Halt Construction Activity, Evaluate Find, and Implement Mitigation for Paleontological Resources

In the event that previously unidentified paleontological resources are uncovered during site preparation, excavation, or other construction activity, all such activity within 25 feet of the discovery will cease until the resources have been evaluated by a qualified professional, and specific measures can be implemented to protect these resources in accordance with PRC Sections 21083.2 and 21084.1. If the find is significant, a qualified paleontologist will excavate the find in compliance with state law, keeping project delays to a minimum. Any significant finds will be curated and assessments will be incorporated into the countywide cultural resource database, maintained by the Division of Museums, consistent with General Plan policy. If the qualified paleontologist determines the find is not significant then proper recordation and identification will ensue and the project will continue without delay.

3.7.3 References Cited

California Department of Conservation. 2006. Relative Likelihood for the Presence of Naturally Occurring Asbestos in Place County, California. Available: http://www.capcoa.org/Docs/noa/%5B7%5D%20Placer%20County%20NOA%20-%20CGS%20Report%20190.pdf. Accessed May 29, 2020.

California Earthquake Authority. 2020. California Earthquake Risk Map & Faults By County. Available: https://www.earthquakeauthority.com/California-Earthquake-Risk/Faults-By-County. Accessed: May 30, 2020.

California Geological Survey. 2020a. *The Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act*. Available: http://www.conservation.ca.gov/cgs/rghm/ap. Accessed: March 17, 2020.

California Geological Survey. 2020b. CGS Information Warehouse. Available: http://maps.conservation.ca.gov/cgs/informationwarehouse/index.html?map=regulatorymaps. Accessed May 30, 2020.

City of Auburn General Plan Citizens Advisory Committee. 1993. City of Auburn General Plan, VII Open Space and Conservation. Available: https://www.auburn.ca.gov/399/Planning. Accessed: May 8, 2020.

City of Roseville. 2016. *City of Roseville General Plan 2035*, VIII Safety Element. Available: https://www.roseville.ca.us/government/departments/development_services/planning/general_plan_development_guidelines. Accessed: May 8, 2020.

Dundas, R.G. and Chatters, J.C. 2013. The mid-Irvingtonian Fairmead Landfill fossil site, Madera County Paleontology Collection, and Fossil Discovery Center of Madera County, California. In Putirka, K., ed., *Geologic Excursions from Fresno, California, and the Central Valley: A Tour of California's Iconic Geology*: Geological Society of America Field Guide 32, pp. 63-78. Available: https://pubs.geoscienceworld.org/books/chapter-pdf/3739273/9780813756325_ch04.pdf. Accessed: July 30, 2020.

Geological Society of America. 2012. *Seismic Hazard: Faults Discovered Near Lake Tahoe Could Generate Earthquakes Ranging from 6.3 to 6.9*. ScienceDaily. Available: www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2012/05/120524123236.htm. Accessed May 30, 2020.

High Sierra Resource Conservation and Development Council. 2005. Vegetation Establishment Guidelines for the Sierra Nevada Foothills and Mountains. Available: http://placerrcd.org/wp-content/uploads/documents/NEW-2005-Vegetation-Guidelines.pdf. Accessed: June 5, 2020.

Marchand, D.E. and Allwardt, A. 1981. Late Cenozoic Stratigraphic Units, Northeastern San Joaquin Valley, California. (Geological Survey Bulletin 1470.) Available: https://pubs.usgs.gov/bul/1470/report.pdf. Accessed: June 5, 2020.

National Park Service. n.d. Fossils and Paleontology: Paleontological Resource Monitoring. Available: https://www.nps.gov/subjects/fossils/resource-monitoring.htm. Accessed: June 5, 2020.

North Fork Associates. 2010. *Martis Valley Regional Trail Initial Study*. Available: https://evogov.s3.amazonaws.com/media/186/media/161211.pdf. Accessed May 29, 2020.

Placer County. 1994. *Countywide General Plan: Final Environmental Impact Report*. July 26. Prepared by: Crawford Multari & Starr, DKS Associates, Psomas and Associates, Jones & Stokes Associates, Recht Hausrath & Associates, J. Laurence Mintier & Associates. Available: https://www.placer.ca.gov/2981/General-Plan-Environmental-Impact-Report. Accessed: May 18, 2020.

Placer County. 2013. *Placer County General Plan*. Section 5: Recreation and Cultural Resources. Available: https://www.placer.ca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/8564/Recreation-and-Cultural-Resources-PDF. Accessed May 26, 2020.

Saucedo, G.J. and Wagner, D.L. 1992. Geologic Map of the Chico Quadrangle, California, 1:250,000. Available: ftp://ftp.consrv.ca.gov/pub/dmg/pubs/rgm/RGM_007A/. Accessed: May 19, 2020.

SE Group & Assent. 2018. *Squaw Valley/Alpine Meadows Bases-to-Base Gondola Project Draft EIS/EIR*. Available: https://www.placer.ca.gov/2680/Squaw-Valley-Alpine-Meadows-Base-to-Base. Accessed: May 29, 2020.

University of California Museum of Paleontology. n.d. Fossils: Window to the Past. Available: https://ucmp.berkeley.edu/paleo/fossils/. Accessed: June 5, 2020.

University of California Museum of Paleontology. 2020a. Advanced Specimen Search: Riverbank Formation. Available: https://ucmpdb.berkeley.edu/advanced.html. Accessed: June 5, 2020.

University of California Museum of Paleontology. 2020b. Advanced Specimen Search: Mehrten Formation. Available: https://ucmpdb.berkeley.edu/advanced.html. Accessed: May 26, 2020.

Wagner, D.L., Jennings, C.W., Bedrossian, T.L., and Bortugno, E.J. 1991. Geologic Map of the Sacramento Quadrangle, California, 1:250,000. Available: ftp://ftp.consrv.ca.gov/pub/dmg/pubs/rgm/RGM_001A/. Accessed: May 19, 2020.

3.8 Greenhouse Gas Emissions

This section addresses the potential impacts of Placer County's (County) proposed General Plan amendments, Zoning Ordinance update, and the development of design standards and guidelines for mixed-use development (project) related to greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. It describes the existing setting and identifies the applicable federal and state plans, policies, and laws and local plans, policies, and regulations.

The analysis in this section is based on a review of the Placer County GHG inventory and Sustainability Plan and regulations administered by the State of California, and the Placer County Air Pollution Control District (PCAPCD). Appendix C, *Criteria Pollutant and GHG Modeling Results*, presents supporting GHG emissions calculations for the impact analysis.

3.8.1 Existing Conditions

Regulatory Setting

This section summarizes the federal, state, and local regulations related to GHG emissions, climate change, and energy resources that are applicable to the proposed project.

Federal Regulations

There is currently no overarching federal law related specifically to reductions in GHG emissions. Under the Obama administration, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) developed regulations under the Clean Air Act (CAA), pursuant to USEPA's authority under the CAA.[1] In addition, there were settlement agreements among USEPA, several states, and nongovernmental organizations to address issues related to GHG emissions from electric generating units and refineries. USEPA also issued an "endangerment finding" and a "cause or contribute finding" and adopted a mandatory reporting rule and the Clean Power Plan. Under the Clean Power Plan, USEPA issued regulations to control carbon dioxide (CO_2) emissions from new and existing coal-fired power plants. However, on February 9, 2016, the Supreme Court issued a stay regarding these regulations, pending litigation. Former USEPA Administrator Scott Pruitt signed a measure to repeal the Clean Power Plan in October 2017.

Federal regulations have also been adopted related to medium- and heavy-duty trucks (Phase 1 and 2 truck standards), and cars and light-duty trucks (Corporate Average Fuel Economy [CAFE] Standards). CAFE standards incorporate stricter fuel economy standards promulgated by the State of California into one uniform standard. Additionally, automakers are required to cut GHG emissions in new vehicles by roughly 25 percent by 2016.

The U.S. EPA, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), and CARB issued joint Final Rules for CAFE standards and GHG emissions regulations for 2017 to 2025 model year passenger vehicles, which require an industry-wide average of 54.5 miles per gallon (mpg) in 2025.

[1] In *Coalition for Responsible Regulation, Inc., et al. v. EPA*, the U.S. Court of Appeals upheld USEPA's authority to regulate GHG emissions under the CAA.

On August 2, 2018, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) proposed to amend the fuel efficiency standards for passenger cars and light trucks and establish new standards covering model years 2021 through 2026 by maintaining the current model year 2020 standards through 2026 (Safer Affordable Fuel-Efficient [SAFE] Vehicles Rule). On September 19, 2019, EPA and NHTSA issued a final action on the One National Program Rule, which is consider part 1 of the SAFE Vehicles Rule and a precursor to the proposed fuel efficiency standards. The One National Program Rule enables EPA/NHTSA to provide nationwide uniform fuel economy and GHG vehicle standards, specifically by (1) clarifying that federal law preempts state and local tailpipe GHG standards, (2) affirming NHTSA's statutory authority to set nationally applicable fuel economy standards, and (3) withdrawing California's Clean Air Act preemption waiver to set state-specific standards.

EPA and NHTSA published their decisions to withdraw California's waiver and finalize regulatory text related to the preemption on September 27, 2019 (84 *Federal Register* 51310). The agencies also announced that they will publish the second part of the SAFE Vehicles Rule (i.e., the standards). California, 22 other states, the District of Columbia, and two cities filed suit against the proposed One National Program Rule on September 20, 2019 (*California et al. v. United States Department of Transportation et al.*, 1:19-cv-02826, U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia). The lawsuit requests a "permanent injunction prohibiting Defendants from implementing or relying on the Preemption Regulation." The fate of the One National Program Rule and SAFE Vehicles Rule remains uncertain in the face of pending legal deliberations.

State Regulations

California has adopted statewide legislation to address various aspects of climate change and provide GHG mitigation. Much of this establishes a broad framework for the state's long-term GHG reduction goals as well as the climate change adaptation program. Governors of California, both former and current, have also issued Executive Orders (EO) related to the state's evolving climate change policy. Summaries of the key policies, EOs, regulations, and state legislation relevant to the project are provided below in chronological order.

Executive Order S-03-05 (2005)

EO S-03-05 was designed to reduce California's GHG emissions to (1) 2000 levels by 2010, (2) 1990 levels by 2020, and (3) 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050.

Assembly Bill 32—California Global Warming Solutions Act (2006)

Assembly Bill (AB) 32 codified the state's GHG emissions target by requiring California's global warming emissions to be reduced to 1990 levels by 2020. Since being adopted, the California Air Resources Board (CARB), California Energy Commission (CEC), California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC), and California Building Standards Commission have been developing regulations that will help the state meet the goals of AB 32 and EO S-03-05. The scoping plan for AB 32 identifies specific measures for reducing GHG emissions to 1990 levels by 2020 and requires CARB and other state agencies to develop and enforce regulations and other initiatives to reduce GHG emissions. The AB 32 scoping plan, first adopted in 2008, is the state's roadmap for meeting AB 32's reduction target. Specifically, the scoping plan articulates a key role for local governments by recommending that they establish GHG emissions reduction goals for both municipal operations and the community that are consistent with those of the state (i.e., approximately 15 percent below current levels) (California Air Resources Board 2008).

Senate Bill 375—Sustainable Communities Strategy (2008)

Senate Bill (SB) 375[2] provides for a new planning process that coordinates land use planning, regional transportation plans (RTP), and funding priorities to help California meet the GHG reduction goals established in AB 32. SB 375 requires that the RTPs developed by metropolitan planning organizations (MPO) include a sustainable communities strategy (SCS). The goal of the SCS is to reduce regional vehicle miles traveled (VMT) through land use planning and consequent transportation patterns. CARB released the regional targets in September 2010.

The Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG) is the MPO for the Sacramento region, including most of Placer County, and the entire area covered by the proposed project. SACOG adopted its SB 375–compliant *2020 Metropolitan Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy* (MTP/SCS) in November 2019. SB 375 also includes provisions for streamlined California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) review for certain types of mixed-use and transit priority projects that meet specific criteria established by SB 375. Under State CEQA Guidelines Section 15183.5, quantified plans, such as the MTP/SCS environmental impact report (EIR), "may be used in the cumulative impacts analysis of later projects." More specifically, "[l]ater project-specific environmental documents may tier from and/or incorporate by reference" the "programmatic review" conducted for the GHG reduction plan. Section 15183.5 also states:

> An environmental document that relies on a greenhouse gas reduction plan for a cumulative impacts analysis must identify those requirements specified in the plan that apply to the project, and, if those requirements are not otherwise binding and enforceable, incorporate those requirements as mitigation measures applicable to the project.

Environmental documents prepared for projects that are consistent with the MTP/SCS EIR are not required to reference, describe, or discuss the following in their GHG impact analysis.

- Growth-inducing impacts.
- A reduced-density alternative to address impacts on transportation or climate change of increased car and truck VMT induced by the project.
- Any project-specific or cumulative impacts from cars and light-duty truck trips generated by the project on global warming or the regional transportation network.

California Energy Efficiency Standards for Non-Residential Buildings—Green Building Standards Code (2011) and Title 24 Update (2020)

The California Green Building Standards Code (CALGreen) applies to the planning, design, operation, construction, use, and occupancy of newly constructed buildings. It requires the installation of energy- and water-efficient indoor infrastructure for all new projects beginning after January 1, 2011. CALGreen also requires newly constructed buildings to develop a waste management plan and divert at least 50 percent of the construction materials generated during project construction.

Administrative regulations to CALGreen Part 11 and the California Building Energy Efficiency Standards were adopted in 2013 and took effect on January 1, 2014. The 2013 California Building Energy Efficiency Standards call for commercial construction that is 30 percent more efficient than commercial construction under the 2008 standards. Part 11 also established voluntary standards in the 2008 edition of the code that became mandatory in the 2010 edition, including standards related

[2] California Government Code Sections 14522.1, 14522.2, 65080, 65080, 65080.01, 65400, 65583, 65584.01, 65584.02, 65584.04, 65587, and 65588, and Public Resources Code Sections 2161.3, 21155, and 21159.28.

to sustainable site development, energy efficiency, water conservation, material conservation, and internal air contaminants (California Energy Commission 2012).

The 2016 Building Energy Efficiency Standards were adopted in 2015 and took effect on January 1, 2017. The 2019 standards, which took effect January 1, 2020, take the final step toward achieving zero net energy for newly constructed residential buildings throughout California with requirements such as solar voltaic systems for new homes and encouraging demand responsive technologies (e.g., battery storage, heat pump water heaters) to improve energy savings. The California Energy Commission estimates that the current 2019 standards will result in approximately 30 percent less energy from nonresidential buildings than those designed in compliance with the 2016 standards. These energy savings are due primarily to the required lighting upgrades with the current standards. Future standards are expected to require zero net energy for newly constructed commercial buildings.

Senate Bill 350 (2015)

SB 350 (De Leon, also known as the Clean Energy and Pollution Reduction Act of 2015) was approved by the California legislature in September 2015 and signed by Governor Brown in October 2015. Its key provisions call for the following by 2030: (1) achieving a Renewables Portfolio Standard (RPS) of 50 percent and (2) doubling the efficiency of existing buildings.

Senate Bill 32, California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006: Emissions Limit, and Assembly Bill 197, State Air Resources Board, Greenhouse Gases, Regulations (2016)

SB 32 (Pavley) requires CARB to ensure that statewide GHG emissions will be reduced to at least 40 percent below the 1990 level by 2030, consistent with the target set forth in EO B-30-15. The bill specified that SB 32 will become operative only if AB 197 (Garcia) is enacted and effective on or before January 1, 2017. AB 197 requires formation of the Joint Legislative Committee on Climate Change Policies; requires CARB to prioritize direct emissions reductions from stationary sources, mobile sources, and other sources and consider social costs when adopting regulations to reduce GHG emissions beyond the 2020 statewide limit; requires CARB to prepare reports on sources of GHGs, criteria air pollutants, and toxic air contaminants (TAC); establishes 6-year terms for voting members of CARB; and adds two legislators as non-voting members of CARB. Both bills were signed by Governor Brown in September 2016.

CARB approved the 2017 Climate Change Scoping Plan Update in December 2017 to build on the programs set in place as part of the previous scoping plan, which was drafted to meet the 2020 reduction targets of AB 32. The 2017 scoping plan proposes meeting the 2030 goal by accelerating the focus on zero and near-zero technologies for moving freight; continuing investment in renewables; relying on greater use of low-carbon fuels, including hydrogen; implementing stronger efforts to reduce emissions of short-lived climate pollutants (e.g., methane [CH_4], black carbon, fluorinated gases); overseeing further efforts to create walkable communities with expanded mass transit and other alternatives to traveling by car; continuing the cap-and-trade program; and ensuring that natural lands become carbon sinks to provide additional emissions reductions and flexibility in meeting the target. The scoping plan update also recommends that local governments achieve community-wide efficiency through the use of targets that call for 6 metric tons (MT) carbon dioxide equivalent (CO_2e) per capita by 2030 and 2 $MTCO_2e$ per capita by 2050, targets that can be used in local climate action planning. These efficiency targets would replace the “15 percent below 2008 levels by 2020” approach recommended in the initial scoping plan.

Senate Bill 100 (2018)

SB 100 (De León, also known as the California Renewables Portfolio Standard Program: Emissions of Greenhouse Gases) was approved by the California Legislature and signed by Governor Brown in September 2018. The bill increases the RPS in 2030 from 50 to 60 percent and establishes an RPS goal of 100 percent by 2045.

Executive Order B-55-18 (2018)

EO B-55-18 was approved by the California Legislature and signed by Governor Brown in September 2018. The order establishes a statewide goal that calls for achieving carbon neutrality by no later than 2045 as well as achieving and maintaining net negative emissions thereafter. Although this EO has not been codified in law, it directs CARB to ensure that future climate change scoping plans identify and recommend measures for achieving the carbon neutrality goal.

Local Regulations

The State's Scoping Plan does not provide an explicit role for local air districts in implementing AB 32 and SB 32, but it does state that CARB will work actively with air districts in coordinating emissions reporting, encouraging and coordinating GHG reductions, and providing technical assistance in quantifying reductions. The ability of air districts to control emissions (both criteria pollutants and GHGs) is provided primarily through permitting as well as through their role as CEQA lead or commenting agency, the establishment of CEQA thresholds, and the development of analytical requirements for CEQA documents. The PCAPCD's *CEQA Handbook* (Placer County 2017) provides guidance for evaluating project-level GHG impacts, including thresholds to assist lead agencies in evaluating the significance of project-generated emissions.

The PCAPCD has adopted a *de minimis* threshold of 1,100 $MTCO_2e$ for construction and operation of land use development projects, such as new residential projects. The air district also has a bright line threshold of 10,000 $MTCO_2e$, where land use development projects in excess of the *de minimis* threshold (1,100 $MTCO_2e$) can be found less than cumulatively considerable if the emission intensity (emissions per capita) meets certain criteria.

Placer County Sustainability Plan

CARB encourages local governments to adopt a reduction goal for municipal operations emissions and move toward establishing similar goals for community emissions that parallel the State's commitment to reducing GHG emissions (California Air Resources Board 2008).

The County adopted the *Placer County Sustainability Plan: A Greenhouse Gas Emission Reduction Plan and Adaptation Strategy* (PCSP) in January 2020 (Placer County 2020). The PCSP includes an inventory of baseline (2005) and forecasted emissions in 2020, 2030, and 2050 and identifies reduction targets and strategies to reach those targets. The reduction strategies and measures included in the PCSP apply to both municipal operations and community activities in the unincorporated county. The reduction measures address GHG emissions from agriculture and forestry, off-road equipment, solid waste, water and wastewater, transportation, and energy.

Environmental Setting

Global Climate Change

The phenomenon known as the greenhouse effect keeps the atmosphere near the Earth's surface warm enough for successful habitation by humans and other life forms. GHGs include CO_2, CH_4, nitrous oxide (N_2O), perfluorocarbons (PFC), sulfur hexafluoride (SF_6), and hydrofluorocarbons (HFC). These six gases are also identified as GHGs in Section 15364.5 of the State CEQA Guidelines.

Sunlight in the form of infrared, visible, and ultraviolet light passes through the atmosphere. Some of the sunlight striking the Earth is absorbed and converted to heat, which warms the surface. The surface emits infrared radiation to the atmosphere where some of it is absorbed by GHGs and re-emitted toward the surface. Human activities that emit additional GHGs to the atmosphere increase the amount of infrared radiation that gets absorbed before escaping into space, thereby enhancing the greenhouse effect and amplifying the warming of the Earth (National Park Service 2019).

Increases in fossil fuel combustion and deforestation have exponentially increased concentrations of GHGs in the atmosphere since the Industrial Revolution. Rising atmospheric concentrations of GHGs in excess of natural levels enhance the greenhouse effect, which contributes to global warming of the Earth's lower atmosphere. This warming induces large-scale changes in ocean circulation patterns, precipitation patterns, global ice cover, biological distributions, and other changes to the Earth's systems. This is collectively referred to as climate change.

GHGs are global pollutants, unlike criteria air pollutants and TACs. Criteria air pollutants and TACs occur locally or regionally. Local concentrations respond to locally implemented control measures. However, the long atmospheric lifetimes of GHGs allow them to be transported great distances from sources and become well mixed, unlike criteria air pollutants, which typically exhibit strong concentration gradients away from point sources. GHGs and global climate change represent cumulative impacts; that is, GHG emissions contribute, on a cumulative basis, to the significant adverse environmental impacts of global climate change.

Principal Greenhouse Gases

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) (2014) defines GHG emissions as CO_2, CH_4, N_2O, HFCs, PFCs, and SF_6. California law and the State CEQA Guidelines contain similar definitions of GHGs (Health and Safety Code § 38505(g); 14 California Code of Regulations § 15364.5). Water vapor, the most abundant GHG, is not included in this list because its natural concentrations and fluctuations far outweigh its anthropogenic (human-made) sources. The primary GHGs of concern associated with the project are CO_2, CH_4, and N_2O; these are discussed below. Note that PFCs, HFCs, and SF_6 are not discussed because those gases are generated primarily by industrial and manufacturing processes, which are not part of the proposed project.

- **CO_2** enters the atmosphere through the burning of fossil fuels (e.g., oil, natural gas, coal), solid waste, trees, and wood products; respiration; and chemical reactions (e.g., from the manufacture of cement). CO_2 is removed from the atmosphere (or "sequestered") when it is absorbed by plants as part of the biological carbon cycle.
- **CH_4** is emitted during the production and transport of coal, natural gas, and oil. CH_4 is also emitted from livestock and agricultural operations as well as the decay of organic waste in municipal solid waste landfills.

- **N_2O** is emitted during agricultural and industrial activities as well as the combustion of fossil fuels and solid waste.

Methods have been set forth to describe emissions of GHGs in terms of a single gas to simplify reporting and analysis. The most commonly accepted method for comparing GHG emissions is the global warming potential (GWP) methodology defined in the IPCC reference documents. IPCC defines the GWP of various GHG emissions on a normalized scale that recasts all GHG emissions in terms of CO_2e, which compares the gas in question to that of the same mass of CO_2 (which has a GWP of 1 by definition). The GWP values used in this report are based on the IPCC Fourth Assessment Report (AR4) and the reporting guidelines, as defined in Table 3.8-1, from the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (Myhre et al. 2013). The AR4 GWP values are consistent with those used in CARB's 2018 California GHG inventory, CARB's 2017 scoping plan, and the County's GHG emissions inventory (California Air Resources Board 2017, 2018; Placer County 2018).

Table 3.8-1. Lifetimes and Global Warming Potentials of Significant Greenhouse Gases

Gas	GWP (100 years)	Lifetime (years)[1]
CO_2	1	50–200
CH_4	25	9–15
N_2O	298	121

Sources: Myhre et al. 2013; Blasing 2016; Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change 2007.
ppm = parts per million; ppb = parts per billion.
[1] Defined as the half-life of the gas.

Greenhouse Gas Inventories

A GHG inventory is a quantification of all GHG emissions and sinks[3] within a selected physical and/or economic boundary. GHG inventories can be performed on a large scale (e.g., for global and national entities) or on a small scale (e.g., for a particular building or person). Although many processes are difficult to evaluate, several agencies have developed tools to quantify emissions from certain sources.

Table 3.8-2 outlines the most recent global, national, statewide, and local GHG inventories to help contextualize the magnitude of potential project-related emissions.

Table 3.8-2. Global, National, State, and Local Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventories

Emissions Inventory	CO_2e (metric tons)
2010 Global (IPCC)	52,000,000,000
2018 United States of America (USEPA)	6,676,600,000
2017 State of California (CARB)	424,100,000
2015 Placer County	1,203,260

Sources: Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change 2014; U.S. Environmental Protection Agency 2020; California Air Resources Board 2019; Placer County 2020

GHG emissions generated within the county are included in the PCSP and are shown in Table 3.8-3. Sources of GHGs within the county include residential and nonresidential energy use,

[3]A GHG sink is a process, activity, or mechanism that removes a GHG from the atmosphere.

transportation, solid waste, off-road equipment, water and wastewater, and agriculture and forest management. Of these sources, the individual source with the most emissions is transportation, which is 42 percent of the total, followed by residential energy sources, which is 21 percent of the county's total emissions.

Table 3.8-3. 2015 Placer County Community-Wide Greenhouse Gas Emissions by Sector

Emissions Sector	$MTCO_2e$	Percent
Residential Energy	256,070	21%
Nonresidential Energy	148,650	12%
Transportation	503,610	42%
Solid Waste	87,530	7%
Off-Road Equipment	9,410	1%
Water and Wastewater	11,550	1%
Agriculture and Forest Management	186,460	15%
Total	**1,203,260**	**100%**

Source: Placer County 2020

3.8.2 Environmental Impacts

Methods for Analysis

GHG impacts associated with construction and operation of the proposed project were assessed and quantified using industry standard and accepted software tools, techniques, and emission factors. This section provides a summary of the methodology. A full list of assumptions and emission calculations can be found in Appendix C. The methodology used to estimate GHG emissions discussed below is the same method used to estimate air quality emissions, as described in Section 3.3, with the exception of electricity-, water-, wastewater-, and solid waste-related emissions.

Construction Emissions

The 194 units that could be developed as a result of project implementation would generate construction-related GHG emissions in the form of CO_2, CH_4, and N_2O that could result in impacts on climate change. Sources of construction emissions could include mobile and stationary construction equipment exhaust, employee and haul truck vehicle exhaust, and electricity from temporary mobile offices and electric equipment. In addition, construction of the residential units allowed with implementation of the proposed project could result in the disturbance or removal of trees and other vegetation, which are important sinks[4] of CO_2.

For purposes of analysis, it is assumed that buildout of the proposed project would be 2030. With an anticipated buildout year of 2030, implementation of various projects associated with the proposed project would occur over an extended period and would depend on factors such as economic conditions, market and housing demands, and other considerations. Since the project does not directly propose development, it is not possible to know with certainty how many units would be constructed within a single year. As such, it was conservatively assumed that up to 25 percent (49 units) of the potential 194 units would be constructed in a single year. This approach is

[4] A carbon *sink* is a natural reservoir that absorbs and stores CO_2 from the atmosphere.

recommended by the Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District (SMAQMD) in their guidance for plan-level analyses (Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District 2016).

Annual GHG emissions from project construction were estimated using default consumption data for single-family housing land use in the California Emissions Estimator Model (CalEEMod), version 2016.3.2. Emissions were estimated for construction of a single unit, as well as 25 percent of total proposed buildout, as described above.

Operational Emissions

Operation of future development associated with project implementation would generate emissions of CO_2, CH_4, and N_2O that could result in impacts on climate change. Operational emissions would result from motor vehicle travel, onsite combustion of natural gas for space and water heating, landscaping equipment, water consumption, waste generation, and use of electricity.

Annual GHG emissions from project operation at full buildout (2030) were estimated using default consumption data for single-family housing land use in CalEEMod version 2016.3.2, with adjustments to account for emissions reductions associated with 2019 Title 24 Building Energy Efficiency Standards.[5] The Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) emission rate was adjusted to account for the 2030 RPS, pursuant to SB 100 (Pacific Gas and Electric Company 2019). The daily trip rates used were provided by the project traffic engineer (Tokarski pers. comm.). The analysis also accounts for CARB's CO_2 adjustment factors to account for the SAFE Vehicle Rule (CARB 2020).

Thresholds of Significance

In accordance with Appendix G of the State CEQA Guidelines, the proposed project would be considered to have a significant effect if it would result in any of the conditions listed below.

- Generation of GHG emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment.
- Conflict with an applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of GHGs.

The State CEQA Guidelines do not indicate what amount of GHG emissions would constitute a significant impact on the environment. Instead, they authorize the lead agency to consider thresholds of significance previously adopted or recommended by other public agencies or recommended by experts, provided the decision of the lead agency to adopt such thresholds is supported by substantial evidence (State CEQA Guidelines §§ 15064.4(a) and 15064.7(c)). The State CEQA Guidelines provide the lead agency discretion whether to quantify GHG emissions resulting from a project and/or rely on a qualitative analysis or performance-based standards, focusing specifically on the following factors (State CEQA Guidelines § 15064.4(b):

- The extent to which the project may increase or reduce GHG emissions as compared to the existing environmental setting
- Whether the project GHG emissions exceed a threshold of significance that the lead agency determines applies to the project

[5] Assumed 53 percent less energy use with 2019 Title 24 standards as compared to 2016 Title 24 standards, due to design efficiencies, including mandatory rooftop solar electricity generation.

- The extent to which the project complies with regulations or requirements adopted to implement a statewide, regional, or local plan for the reduction or mitigation of GHG emissions. The lead agency must include substantial evidence linking statewide goals, strategies, and plans to the project's findings.

Threshold Approach

Generate a Significant Amount of GHG Emissions

PCAPCD has specified significance thresholds in its *Review of Land Use Projects under CEQA Policy* to determine GHG emissions of projects located within district boundaries (Placer County Air Pollution Control District 2016). PCAPCD uses these thresholds to determine the level of significance for GHG emissions associated with a project's construction and operational emissions. These thresholds are outlined in Table 3.8-4.

The *de minimis* level for the operational phase of land use projects—1,100 $MTCO_2e$/year—represents an emissions level that can be considered as less than cumulatively considerable and be excluded from further GHG impact analysis. Land use projects with operational phase GHG emissions that exceed the *de minimis* level of 1,100 $MTCO_2e$/year, but fall below 10,000 $MTCO_2e$/year, can still be found less than cumulatively considerable if a project's operational GHG emissions are less than the appropriate efficiency level thresholds (4.5–27.3 $MTCO_2e$/capita or square feet [sf]/year) shown in Table 3.8-4. GHG emissions from the construction and operational phases of land use and stationary projects that exceed the bright-line threshold of 10,000 $MTCO_2e$/year would be deemed to have a cumulatively considerable contribution to global climate change.

Table 3.8-4. PCAPCD Adopted Greenhouse Gas Thresholds

Type	Numeric Threshold	Application
De minimis level for land use projects	1,100 $MTCO_2e$/year	Operational emissions
Efficiency levels for land use projects		
Residential	4.5 $MTCO_2e$/capita/year	Urban operational emissions
	5.5 $MTCO_2e$/capita/year	Rural operational emissions
Non-residential	26.5 $MTCO_2e$/1,000 SF/year	Urban operational emissions
	27.3 $MTCO_2e$/1,000 SF/year	Rural operational emissions
Bright-line threshold for land use and stationary source projects	10,000 $MTCO_2e$/year	Construction and operational emissions

Source: Placer County Air Pollution Control District 2016

Development associated with the proposed project would result in residential units within the Low Density Residential (LDR) and Medium Density Residential (MDR) land use types which are both applied to urban areas within the county. As such, the appropriate efficiency level for the proposed project would be the urban residential efficiency of 4.5 $MTCO_2e$/capita/year. If operational emissions resulting from implementation of the proposed project exceed the *de minimis* threshold of 1,100 $MTCO_2e$ per year, the project can still be found less than cumulatively considerable if emissions per person are below 4.5 $MTCO_2e$/year.

Compliance with GHG Reduction Plans and Statewide Regulatory Programs

The PCSP was adopted in January 2020. The PCSP includes a variety of potential GHG reduction strategies and actions provided to help meet the GHG reduction goals of 40 percent below 2005 levels by 2030, and the statewide per capita reduction efficiency target of 6 $MTCO_2e$ per person by 2030.

Many community-wide GHG reduction plans prepared throughout the state meet the requirements of State CEQA Guidelines Section 15183.5, and therefore allow for discretionary projects to tier from the environmental analysis prepared for a community-wide GHG emissions reduction plan. This is not the case for the PCSP. Instead, the PCSP provides goals and strategies that can be applied to the environmental review process, particularly those projects that would exceed the applicable CEQA threshold for GHG emissions.

At the state level, CARB's 2017 Scoping Plan outlines the framework and strategies the state will take to achieve its emission reduction targets. The 2017 Scoping Plan Update proposes to meet the 2030 goal by accelerating the focus on zero and near-zero technologies for moving freight, continued investment in renewables, greater use of low-carbon fuels including electricity and hydrogen, stronger efforts to reduce emissions of short-lived climate pollutants, further efforts to create walkable communities with expanded mass transit and other alternatives to traveling by car, continuing the cap-and-trade program, and ensuring that natural lands become carbon sinks to provide additional emissions reductions and flexibility in meeting the target (California Air Resources Board 2017). In addition to the CARB Scoping Plan, there are several CARB and statewide regulations that address reduction of GHG emissions from other sources not fully covered by the PCSP, such as off-road equipment.

If the project is compliant with the PCSP, and implements regulatory programs adopted by CARB or other state agencies to reduce GHG emissions (including the 2017 Climate Change Scoping Plan), then the project's cumulative contribution of emissions would be considered less than significant. Conversely, if the project is determined to not be compliant with the PCSP, or not implement regulatory programs adopted by CARB or other state agencies to reduce GHG emissions, then the project's cumulative contribution of GHG emissions would be considered significant and feasible mitigation measures are required. While significance will be determined based on plans and regulatory programs that are relevant to GHG reduction up to Opening Year of the project (2030), for informational purposes, the analysis also reviews the project's consistency with the state's long-term climate change goals, as articulated under EO B-55-18.

Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Impact GHG-1: Generation of greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment (less than significant with mitigation)

Construction

Construction of future residential development associated with implementation of the proposed project would occur intermittently throughout the county during the course of the buildout period. Construction of the project would result in direct GHG emissions generated by vehicle trips (i.e., trips by construction workers and haul trucks) and operation of construction equipment. Indirect GHG emissions would be generated by the electricity used to power any electric construction equipment, mobile offices, or water delivered to construction sites. Estimated construction

emissions associated with the proposed project are summarized in Table 3.8-5 and compared to the PCAPCD bright-line threshold of 10,000 $MTCO_2e$/year for construction of land use projects within the PCAPCD. Build out of the proposed project is anticipated to occur over a 10-year period, with full buildout in 2030. As the precise timing and intensity of future development is not known at this time, it is not clear the exact number of units that would be constructed in a single year. In this case, emissions were quantified for construction of 25 percent of total proposed project buildout, per SMAQMD guidance for plan-level analyses (Sacramento Municipal Air Quality Management District 2016).

As shown in Table 3.8-5, emissions resulting from construction of 25 percent of the total proposed residential units would be well below the bright-line threshold recommended by PCAPCD. As such, impacts would be less than significant.

Table 3.8-5. Maximum Unmitigated Construction GHG Emissions ($MTCO_2e$)

Construction Scenario	$MTCO_2e$
49 residential units[a]	364
PCAPCD Bright-Line Threshold	10,000
Exceed threshold?	*No*

Source: Modeling outputs provided in Appendix C.

[a] 49 units represents one-quarter of the total proposed development. Methodology per SMAQMD guidance that states, "for construction projects that will last more than 4 years, lead agencies should assume 25% of the total land uses would be constructed in 1 single year, unless otherwise known." (Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District 2016)

Operation

Operation of the proposed project would result in changes in travel patterns and VMT in the local and regional transportation network. Vehicle emissions were estimated using CalEEMod and activity data provided by the project traffic engineer (Tokarsi pers. comm.). Emissions would also be generated by onsite combustion of natural gas for space and water heating, water consumption, waste generation, landscaping equipment, and use of electricity. Emissions were modeled for the anticipated buildout year (2030) and analyzed against the applicable PCAPCD numerical efficiency target, as described in *Thresholds of Significance* above.

Full buildout of the project, which could include up to 194 units, could result in an increase in population of up to 555 new individuals within the county. Table 3.8-6 presents the total estimated operational emissions, as well as per capita emissions, with implementation of the proposed project before mitigation. Prior to mitigation, operation of the proposed project would generate GHG emissions that would exceed the numerical efficiency target for urban residential development. The primary sources of these emissions are mobile and energy sources, followed by area sources, which is driven by wood-burning hearths, and solid waste. Mitigation is required to reduce emissions to the PCAPCD efficiency threshold level of 4.5 $MTCO_2e$/capita/year.

Table 3.8-6. Maximum Unmitigated Operational GHG Emissions in 2030 ($MTCO_2e$)

Source	$MTCO_2e$
Area	296
Energy	262
Mobile	2,122
Waste	100
Water	20
Total	**2,800**
Proposed Project Population	555
Efficiency ($MTCO_2e$/capita)	5.0
PCAPCD numeric threshold ($MTCO_2e$/capita)	4.5
Exceed threshold?	*Yes*

Source: Modeling outputs provided in Appendix C.

To reduce GHG emissions to the PCAPCD numeric threshold, the proposed project would be required to implement, **Mitigation Measure AQ-2**, which would require the project install all electric appliances, prohibiting the use of wood-burning or natural gas in new developments related to the project. As shown in Table 3.8-7, after implementation of this mitigation measure, GHG emissions resulting from proposed project operation would not exceed the numerical efficiency target for urban residential development. Accordingly, this impact would be ***less than significant with mitigation***.

Table 3.8-7. Maximum Mitigated Operational GHG Emissions in 2030 ($MTCO_2e$)

Source	$MTCO_2e$
Area	2
Energy	262
Mobile	2,122
Waste	100
Water	20
Total	**2,507**
Proposed Project Population	555
Efficiency ($MTCO_2e$/capita)	4.5
PCAPCD numeric threshold ($MTCO_2e$/capita)	4.5
Exceed threshold?	*No*

Source: Modeling outputs provided in Appendix C.

Note: Emissions may not add up exactly due to rounding. Quantified mitigation assumes no wood-burning or natural gas hearths.

Impact GHG-2: Conflict with an applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases (less than significant with mitigation)

Placer County Sustainability Plan

Project consistency with the applicable PCSP reduction strategies is discussed in Table 3.8-8. Before mitigation, the proposed project would not be consistent with the PCSP because it would not implement all applicable reduction measures. The proposed project would be required to

implement mitigation measures to ensure consistency with the PCSP. These measures include restrictions on wood-burning and natural gas hearths through **Mitigation Measure AQ-2**; installation of electric vehicle (EV) charging stations with **Mitigation Measure GHG-2a**; and installation of greywater and rainwater catchment systems through **Mitigation Measure GHG-2b**. Implementation of mitigation would ensure the proposed project is consistent with the applicable GHG reduction strategies in the PCSP. As such, the impact would be ***less than significant with mitigation***.

Table 3.8-8. Project Consistency with Applicable Placer County Sustainability Plan Strategies

No.	Strategy Description	Project Consistency Analysis
Energy		
E-1	Facilitate a transition to electricity as the primary energy source for residential, mixed-use, commercial, and office buildings.	**Consistent After Mitigation**. Mitigation measure **Mitigation Measure AQ-2** would prohibit the installation of hearths (wood-burning and natural gas) in new developments related to the project. Additionally, all residential units would be constructed to meet the 2019 Title 24 Building Energy Efficiency Standards. Given that the 2019 standards require all low-rise single-family buildings have photovoltaic systems installed, the residential units associated with the proposed project will contain onsite renewable energy generation and storage systems.
E-4	Encourage new residential, office, and commercial development, as mitigation for discretionary projects exceeding applicable CEQA GHG thresholds, to implement CALGreen Tier 1 standards and accelerate ZNE in new construction.	**Not Applicable**. Emissions related to implementation of the proposed project would be below the applicable GHG thresholds.
E-15	Incentivize new homes to install renewable energy generation and energy storage systems that can fully supply the home's energy needs, in cases where the required size of the renewable energy system is insufficient to fully meet onsite demand.	**Consistent Prior to Mitigation.** All residential units would be constructed to meet the 2019 Title 24 Building Energy Efficiency Standards. Given that the 2019 standards require all low-rise single-family buildings have photovoltaic systems installed, the residential units associated with the proposed project will contain onsite renewable energy generation and storage systems.
Water and Wastewater		
WW-1	In partnership with the Placer County Water Agency and other water providers, encourage homeowners and landlords to replace inefficient appliances and fixtures with modern models.	**Consistent Prior to Mitigation.** All residential units would be constructed to meet the 2019 Title 24 Building Energy Efficiency Standards, which require the installation of efficient, low-flow fixtures for kitchen and bathroom faucets, showerheads, and toilets.

No.	Strategy Description	Project Consistency Analysis
WW-2	Encourage new development projects, as mitigation for discretionary projects exceeding applicable GHG thresholds, to exceed minimum state water efficiency requirements for new water fixtures.	**Not Applicable.** Emissions related to implementation of the proposed project would be below the applicable GHG thresholds.
WW-5	Incentivize the installation of greywater and rainwater catchment systems for new developments.	**Consistent After Mitigation**. **Mitigation Measure GHG-2b** encourages installation of greywater and rainwater catchment systems in new developments associated with the proposed project.
WW-6	Encourage all existing properties to adopt water-efficient landscaping strategies, including more efficient irrigation systems and plants with lower water needs, consistent with the Water Efficient Landscaping Ordinance (WELO).	**Consistent Prior to Mitigation.** All residential units would be constructed to meet the 2019 Title 24 Building Energy Efficiency Standards. Given that the 2019 standards require compliance with the Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance in the California Code of Regulations, Title 23, Chapter 2.7, Division 2, all residential units associated with the proposed project would contain water-efficient irrigation systems.
Transportation		
T-1	Facilitate the installation of public electric vehicle (EV) charging stations at existing and new residential and non-residential uses.	**Consistent After Mitigation. Mitigation Measure GHG-2a** encourages the project proponent to install electric vehicle charging stations at the new single-family dwelling units associated with the proposed project.
T-1.2	Encourage new residential one- and two-family dwelling units, as mitigation for discretionary projects exceeding applicable GHG thresholds, to install EV-ready outlets in private garages or near where parking facilities will be located.	**Not Applicable.** Emissions related to implementation of the proposed project would be below the applicable GHG thresholds.
T-3	Encourage new development to provide a mix of land uses and to be located contiguous to existing developed areas and infrastructure to support connectivity and to reduce trip lengths.	**Consistent Prior to Mitigation.** The 194 units that could be developed with implementation of the proposed project represent the addition of a fourth unit on a property that is already developed. Affected parcels have between one and three existing units, and therefore all future residential units would be contiguous with existing developed areas.
T-8	Look for opportunities to achieve additional trip reductions in the foothill and valley regions of Placer County.	**Consistent Prior to Mitigation.** The 194 units that could be developed with implementation of the proposed project represent the addition of a fourth unit on a property that is already developed. An objective of the proposed project is to reduce VMT per capita by shortening commute distances for those that commute within Placer County.
Solid Waste		

No.	Strategy Description	Project Consistency Analysis
SW-3	Continue to comply with, and strive to continue to exceed, state-mandated diversion rates per AB 939.	**Consistent Prior to Mitigation**. AB 939 is a state law that requires no action at the local or project level. The project will comply will any and all state or local mandates stemming from AB 939, and benefits to project-related solid waste emissions will be realized.

Source: Placer County 2020.

Metropolitan Transportation Plan and Sustainable Communities Strategy

The MTP/SCS provides a long-range framework to minimize transportation impacts on the environment, improve regional air quality, protect natural resources, and reduce GHG emissions. The MTP/SCS is consistent with SB 375, which requires SACOG to adopt an SCS that outlines policies to reduce per-capita GHG emissions from passenger vehicles. The SCS policies include a mix of strategies that target smart growth, mixed-used design, alternative transportation, transit, mobility and access, network expansion, and transportation investment.

Implementation of the SCS is intended improve the efficiency of the transportation system and achieve a variety of housing types throughout the SACOG region that meet market demands in a balanced and sustainable manner. Consistent with the MTP/SCS goals, the proposed project would create transit-oriented, higher density, mostly infill residential developments. Additionally, a primary objective of the proposed project is to shorten commute distances for residents within Placer County, and thereby reducing VMT per capita. As discussed in Section 3.16, *Transportation*, the VMT generated by the proposed project would be substantially lower than the VMT generated near typical market-rate housing in the county. The proposed project is therefore expected to help reduce per capita GHG emissions from passenger vehicles consistent with SACOG's MTP/SCS. This impact would be ***less than significant***.

2017 Scoping Plan

The 2017 Scoping Plan builds on the programs set in place as part of the previous Scoping Plan that was drafted to meet the 2020 reduction targets per AB 32. The 2017 Scoping Plan proposes meeting the 2030 goal by both accelerating the focus on several existing programs and incorporating new strategies and programs that go beyond existing measures and strategies. Although the measures included in the 2017 Scoping Plan are necessarily broad, the project would be generally consistent with the goals and desired outcomes of the Scoping Plan. The project's consistency with the 2017 Scoping Plan strategies is discussed in Table 3.8-9. As shown, the proposed project would be generally consistent with those statewide programs in the 2017 Scoping Plan that have been adopted. In each case, the state program requires no action at the project level, and benefits to project-related emission sources will be realized over time. For example, the Scoping Plan incorporates SB 350, which extends the RPS to a 50 percent target by 2030 while doubling the energy efficiency savings expected statewide. In addition, CARB expanded the Low Carbon Fuel Standard, aiming to achieve an 18 percent reduction in the carbon intensity of transportation fuels. Furthermore, the Mobile Source Strategy aims to support the transition to 1.5 million zero emission vehicles (plug-in hybrid electric, battery-electric, and hydrogen fuel cell) by 2025 and 4.2 million by 2030, while also ramping up GHG stringency for all light-duty vehicles. Each of these measures will be implemented over time, with eventual benefits to project-related emission sources. As such, this impact would be ***less than significant***.

Table 3.8-9. Proposed Project Consistency with Scoping Plan Policies

Policy	Primary Objective	Project Consistency Analysis
SB 350 (superseded by SB 100)	Reduce GHG emissions in the electricity sector through the implementation of the 50% RPS, doubling of energy savings, and other actions as appropriate to achieve GHG emissions reductions planning targets in the Integrated Resource Plan process.	**Consistent.** This is a state program that requires no action at the local or project level. Benefits to project-related electricity and water consumption would be realized. The project would be subject to any regulations or actions developed to implement the goals of SB 350.
Low Carbon Fuel Standard	Transition to cleaner/less-polluting fuels that have a lower carbon footprint.	**Consistent.** This is a state program that requires no action at the local or project level. Benefits to project-related vehicle travel would be realized independently.
Mobile Source Strategy (Cleaner Technology and Fuels Scenario)	Reduce GHGs and other pollutants from the transportation sector through transition to zero-emission and low-emission vehicles, cleaner transit systems, and reduction of VMT.	**Consistent.** This is a state program that requires no action at the local or project level. Benefits to project-related vehicle travel would be realized independently.
SB 1383	Approve and implement Short-Lived Climate Pollutants (SLCP) strategy to reduce highly potent GHGs.	**Consistent.** This is a state program that requires no action at the local or project level. Benefits to project-related solid waste emissions will be realized.
Post-2020 Cap-and-Trade Program	Reduce GHGs across largest GHG emission sources.	**Consistent.** This a state program that requires no action at the local or project level. This program is not directly applicable to the proposed project because there are no sources regulated under cap-and-trade proposed.

Source: California Air Resources Board 2017.

Other State Regulations

Other state regulations, such as the 100 percent carbon-free RPS by 2045 mandated by SB 100; implementation of the state's SLCP Reduction Strategy, including forthcoming regulations for composting and organics diversion; and future updates to the state's Title 24 standards (including requirements for net zero energy buildings), will be necessary to attain the magnitude of reductions required for the State's goals. The proposed project would be required to comply with these regulations in new construction (in the case of updated Title 24 standards), or would be directly affected by the outcomes (e.g., energy consumption would be less carbon intensive due to the increasingly stringent RPSs). Unlike the scoping plans, which explicitly call for additional emissions reductions from local governments and new projects, none of these state regulations identify specific requirements or commitments for new development beyond what is already required by existing regulations, or will be required in forthcoming regulation. Thus, for the foreseeable future, the proposed project and future associated residential developments would not conflict with any other state-level regulations pertaining to GHGs.

Executive Order EO S-3-05/B-55-18

There are several studies that discuss potential mechanisms for meeting California's long-term decarbonization goals. For instance, the CEC commissioned a study to evaluate mitigation options and costs for achieving an 80 percent reduction in GHG emissions by 2050, relative to 1990 levels (Mahone et al. 2018). Other recent studies have been published by the Center for Climate and Energy Solutions and Energy Future Initiative (Lempert et al. 2019; Energy Future Initiative 2019). In general, these studies reach similar conclusions. Deep reductions in GHG emissions can be achieved only with significant changes in electricity production, transportation fuels, and industrial processes. For example, the Center for Climate and Energy Solutions report notes that "achieving climate neutrality requires a broad array of social, economic, and technological transformations—in essence, reinventing the ways we power our homes and economies, move people and goods from place to place, and manage our lands" (Lempert et al. 2019).

The systemic changes needed to achieve the State's long-term GHG reduction goals, if legislatively adopted, will require significant policy, technical, and economic solutions. Decarbonization of the transportation fuel supply will require electric and plug-in hybrid electric vehicles to make up most light-duty vehicles. Some changes, such as the use of biofuels to replace petroleum for aviation, cannot be accomplished without action by the federal government. Furthermore, achieving the long-term GHG reduction goals will require California to increase the amount of electricity that is generated by renewable generation sources dramatically and, correspondingly, advance the deployment of energy storage technology and smart-grid strategies, such as price-responsive demand and the smart charging of vehicles. This would entail a significant redesign of California's electricity system.

In qualitatively evaluating the proposed project's emissions for consistency with EO S-03-05/B-55-18 for informational purposes, it is important to note that some of these broad-scale shifts in how energy is produced and used are outside of the control of the project. The changes necessitated by the State's long-term climate policy will require additional policy and regulatory changes, which are unknown at this time. Therefore, the extent to which the project's emissions and resulting impacts would be mitigated through implementation of such changes is not known and cannot be known at this time. Furthermore, implementation of such additional policy and regulatory changes is in the jurisdiction of state-level agencies (e.g., CARB), not the County. However, some of these measures (e.g., decarbonization, energy efficiency, and reduced fossil-fuel-based VMT) can be facilitated, at least to some extent, through implementation of specific GHG reduction measures. Under this same rationale, if the proposed project did not implement measures to maximize energy efficiency or utilize renewable energy, the reductions may not be enough to meet the aggressive long-term cumulative reduction goals. Mitigation Measures **AQ-2**, **GHG-2a**, and **GHG-2b**, for instance, would require the proposed project implement feasible GHG reduction measures within its control to put the project on the path toward the long-term reduction goals of EO S-03-05 and EO B-55-18.

Mitigation Measure GHG-2a: Installation of Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging Stations. In accordance with the Placer County Sustainability Plan, project applicants will be encouraged to install EV charging stations at new residential units associated with the proposed project.

Mitigation Measure GHG-2b: Installation of Greywater and Rainwater Catchment Systems. In accordance with the Placer County Sustainability Plan, installation of greywater systems, and rainwater catchment systems in new residential construction will be encouraged where feasible.

3.8.3 References Cited

Printed References

Blasing, T.J. 2016. *Recent Greenhouse Gas Concentrations*. DOI: 10.3334/CDIAC/atg.032. Updated April. Available: https://www.osti.gov/dataexplorer/biblio/dataset/1394398. Accessed August 2020.

California Air Resources Board (CARB). 2008. *Climate Change Scoping Plan*. Available: https://ww3.arb.ca.gov/cc/scopingplan/document/adopted_scoping_plan.pdf. Accessed May 21, 2020.

California Air Resources Board. 2017. *The 2017 Climate Change Scoping Plan Update: The Strategy for Achieving California's 2030 GHG Target.* January. Available: https://www.arb.ca.gov/cc/scopingplan/scopingplan.htm. Accessed June 2020.

California Air Resources Board. 2019. California Greenhouse Gas Emission Inventory- 2019 Edition. Available at: https://www.arb.ca.gov/cc/inventory/data/data.htm. Accessed April 2020.

California Energy Commission 2012. Guide to the (Non-Residential) California Green Building Standards Code. July 1, 2012. Available: https://sfplanning.org/sites/default/files/documents/reports/bicycle_parking_reqs/ExhibitD.pdf. Accessed August 2020.

Energy Future Initiative. 2019. *Pathways for Deep Decarbonization in California*. Available: https://static1.squarespace.com/static/58ec123cb3db2bd94e057628/t/5ccb4cf87817f7881c4c58e6/1556827401738/FINAL+OFI.pdf. Accessed June 2020.

Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). 2007. *Climate Change 2007: The Physical Science Basis. Contribution of Working Group I to the Fourth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.* Solomon, S., D. Qin, M. Manning, Z. Chen, M. Marquis, K. B. Averyt, M. Tignor and H. L. Miller (eds.).

Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. 2014. *Climate Change 2014: Synthesis Report*. Available: http://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar5/syr.

Lempert, Robert, Preston, Benjamin, Edmonds, Jae, Clarke, Leon, Wild, Tom, Binsted, Matthew, Diringer, Elliot, and Townsend, Brad. *Pathways to 2050: Alternative Scenarios for Decarbonizing the U.S. Economy*. Available: https://www.c2es.org/site/assets/uploads/2019/05/pathways-to-2050-scenarios-for-decarbonizing-the-us-economy-final.pdf. Accessed June 2020.

Mahone, Amber, Zachary Subin, Jenya Kahn-Lang, Douglas Allen, Vivian Li, Gerrit De Moor, Nancy Ryan, Snuller Price. 2018. *Deep Decarbonization in a High Renewables Future: Updated Results from the California PATHWAYS Model*. California Energy Commission. Publication Number: CEC-500-2018-012.

Myhre, G., D. Shindell, F.-M. Bréon, W. Collins, J. Fuglestvedt, J. Huang, D. Koch, J.-F. Lamarque, D. Lee, B. Mendoza, T. Nakajima, A. Robock, G. Stephens, T. Takemura and H. Zhang, 2013: *Anthropogenic and Natural Radiative Forcing. In: Climate Change 2013: The Physical Science Basis. Contribution of Working Group I to the Fifth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change* [Stocker, T.F., D. Qin, G.-K. Plattner, M. Tignor, S.K. Allen, J. Boschung, A. Nauels, Y. Xia, V. Bex and P.M. Midgley (eds.)]. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, United Kingdom and New York, NY, USA.

National Park Service 2019 *What is Climate Change?* August 2. Available: https://www.nps.gov/goga/learn/nature/climate-change-causes.htm. Accessed: August 2020.

Pacific Gas and Electric Company. 2019. *PG&E's 2018 Power Content Label*. Available: https://www.pge.com/pge_global/common/pdfs/your-account/your-bill/understand-your-bill/bill-inserts/2019/1019-Power-Content-Label.pdf. Accessed June 2020.

Placer County Air Pollution Control District. 2016. *Review of Land Use Projects Under CEQA*. October 13. Available: https://www.placer.ca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/2060/Review-of-Land-Use-Projects-Under-CEQA-Policy-PDF. Accessed August 2020.

Placer County. 2017. *Placer County CEQA Handbook*. Available: https://www.placer.ca.gov/1801/CEQA-Handbook. Accessed June 2020.

Placer County. 2018. Community-Wide and County-Operations 2015 Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventories. January. Available: https://www.placer.ca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/8533/Greenhouse-Gas-Emissions-Inventory-PDF. Accessed June 2020.

Placer County. 2020. *Placer County Sustainability Plan: A Greenhouse Gas Emission Reduction Plan and Adaptation Strategy*. Adopted January 28. Available: https://www.placer.ca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/42940/PCSP-ADOPTION?bidId=. Accessed May 21, 2020.

Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District. 2016. *Guide to Air Quality Assessment in Sacramento County.* Last revision August 2016.

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. 2020. *Inventory of U.S. Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Sinks (2018)*. Last updated April 13. Available: https://www.epa.gov/ghgemissions/inventory-us-greenhouse-gas-emissions-and-sinks. Accessed: April 17, 2020.

Personal Communications

Tokarski, David. DKS Associates. April 22, 2020—email correspondence with Erin Efner, ICF.

3.9 Hazards and Hazardous Materials

This section addresses the potential impacts of Placer County's (County) proposed General Plan amendments, Zoning Ordinance update, and the development of design standards and guidelines for mixed-use development (project) related to hazards and hazardous materials. It describes existing conditions for the project area and identifies the applicable federal and state plans, policies, and laws and local plans, policies, and regulations.

Comments received on the Notice of Preparation included concerns regarding potential development occurring within airport influence areas and emergency evacuation during wildfires. This analysis considers potential project impacts on airports and emergency vehicle access.

3.9.1 Existing Conditions

Regulatory Setting

Federal

The primary federal laws regulating hazardous wastes and materials are the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act of 1980 (CERCLA) and the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act of 1976 (RCRA).

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) is the principal federal regulatory agency responsible for the safe use and handling of hazardous materials. The following subsections describe the key federal regulations pertaining to hazardous wastes relevant to the project.

Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act

The purpose of CERCLA, often referred to as Superfund, is to clean up contaminated sites so that public health and welfare are not compromised. CERCLA maintains a national trust for hazardous waste-related industries to be able to fund and coordinate large cleanup activities for hazardous waste spills and accidents and to clean up older abandoned waste sites. Amended in 1986, CERCLA establishes two primary actions: (1) to coordinate short-term removal of hazardous materials; and (2) to coordinate and manage the long-term removal of hazardous materials identified on USEPA's National Priorities List (NPL). The NPL is a record of known or threatened releases of hazardous substances, pollutants, or contaminants. A national database and management system, known as the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Information System, is used by USEPA to track activities at hazardous waste sites considered for cleanup under CERCLA. CERCLA also maintains provisions and guidelines dealing with closed and abandoned waste sites and tracks amounts of liquid and solid media treated at sites on the NPL or sites that are under consideration for the NPL.

Resource Conservation and Recovery Act of 1976

RCRA (42 United States Code §§ 6901–6987) provides for *cradle to grave* regulation of hazardous wastes and includes the Hazardous and Solid Waste Amendments of 1984 (HSWA). RCRA and HSWA protect human health and the environment, and impose regulations on hazardous waste generators, transporters, and operators of treatment, storage, and disposal facilities. HSWA also requires USEPA

to establish a comprehensive regulatory program for underground storage tanks. The corresponding regulations in 40 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Parts 260–299 provide the general framework for managing hazardous waste, including requirements for entities that generate, store, transport, treat, and dispose of hazardous waste.

Toxic Release Inventory

The Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act of 1986 and the Pollution Prevention Act of 1990 established the Toxic Release Inventory, a publicly available database that has information on toxic chemical releases and other waste management activities. The inventory is updated annually and lists chemical releases by industry groups and federal facilities managed by USEPA.

Chemical Accident Prevention Provisions

Under the authority of Section 112(r) of the Clean Air Act, the Chemical Accident Prevention Provisions require facilities that produce, handle, process, distribute, or store certain chemicals to develop a risk management program, prepare a risk management plan (RMP), and submit the RMP to USEPA.

Occupational Safety and Health Standards

Occupational safety standards exist in federal and state laws to minimize worker safety risks from both physical and chemical hazards in the workplace. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) is responsible for assuring worker safety in the workplace.

OSHA asbestos regulations are contained in 29 CFR. Lead-based paint regulations are described in the Lead-Based Paint Elimination Final Rule (24 CFR Part 33), governed by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Hazardous Materials Transportation Act

The U.S. Department of Transportation, the Federal Highway Administration, and the Federal Railroad Administration are the three entities that regulate the transport of hazardous materials at the federal level. The Hazardous Materials Transportation Act (49 CFR Part 171(C)) governs the transportation of hazardous materials. These regulations are promulgated by the U.S. Department of Transportation and enforced by USEPA.

State

California hazardous materials and wastes regulations are equal to or more stringent than federal regulations. USEPA has granted the state primary oversight responsibility to administer and enforce hazardous waste management programs. State regulations require planning and management to ensure that hazardous materials are handled, stored, and disposed of properly to reduce risks to human health and the environment. The following subsections discuss state laws pertaining to hazardous materials and wastes.

California Accidental Release Prevention Program

As specified in 19 California Code of Regulations (CCR) 2, Chapter 4.5, Articles 1 through 11, all businesses that handle specific quantities of hazardous materials are required to prepare a

California Accidental Release Prevention (CalARP) Program RMP. The CalARP RMP is the state equivalent of the federal RMP. CalARP RMPs include the preparation of an offsite consequence analysis of worst-case release of the stored chemicals and the preparation of emergency response plans, including coordination with local emergency response agencies. CalARP RMPs are required to be updated at least every 5 years and when there are significant changes to the stored chemicals.

Hazardous Materials Release Response Plans and Inventory Act

The Hazardous Materials Release Response Plans and Inventory Act (also referred to as the Business Plan Act) requires a business using hazardous materials to prepare a business plan describing the facility, inventory, emergency response plans, and training programs. The owner or operator of any business that has specified amounts of liquid and solid hazardous materials, compressed gases, extremely hazardous substances, or underground storage tanks onsite, or that generates or treats hazardous waste, is required to develop and submit a business plan to the local Certified Unified Program Agency (CUPA), which for the proposed project, is the Environmental Health Division of Placer County.

California Health and Safety Codes

The California Environmental Protection Agency (Cal-EPA) has been granted primary responsibility by USEPA for administering and enforcing hazardous materials management plans within California. Cal-EPA, more generally than USEPA, defines a hazardous material as a material that, because of its quantity, concentration, or physical or chemical characteristics, poses a significant present or potential hazard to human health and safety or to the environment if released (26 CCR § 25501).

State regulations include detailed planning and management requirements to ensure that hazardous materials are properly handled, stored, and disposed of to reduce human health risks. In particular, the state has acted to regulate the transfer and disposal of hazardous waste. Hazardous waste haulers are required to comply with regulations that establish numerous standards, including criteria for handling, documenting, and labeling the shipment of hazardous waste (26 CCR § 25160 et seq.).

Cortese List

Cal-EPA maintains the Hazardous Wastes and Substances Site (Cortese) List, a planning document used by state and local agencies and developers to comply with California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requirements in providing information about the locations of hazardous materials release sites. Per Government Code Section 65962.5, the Cortese List must be updated at least once annually. The California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC), State Water Resources Control Board, and California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery contribute to the hazardous material release site listings.

Hazardous Waste Control Act

The state equivalent of RCRA is the Hazardous Waste Control Act (HWCA). HWCA created the State Hazardous Waste Management Program, which is similar to but more stringent than the RCRA program. HWCA establishes requirements for the proper management of hazardous substances and wastes with regard to criteria for identification and classification of hazardous wastes; generation and transportation of hazardous wastes; design and permitting of facilities that recycle, treat, store,

and dispose of hazardous wastes; treatment standards; operation of facilities; staff training; closure of facilities; and liability requirements.

Emergency Services Act

Under the California Emergency Services Act, the state developed an emergency response plan to coordinate emergency services provided by all governmental agencies. The plan is administered by the California Office of Emergency Services. The California Office of Emergency Services coordinates the responses of other agencies, including USEPA, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the California Highway Patrol, regional water quality control boards, air quality management districts, and county disaster response offices. Local emergency response teams, including fire, police, and sheriff's departments, provide most of the services to protect public health.

School Siting

The California Education Code (§ 17210 et seq.) contains the requirements related to siting school facilities near or on suspected hazardous materials sites, or near facilities that emit hazardous air emissions, handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste. The Education Code requires that, prior to commencing the acquisition of property for a new school site, an environmental site investigation must be completed to determine the health and safety risks (if any) associated with a site. The Education Code identifies DTSC's role in assessment, investigation, and cleanup of proposed school sites. All proposed school sites that will receive state funding for acquisition and/or construction must go through a comprehensive investigation and cleanup process under DTSC oversight. DTSC is required to be involved in the environmental review process to ensure that selected properties are free of contamination. Prior to acquiring a school site or engaging in a construction project, school districts must contract for the preparation of a Phase I environmental site assessment, which must be reviewed by DTSC according to established guidelines.

School Site Locations and Source of Hazardous Emissions

California Public Resources Code (PRC) Sections 21151.4(a), and 21151.8(a), require that no environmental impact report (EIR) be certified for a project involving construction or alteration of a facility that might reasonably be anticipated to result in hazardous air emissions within 0.25 mile of a school unless the lead agency has consulted with the school district with jurisdiction regarding the potential impact of the project on the school, or the school has been given written notification of the project not less than 30 days prior to approval of the EIR. Schools are required to be at least 0.25 mile from high-pressure gas lines.

Worker Safety

The California Division of Occupational Safety and Health (Cal/OSHA) is the state agency responsible for assuring worker safety in the workplace. Cal/OSHA assumes primary responsibility for developing and enforcing standards for safe workplaces and work practices within the state. At sites known to be contaminated, a site safety plan must be prepared to protect workers. The site safety plan establishes policies and procedures to protect workers and the public from exposure to potential hazards at the contaminated site.

California Public Resources Code—State Responsibility Area

PRC requires the designation of state responsibility areas (SRA), which are identified based on cover, beneficial water uses, probable erosion damage, and fire risks and hazards. The financial responsibility of preventing and suppressing fires in an SRA is primarily the responsibility of the state. Fire protection in areas outside SRAs are the responsibilities of local or federal jurisdictions and are referred to as local responsibility areas and federal responsibility areas, respectively.

California Public Resources Code Sections 4201–4204

This section of the PRC was amended in 1982 to require the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) to classify fire hazard severity zones within SRAs. Lands within SRAs are classified in accordance with the severity of fire hazard present to identify measures to be used to retard the rate of spreading and reduce the potential intensity of uncontrolled fires that threaten to destroy resources, life, or property (California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection 2012).

Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones

Government Code Section 51178 requires CAL FIRE to identify very high fire hazard severity zones in the state. Government Code Section 51179 requires a local agency to designate, by ordinance, very high fire hazard severity zones in its jurisdiction.

Local

Certified Uniform Program Agency

Cal-EPA can delegate responsibility for many of its programs to a local government through certification as a CUPA. A CUPA is responsible for implementing a unified hazardous materials and hazardous waste management program. This program was established under the amendments to the California Health and Safety Code made by Senate Bill 1082 in 1994. California Health and Safety Code Section 25505 requires handlers of hazardous materials to submit business plans to the CUPA if hazardous materials inventories meet or exceed established thresholds. A CUPA can be a county, city, or joint powers authority that demonstrates its ability to administer the program.

Placer County Environmental Health

The Environmental Health Division has been designated by Cal-EPA as the CUPA for all areas of Placer County except the Roseville Fire Department, which is the CUPA for the City of Roseville. As the CUPA, the Division is responsible for performing all assessments of environmental contamination and/or human exposure and providing oversight of cleanup activity and coordination with the lead state agency having cleanup jurisdiction. In addition, the Division oversees hazardous waste facilities, implements programs for hazardous materials emergency response, hazardous waste generators, and regulates the construction, operation, repair and removal of both aboveground storage tanks and underground storage tanks.

Local Hazard Mitigation Plan

Placer County, along with 21 other jurisdictions, prepared the Local Hazard Mitigation Plan to update the 2010 FEMA-approved Placer County Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan. The purpose of the Local Hazard Mitigation Plan is to guide hazard mitigation planning to reduce or eliminate long-term risk to people and property from hazards like fire, flood, earthquake, terrorism, etc. through planned

regular actions. Use of the plan also ensures continued eligibility for certain federal disaster assistance, specifically the FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant Program, Pre-Disaster Mitigation Program, and the Flood Mitigation Assistance Program. Completion also earns credits for the National Flood Insurance Program's Community Rating System, which enhances the community's floodplain management program and can lower flood insurance premiums in Community Rating System communities.

Placer County and Placer Operational Area Emergency Operations Plan

The Placer County and Placer Operational Area Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) is an emergency management organization that assigns functions and tasks consistent with California's Standardized Emergency Management System and the National Incident Management System. serves the following purposes:

- Establishes standards and procedures for the timely mobilization of resources in the event of a large or complex incident
- Forms the basis for National Incident Management System, Standardized Emergency Management System, and emergency management training within Placer County
- Guides the County emergency services program and is consistent with all city EOPs within the Placer Operational Area

The EOP is applicable to any natural disaster or human-made emergency occurring in or near Placer County that affects, or may affect, the unincorporated area of the county (or the entire operational area, should response require coordination of the emergency response efforts of multiple agencies or jurisdictions). Emergency events range from minor oil spills, brush fires and minor flooding to severe winter storms, floods, wildland fires, earthquakes, and countywide public health emergencies.

Placer County General Plan

The following goals and policies excerpted from the Health and Safety Element of the current General Plan pertain to hazards and hazardous materials (Placer County 1994).

Fire Hazards

Goal 8.C: To minimize the risk of loss of life, injury, and damage to property and watershed resources resulting from unwanted fires.

Policies

8.C.1. The county shall ensure that development in high-fire-hazard areas is designed and constructed in a manner that minimizes risks from fire hazards and meets all applicable state and County fire standards.

8.C.2. The County shall require that discretionary permits for new development in fire hazard areas be conditioned to include requirements for fire-resistant vegetation, cleared fire breaks, or a long-term comprehensive fuel management program. Fire hazard reduction measures shall be incorporated into the design of development projects in fire hazard areas.

8.C.3. The County shall require that new development meets state, County, and local fire district standards for fire protection.

8.C.11. The County shall continue to work cooperatively with the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection and local fire protection agencies in managing wildland fire hazards.

Airport Hazards

Goal 8.D: To minimize the risk of loss of life, injury, damage to property, and economic and social dislocations resulting from airport hazards.

Policies

8.D.1. The County shall ensure that new development around airports does not create safety hazards such as lights from direct or reflective sources, smoke, electrical interference, hazardous chemicals, or fuel storage in violation of adopted safety standards.

8.D.2. The County shall limit land uses in airport safety zones to those uses listed in the applicable airport comprehensive land use plans (CLUPs) as compatible uses. Exceptions shall be made only as provided for in the CLUPs. Such uses shall also be regulated to ensure compatibility in terms of location, height, and noise.

8.D.3. The County shall ensure that development within the airport approach and departure zones complies with Part 77 of the Federal Aviation Administration Regulations (objects affecting navigable airspace).

Emergency Management

Goal 8.E: To ensure the maintenance of an Emergency Management Program to effectively prepare for, respond to, recover from, and mitigate the effects of natural or technological disasters.

Policies

8.E.1. The County shall continue to maintain, periodically update, and test the effectiveness of its Emergency Operations Plan.

Hazardous Materials

Goal 8.G: To minimize the risk of loss of life, injury, serious illness, damage to property, and economic and social dislocations resulting from the use, transport, treatment, and disposal of hazardous materials and hazardous materials wastes.

Policies

8.G.1. The County shall ensure that the use and disposal of hazardous materials in the County complies with local, state, and federal safety standards.

8.G.2. The County shall discourage the development of residences or schools near known hazardous waste disposal or handling facilities.

8.G.3. The County shall review all proposed development projects that manufacture, use, or transport hazardous materials for compliance with the County's Hazardous Waste Management Plan (CHWMP).

8.G.13. The County shall work with local fire protection and other agencies to ensure an adequate Countywide response capability to hazardous materials emergencies.

Environmental Setting

Hazardous Materials Sites within the Project Area

Placer County has a number of industries and activities that transport, store, or use toxic or hazardous chemicals, posing significant potential safety hazards. Most of these are in cities and along major transportation corridors.

A preliminary search of the State Water Resources Control Board's GeoTracker online database and the DTSC's Envirostor online database was conducted in an effort to identify hazardous materials sites of environmental concern, mainly those within the targeted growth areas as illustrated in Figure 2-3 in Chapter 2, Project Description. Sites listed in this section were identified through the DTSC Envirostor site (2020).

Roseville Area

Seven leaking underground storage tank (LUST) sites were identified within 0.25 mile of the potential Roseville growth area. Six sites are located along Auburn Boulevard and one is near Orlando Avenue. These sites, consisting of gasoline stations and auto repair shops, involved soil and aquifer contamination from releases of gasoline, motor oil, hydraulic fluids, etc. Cleanup statuses are listed as completed and the cases closed for all seven sites.

Loomis/Newcastle Area

Five sites were identified within 0.25 mile of the potential Loomis/Newcastle growth area. These sites are listed under the Voluntary Cleanup Program. Three are related to the Penryn Development, a 15-acre site in Loomis near Taylor and Penryn Roads. The site was previously used as an orchard where pesticides, such as DDT and lead arsenate, were used for pest control. Due to soil contamination concerns, DTSC approved a Removal Action Work Plan that recommended to excavate the contaminated soil and transport it to a landfill. It is not known if remediation is complete. Cleanup status is listed as Inactive as of September 6, 2018.

Soil remediation efforts related to the historic use of lead and arsenic were completed for the fourth voluntary cleanup site for a future school. The site has been cleared and is now considered suitable for unrestricted use.

Another school assessment site was tested for agricultural pesticides. No contaminants were found and the case closed.

Auburn/Bowman Area

Although no hazardous sites or facilities were identified in the potential Auburn/Bowman growth area, three voluntary cleanup sites and one LUST site were identified within 0.25 mile. The voluntary cleanup sites are along Kemper Road and involved historic use of pesticides, lead, and arsenic and subsequent potential soil and aquifer contamination. The status of these sites is listed as No Further Action granted by the DTSC (i.e., cases closed).

Eastern Placer County

Six LUST sites were identified in or immediately adjacent to the potential Sugar Bowl growth area. Five are private residences and involved possible soil and groundwater contamination of petroleum, diesel, heating and motor oil. The other site involved an unauthorized release of gasoline from an underground tank used by the Sugar Bowl Ski Resort. All six sites are listed by DTSC as case closed.

One LUST site was identified along State Route 89 within 0.25 mile of a potential DU parcel on Sandy Way. The site involved soil contamination from a diesel leak. The site was subsequently closed.

No hazardous sites or facilities were identified in or near the potential Northstar or Squaw Valley growth areas.

Airports

Airport-related hazards are generally associated with aircraft accidents, particularly during takeoff and landing. Airport operation hazards include incompatible land uses, power transmission lines, wildlife hazards (e.g., bird strikes), and tall structures that penetrate the imaginary surfaces surrounding an airport.

Aviation facilities in Placer County include both public and private airports and helipads serving commercial, recreational, medical, law enforcement, fire and agricultural needs. There are three public use airports: Auburn Municipal Airport, Lincoln Regional Airport, and Truckee-Tahoe Airport. The Blue Canyon-Nyack Airport near Emigrant Gap is a limited use emergency airstrip operated by the County and under special use permit from the U.S. Forest Service (Placer County Transportation Planning Agency 2010:6.4-2).

Military planes occasionally fly over the Sierra Nevada through the county during slow military training exercises (State of California 2010). According to the California Military Lane Use Compatibility Analyst, the county does not intersect with any military bases, special use airspaces, or low-level flight paths (State of California 2010). Other regional aircraft may include crop-dusting planes and police and news helicopters. There are two private airstrips in the county, Holsclaw Airstrip in Loomis and Fiddyment Field located 4 miles northwest of Roseville.

Fire-Related Hazards

Much of Placer County is in heavily vegetated areas near development and is considered part of the urban/wildland interface. Continued development of these areas increases the number of people living near the urban/wildland interface. Fires in these areas can potentially result in major losses to property and life. Further information regarding fire protection services is in Section 3.15, *Public Services, Recreation, and Utilities and Service Systems*, of this document. For information relating to wildfire risks in high fire hazard severity zones see Section 3.18, *Wildfire*.

School-Related Hazards

Hazardous emissions and accidental release or combustion of hazardous materials near existing schools could result in health risks or other dangers to students. There are 16 school districts serving Placer County exclusively including the Sierra Joint Community College District which serves Placer, Nevada and parts of El Dorado and Sacramento counties. The County serves approximately 74,927 students with 65 elementary schools, 15 middle schools, 14 high schools, 14 alternative schools, 21 charter schools, and two special education schools (Placer County Office of Education 2020).

3.9.2 Environmental Impacts

The environmental analysis in this section focuses on the two main components of the project: (1) amendments to the Land Use Element in the County's General Plan, Zoning Ordinance, and Community Design Manual, and (2) the potential locations for the new dwelling units that could be constructed as a result of changes to the Zoning Ordinance (a total of 194 units distributed throughout the county).

The general land use pattern allowed by the housing-related code amendments is evaluated in the following discussions for its potential to result in adverse effects related to hazards and hazardous materials.

The analysis in this section also considers the impacts from the potential development of dwelling units in targeted areas throughout the county. As a result of project implementation, a total of 194 units could be constructed, as noted below. While these units could be developed as a result of project implementation, the project itself does not propose any site-specific development.

- 50 units in the Roseville area (South Placer County)
- 13 units in the Loomis/Newcastle area (foothill region)
- 49 units in the Auburn/Bowman area (foothill region)
- 82 units in the eastern county (High Sierra region), including:
    - 31 units near Sugar Bowl
    - 4 units near Squaw Valley
    - 42 units near SR 89
    - 5 units near Northstar

Methods for Analysis

The analysis of hazards and hazardous materials is based on a review of the Placer County General Plan (Placer County 1994), government hazardous facilities databases (i.e., DTSC's Envirostor, SWRCB's, GeoTracker) prepared in compliance with federal, state, and local ordinances and regulations, and professional standards pertaining to hazards and hazardous materials.

Thresholds of Significance

In accordance with Appendix G of the State CEQA Guidelines, the proposed project would be considered to have a significant effect if it would result in any of the conditions listed below.

- Creation of a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials.
- Creation of a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment.
- Emission of hazardous emissions or handling hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within 0.25 mile of an existing or proposed school.
- Placement of project-related facilities on a site that is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and resulting in creation of a significant hazard to the public or the environment.
- Placement of project-related facilities within an airport land use plan area or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within 2 miles of a public airport or public use airport, resulting in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area.

- Impairment of implementation of or physical interference with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan.
- Exposure of people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires.

Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Impact HAZ-1: Creation of a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials (less than significant)

Implementation of the project would lead to further development and other land use activities that would require the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials and wastes within the county, and that could result in reasonably foreseeable accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment.

The County would continue to offer its free hazardous household waste disposal program for all county residents available in western Placer County at the Western Placer Waste Management Authority Hazardous Household Waste Facility. The CUPA would also provide oversight of cleanup activities and permitting for hazardous waste generators.

In the event of a hazardous materials incident, the Placer County Fire Department would respond; if assistance were required, CAL FIRE or the incorporated city fire departments (e.g., Roseville Fire Department) would respond as part of their mutual aid agreements and the Placer County and Placer Operational Area EOP.

All projects within the project area would be required to be consistent with the General Plan and policies therein addressing hazardous materials. In addition, the General Plan updates require implementing actions to comply with existing regulations. Existing regulations would ensure that hazardous materials are handled in a safe manner. For these reasons, this impact would be ***less than significant***, and no mitigation is required.

Impact HAZ-2: Creation of a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment (less than significant)

Implementation of the project could lead to new development. Construction equipment that is typically used for development projects has the potential to release oils, greases, solvents, and other finishing materials through accidental spills. Given the nature of hazardous materials that would be used, stored, or disposed of (e.g., materials for construction equipment, contaminated soil), there is a possibility for upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment. Accidental releases of small quantities of these substances could contaminate soils and degrade the quality of surface water and groundwater, resulting in a public safety hazard. However, the handling and disposal of these materials would be governed according to regulations enforced by Placer County Fire Department CUPA, Cal/OSHA, and DTSC. In addition, regulations under the federal Clean Water Act require contractors to avoid allowing the release of materials into surface waters as part of their stormwater pollution prevention plan and National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit requirements (see Section 3.10, *Hydrology and Water Quality*, for a discussion of stormwater pollution prevention plans). Therefore, it is not anticipated that use of

hazardous materials during construction would result in a reasonably foreseeable upset or accident condition that would cause significant hazard to the public or environment.

Reasonably foreseeable spills under operational conditions would be handled according to the specifications of the CUPA and the Placer County Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan. This plan governs the preparation and implementation of the County's emergency response to chemical spills in the community. Based on the existing regulatory scheme, this impact would be ***less than significant***, and no mitigation is required.

Impact HAZ-3: Emission of hazardous emissions or handling of hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within 0.25 mile of an existing or proposed school (less than significant)

Implementation of the project could lead to further development and the intensification of land uses that could result in the release of hazardous emissions or entail the handling of hazardous materials, substances, or waste within 0.25 mile of an existing or proposed school. There are existing and proposed land uses designated for schools throughout the project area. The General Plan does not explicitly incorporate policies to limit the use of hazardous materials near school sites or limit the development of proposed schools near existing contamination; however, Policy 8.G.2 in the Health and Safety Element of the General Plan discourages development of schools near known hazardous waste disposal or handling facilities. The County also routinely consults with school districts prior to discretionary approval of new businesses and industry that use hazardous materials near existing school sites as part of the project review process. Additionally, school siting regulations implemented by the Department of Education prohibit locating proposed schools near existing contamination. Therefore, this impact would be ***less than significant***, and no mitigation is required.

Impact HAZ-4: Placement of project-related facilities on a site that is included on a list of hazardous materials sites, and resulting creation of a significant hazard to the public or the environment (less than significant)

The preliminary search of government databases to identify hazardous materials sites of environmental concern revealed that several sites are within 0.25 mile of potential growth areas, as illustrated in Figure 2-3 in Chapter 2, Project Description. With one exception, these sites have been remediated or otherwise closed. The Penryn Development (APN 043-060-052-000; 043-060-053-000) in Loomis is listed as Inactive and may require further remediation of contaminated soil. A Removal Action Work Plan for this site was approved by DTSC requiring remediation and removal of 11,600 cubic yards of contaminated soil to be replaced by clean, imported fill (Placer County 2020). Remediation must be completed before DTSC will issue a letter of "No Further Action." As of September 6, 2019, the site is still listed as "Inactive." Therefore, it is assumed cleanup activities have not occurred and that development, including grading, on parcels with potential contaminants, could expose the public or environment to significant hazards.

However, the proposed project would not directly result in development of the DU parcels and all future projects would be required to be consistent with the General Plan, including Policy 8.G.2, which discourages development near known hazardous waste sites or facilities. The proposed project would not change existing provisions regarding hazardous material sites. Existing regulations would ensure that sites containing hazardous materials be cleaned up to existing standards for the proposed land use prior to development. Based on the existing regulatory scheme, this impact would be ***less than significant***, and no mitigation is required.

Impact HAZ-5: Placement of project-related facilities within an airport land use plan area or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within 2 miles of a public airport or public use airport, resulting in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area (less than significant)

Airports in the project area include Auburn Municipal Airport in the Auburn/Bowman project area, Blue Canyon-Nyack Airport in the East County project area, Truckee-Tahoe Airport partially in the East County project area and partially in Nevada County, Holsclaw Airstrip in Loomis, and Fiddyment Field 4 miles northwest of Roseville. Development of additional units on affected parcels may occur in areas that are within 2 miles of these airports.

The project would comply with the Section 8 of the General Plan (Policy 8.D.1), to ensure that new development around airports does not create safety hazards and Policy 8.D.2 which would limit land uses in airport safety zones to those uses listed in the applicable airport comprehensive land use plans as compatible uses. Also, Policy 8.D.3 would ensure that development within airport approach and departure zones comply with Federal Aviation Administration regulations (objects affecting navigable airspace). In addition, all new development near airports would be reviewed by the Placer County Transportation Planning Agency, the county's Airport Land Use Commission. Implementation of General Plan policies and review of development near airports by the Placer County Transportation Planning Agency would reduce any risks associated with people residing or working near airports. Accordingly, this impact is considered ***less than significant***, and no mitigation is required.

Impact HAZ-6: Impairment of implementation of or physical interference with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan (less than significant)

Construction projects implemented under the project could cause temporary changes in emergency access. There are no specific development projects associated with the project. As subsequent development projects are proposed in the county, each project would be reviewed to ensure continued roadway safety and emergency access. Existing county requirements for construction projects require signage and an access plan to ensure continued emergency access during construction. The project does not propose any changes in land uses or development patterns that would result in impairment or physical interference of emergency response plans or evacuation plans since all potential development would occur as infill. Consequently, the impact is considered ***less than significant***, and no mitigation is required.

Impact HAZ-7: Exposure of people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk involving wildland fires (less than significant)

The provision of fire protection is addressed in the discussion of the County's firefighting personnel and facilities, including wildland, structural, and basic hazardous materials response, in Section 3.15. For information relating to wildfire risks in high fire hazard severity zones, see Section 3.18.

Much of rural Placer County is largely surrounded by residential development, the residential areas are of varying densities, and the more rural communities are interspersed with oak woodlands and understory vegetation that provides a fuel source for potential fires. According to CAL FIRE's fire hazard severity zone map, much of Placer County, from approximately Auburn east, is designated as a very high fire hazard severity zone (California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection 2007). The area west of Auburn is zoned as moderately high for fire hazards and is either in an

incorporated area or local responsibility area that is not zoned for fire hazard severity ratings. The County contracts with CAL FIRE to provide structural and wildland fire protection to SRAs.

There are sufficient facilities and fire personnel serving the project area. Response rates throughout the county are adequate even in areas mapped as moderately hazardous for wildland fires. In addition, General Plan Policies 8.C.1, 8.C.2, 8.C.3, and 8.C.11 stipulate that new development in a high fire hazard severity zone be designed to minimize fire risks; meet all local and state fire safety requirements; vegetation management and preparation of a fuel management plan; maintaining mutual aid agreements with other fire protection agencies. Compliance with these policies along with all pertinent local, state, and federal policies and codes would ensure that any development as a result of project implementation would not significantly increase risks involving wildland fire hazards for people or structures, either directly or indirectly. Therefore, this impact would be ***less than significant***, and no mitigation is required.

3.9.3 References Cited

California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection. 2007. *Fire Hazard Severity Zones, Placer County*. Prepared by Fire and Resource Assessment Program. Sacramento, CA.

California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection. 2012. *Fire Hazard Severity Zone Maps*. Last revised: November 1, 2007. Available: http://www.fire.ca.gov/fire_prevention/fire_prevention_wildland_zones.php. Accessed: September 19, 2015.

California Department of Toxic Substances Control. 2020. *Envirostor Search Results*. Available: https://www.envirostor.dtsc.ca.gov/public/map/?myaddress=roseville%2C+ca. Accessed: June 1, 2020.

Placer County. 1994. *Placer County General Plan Update: Countywide General Plan Final Environmental Impact Report.*

Placer County. 2020. *Orchard at Penryn Vesting Tentative Subdivision Map and Variance (PLN14-00052) for the Previously Certified Final Environmental Impact report and Addendum*. Community Development Resource Agency, Planning Services Division. Available: https://www.placer.ca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/44869/SR-F-PC-14-00052-Orchard-at-Penryn-061120-ALL-PDF. Accessed: August 27, 2020.

Placer County Office of Education. 2020. *Educational Snapshot*. Office of Planning and Research. Available: https://www.placercoe.org/Pages/PCOE/About/About.aspx. Accessed: June 1, 2020.

Placer County Transportation Planning Agency. 2010. Placer County 2035 Regional Transportation Plan Document. Final. September. Available: http://www.pctpa.net/library/rtp/2035/Chapter%206.4.pdf. Accessed: May 12, 2020.

State of California. 2010. *California Military Land Use Compatibility Analyst*. Office of Planning and Research. Available: http://cmluca.gis.ca.gov/. Accessed: May 12, 2020.

3.10 Hydrology and Water Quality

This section addresses the potential impacts of Placer County's (County) proposed General Plan amendments, Zoning Ordinance update, and the development of design standards and guidelines for mixed-use development (project) on hydrology and water quality. It describes the existing conditions of the project area and identifies the applicable federal and state plans, policies, and laws and local plans, policies, and regulations.

Comments received on the Notice of Preparation included comments on water quality, dewatering permitting, and consideration of antidegradation policy. This analysis considers the potential impacts the project could have on water quality and outlines relevant regulations in response to these comments.

3.10.1 Existing Conditions

Regulatory Setting

This section summarizes key federal, state, and regional and local regulations, laws, and policies relevant to water resources.

Federal

Clean Water Act

The federal Clean Water Act (CWA) was enacted with the primary purpose of restoring and maintaining the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the nation's waters. The CWA directs states to establish water quality standards for all waters of the United States and to review and update such standards on a triennial basis.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) has delegated responsibility for implementation of portions of the CWA, including water quality control planning and control programs, such as the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) program (discussed below), to the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) and the Regional Water Quality Control Boards (Regional Water Boards). The State Water Board establishes statewide policies and regulations for the implementation of water quality control programs mandated by federal and state water quality statutes and regulations. The Regional Water Boards develop and implement water quality control plans (basin plans) that identify the beneficial uses of surface and ground waters, water quality characteristics, and water quality problems.

Section 303(d) and Total Maximum Daily Loads. The CWA contains two strategies for managing water quality. One is a technology-based approach that includes requirements to maintain a minimum level of pollutant management using the best available technology. The other is a water quality–based approach that relies on evaluating the condition of surface waters and setting limitations on the amount of pollution that the water can be exposed to without adversely affecting the beneficial uses of those waters. Section 303(d) of the CWA bridges these two strategies. Section 303(d) requires that the states make a list of waters that are not attaining standards after the technology-based limits are put into place. For waters on this list (and where the USEPA

administrator deems they are appropriate), the states are to develop total maximum daily loads (TMDL). TMDLs are established at the level necessary to implement the applicable water quality standards. The CWA does not expressly require the implementation of TMDLs. However, federal regulations require that an implementation plan be developed along with the TMDL and Sections 303(d), 303(e), and their implementing regulations require that approved TMDLs be incorporated into basin plans. USEPA has established regulations (40 Code of Federal Regulations Part 122) that require that NPDES permits be revised to be consistent with any approved TMDL.

Section 404 Dredge/Fill Permitting. The discharge of dredged or fill material into waters of the United States is subject to permitting specified under Section 404 (Discharges of Dredge or Fill Material) of the CWA. Section 404 of the CWA regulates placement of fill materials into the waters of the United States. Section 404 permits are administered by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Section 401 Water Quality Certification. Section 401 of the CWA requires that an applicant pursuing a federal permit to conduct an activity that may result in a discharge of a pollutant obtain a Water Quality Certification (or waiver). A Water Quality Certification requires the evaluation of water quality considerations associated with dredging or placement of fill materials into waters of the United States. Water Quality Certifications are issued by one of the nine geographically separated Regional Water Boards in California. Under the CWA, the Regional Water Board must issue or waive a Section 401 Water Quality Certification for a project to be permitted under CWA Section 404.

Section 402—National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System. The 1972 amendments to the federal Water Pollution Control Act established the NPDES permit program to control discharges of pollutants from point sources (Section 402). The 1987 amendments to the CWA created a new section of the CWA devoted to stormwater permitting (§ 402(p)). USEPA has granted the State of California (the State Water Board and Regional Water Boards) primacy in administering and enforcing the provisions of CWA and NPDES. NPDES is the primary federal program that regulates point-source and nonpoint-source discharges to waters of the United States.

Federal Antidegradation Policy

The Federal Antidegradation Policy requires states to develop statewide antidegradation policies and identify methods for implementing them. Pursuant to the Code of Federal Regulations, state antidegradation policies and implementation methods must, at a minimum, protect and maintain (1) existing in-stream water uses; (2) existing water quality, where the quality of the waters exceeds levels necessary to support existing beneficial uses, unless the state finds that allowing lower water quality is necessary to accommodate economic and social development in the area; and (3) water quality in waters considered an outstanding national resource.

National Flood Insurance Program

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is responsible for determining flood elevations and floodplain boundaries based on U.S. Army Corps of Engineers studies. FEMA is also responsible for distributing the Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM), which are used in the National Flood Insurance Program. The FIRMs identify the locations of special flood hazard areas, including the 100-year floodplain. FEMA allows nonresidential development in the floodplain; however, construction activities are restricted within the flood hazard areas, depending on the potential for flooding within each area.

State

Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act

The Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act (Porter-Cologne Act) is established and implemented by the State Water Board and nine Regional Water Boards. Waters of the state are defined more broadly than waters of the United States; they are defined as any surface water or groundwater, including saline waters, within the boundaries of the state. This includes waters in both natural and artificial channels. The Porter-Cologne Act requires projects that are discharging, or proposing to discharge, wastes that could affect the quality of the state's water to file a waste discharge report with the appropriate Regional Water Board. The Porter-Cologne Act also requires that the State Water Board or a Regional Water Board adopt basin plans for the protection of water quality. The majority of the project area lies within the jurisdiction of the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (Central Valley Water Board) and the eastern portion of the project area is within the jurisdiction of the Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board (Lahontan Water Board). The *Water Quality Control Plan for the Sacramento River Basin and The San Joaquin River Basin* (Central Valley Regional Basin Plan) and the *Water Quality Control Plan for the Lahontan Region* (Lahontan Region Basin Plan) specify region-wide and waterbody-specific beneficial uses and set numeric and narrative water quality objectives for several substances and parameters in numerous surface waters in its region (Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board 2018; Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board 2019). The Central Valley Regional Basin Plan and the Lahontan Region Basin Plan were last updated in 2018 and 2019, respectively. Beneficial uses, water quality objectives, and Section 303(d)-listed impairments are described for the project area in the *Water Quality* section.

In addition, all wastewater discharges must comply with the Antidegradation Policy (State Water Board Resolution 68-16) and the Antidegradation Implementation Policy contained in the Basin Plan. As stated in the Basin Plan "Any discharge of waste to high quality waters must apply best practicable treatment or control not only to prevent a condition of pollution or nuisance from occurring, but also to maintain the highest water quality possible consistent with the maximum benefit to the people of the State."

NPDES Construction General Permit

Most construction activities that disturb 1 acre of land or more are required to obtain coverage under the NPDES General Permit for Construction Activities (Construction General Permit). The State Water Board has issued a statewide Construction General Permit (Order No. 2009-0009-DWQ, NPDES No. CAR000002, as amended by 2010-0014-DWQ and 2012-0006-DWQ), adopted September 2, 2009. Construction activities subject to the Construction General Permit include clearing, grading, and disturbances to the ground, such as stockpiling or excavation, that result in soil disturbances of at least 1 acre of total land area. The Construction General Permit requires the applicant to file a notice of intent to discharge stormwater and to prepare and implement a stormwater pollution prevention plan (SWPPP). The SWPPP includes a site map and a description of proposed construction activities, along with a demonstration of compliance with relevant local ordinances and regulations, and an overview of the best management practices (BMP) that would be implemented to prevent soil erosion and discharge of other construction-related pollutants that could contaminate nearby water resources. Permittees are further required to conduct annual monitoring and reporting to ensure that BMPs are correctly implemented and effective in controlling the discharge of stormwater-related pollutants.

NPDES General Municipal Stormwater Permit

CWA Section 402 mandates permits for municipal stormwater discharges, which are regulated under the NPDES General Permit for Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems (MS4) (MS4 Permit). Phase I MS4 regulations cover municipalities with more than 100,000 residents, certain industrial processes, or construction activities that disturb an area of 5 acres or more. Phase II "small" MS4 regulations require stormwater management plans to be developed by municipalities with fewer than 100,000 residents and construction activities that disturb 1 or more acres of land. The State Water Board adopted a Statewide Phase II Small MS4 General Permit in 2013 to efficiently regulate discharges from numerous qualifying small MS4s under a single permit. Small MS4s were categorized as either traditional or nontraditional. Traditional MS4s operate throughout a community. Nontraditional MS4s are similar to traditional MS4s but operate at a separate campus facility.

The Statewide Phase II MS4 Permit specifies criteria for site design measures and stormwater treatment measures. MS4 Permits require that cities and counties develop and implement programs and measures to reduce the discharge of pollutants in stormwater discharges to the maximum extent possible, including management practices, control techniques, system design and engineering methods, and other measures as appropriate. As part of permit compliance, these permit holders have created stormwater management plans for their respective locations. These plans outline the requirements for municipal operations, industrial and commercial businesses, construction sites, and planning and land development. These requirements may include multiple measures to control pollutants in stormwater discharge. During implementation of specific projects that could be implemented as a result of project implementation, project applicants will be required to follow the guidance contained in the stormwater management plans as defined by the permit holder in that location. Compliance with stormwater quality regulations would be addressed during the planning and construction phases on a project-by-project basis. All new building permits are reviewed with respect to the applicability of post-construction controls.

The State Water Board is advancing low-impact development (LID) in California as a means of complying with municipal stormwater permits. LID incorporates site design, including, among other things, the use of vegetated swales and retention basins and minimizing impermeable surfaces, to manage stormwater and maintain a site's predevelopment runoff rates and volumes.

Placer County (County) is considered to be a Phase II traditional small MS4 permittee under the State Water Board's WDRs for stormwater discharges from small MS4s (NPDES Order No. 2013-001-DWQ; General Permit No. CAS000004, as amended by Order WQ 2015-0133-EXEC, Order WQ 2016-0069-EXEC, WQ Order 2017-XXXX-DWQ, Order WQ 2018-0001-EXEC, and Order WQ 2018-0007-EXEC).

Under the Phase II NPDES program Placer County is permitted in the western county area and in the Truckee River Basin. Placer County also shares a permit under the Phase I NPDES program with El Dorado County and the City of South Lake Tahoe. The Phase I permit regulates discharges and runoff into the Lake Tahoe hydrologic unit, and therefore compliance with the Phase I permit does not apply for this project.

Traditional small MS4 permittees are required to comply with Section E of the Statewide Phase II MS4 Permit, which specifies requirements for site design measures, LID design standards, a post-construction stormwater management program, and operation and maintenance of post-construction stormwater management measures as part of a Post-Construction Stormwater

Management Program (Provision E.12). LID design standards are required to be implemented for all development (or redevelopment) projects that create and/or replace 5,000 square feet or more of impervious surface. Redevelopment is any land-disturbing activity that results in the creation, addition, or replacement of an exterior impervious surface area on a site where some past development has occurred. If a redevelopment project increases the impervious surface of an existing development by more than 50 percent, runoff from the entire project, including all existing, new, and/or replaced impervious surfaces, must be included to the extent feasible. If a redevelopment project increases the impervious surface of an existing development by less than 50 percent, only runoff from the new and/or replaced impervious surface of the project must be included.

Waste Discharge Requirements – Discharge to Waters of the State

If the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers determines that only non-jurisdictional waters of the State (i.e. non-federal waters of the State) are present in the area of a future project resulting from implementation of the project, a Waste Discharge Requirement (WDR) permit from the Central Valley Water Board may be required. Projects involving excavation or fill activities impacting less than 0.2 acres or 400 linear feet of non-jurisdictional waters of the state and projects involving dredging activities less than 50 cubic yards of non-jurisdictional waters of the state may be eligible for coverage under the SWRCB Water Quality Order No. 2004-0004-DWQ (General Order 2004-0004).

Dewatering Permit

Construction dewatering to be discharged to land would require coverage under the State Water Board General Water Quality Order (Low Risk General Order) 2003-0003 of the Central Valley Water Board's Waiver of Report of Waste Discharge and Waste Discharge Requirements (Low Risk Waiver) R5-2013-0145. Small temporary construction dewatering projects are projects that discharge groundwater to land from excavation activities or dewatering of underground utilities. Dischargers seeking coverage under the General Order of Waiver must file a Notice of Intent with the Central Valley Water Board prior to beginning discharge.

Sustainable Groundwater Management Act

The Sustainable Groundwater Management Act of 2014 (SGMA) is a comprehensive three-bill package that Governor Jerry Brown signed into California state law in September 2014. The SGMA provides a framework for sustainable management of groundwater supplies by local authorities, with a limited role for state intervention only if necessary, to protect the resource. The SGMA is intended to ensure a reliable groundwater water supply for California for years to come. The SGMA requires the formation of local groundwater sustainability agencies, which are required to adopt groundwater sustainability plans (GSP) to manage the sustainability of groundwater basins. The adoption of a GSP is required for all high- and medium-priority basins as identified by the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) or submit an alternative to a GSP. The SGMA also requires governments and water agencies of high- and medium-priority basins to halt overdraft and bring groundwater basins into balanced levels of pumping and recharge.

The western portion of the county overlies the Sacramento Valley–North American groundwater basin, which is designated as a high-priority basin. Other groundwater basins within the county include the Olympic Valley and the southern portion of the Martis Valley basin, both designated as very-low-priority basins (California Department of Water Resources n.d.).

The West Placer Groundwater Sustainability Agency (WPGSA) was formed by public agencies with water management or land use authority in a portion of the North American Subbasin located within Placer County. WPGSA is comprised of Placer County, the cities of Roseville and Lincoln, Placer County Water Agency, Nevada Irrigation District, and in participation with the California American Water Company. WPGSA aims to implement the SGMA and manages a portion of the North American groundwater basin, including the development of a GSP for the basin by 2022. For the whole North American groundwater basin, five groundwater sustainability agencies have formed and intend to prepare a single GSP to cover the entire North American Subbasin.

Local

General Waste Discharge Requirements/NPDES Permit for Limited Threat Discharges to Surface Waters

The Central Valley Water Board is no longer accepting applications for coverage under the low-threat General Order. New applicants should apply for coverage under the Limited Threat General Order (General Waste Discharge Requirements/NPDES Permit for Limited Threat Discharges to Surface Waters, Order R5-2016-0076/NPDES Permit No. CAG995002; amended by Order R5-2018-0002).

Discharges of the following wastewaters may obtain authorization under this General Order. To obtain authorization for discharges to surface water, dischargers must submit a complete notice of intent.

- Tier 1A: Relatively clean discharges of less than 0.25 million gallons per day and/or less than 4 months in duration.
- Tier 1B: Relatively clean discharges greater than or equal to 0.25 million gallons per day and/or greater than or equal to 4 months in duration.
- Tier 2: Discharges that may contain toxic organic constituents, volatile organic compounds, pesticides, inorganic constituents, chlorine, and/or other chemical constituents that require treatment prior to discharge.
- Tier 3: Discharges of wastewater from hard rock mines.

Placer County General Plan

The Placer County General Plan, adopted in 1994 and last updated in May 2013, includes goals, policies, and implementation programs associated with hydrology and water quality. The Placer County General Plan has identified policies from the Natural Resources, Public Facilities and Services, and Health and Safety elements, related to hydrology and water quality. These goals, policies, and implementation programs include continuing to improve and protect the quality of surface and groundwater, stormwater runoff, drainage, erosion control, and flood protection. Due to the large number of relevant policies, they are not duplicated here.

Placer County Ordinances

Stormwater Quality Ordinance Article 8.28: The purpose of this article is to ensure that Placer County is compliant with state and federal laws and fulfills its requirements.

Grading, Erosion, and Sediment Control Ordinance Article 15.48: This ordinance regulates grading on property within the unincorporated area of Placer County to protect property and public

welfare; avoid pollution of watercourses with hazardous materials, nutrients, sediments, or other earthen materials generated on or caused by surface runoff on or across the permit area; and to ensure that the intended use of a graded site is consistent with the Placer County General Plan, any specific plans adopted thereto and applicable Placer County ordinances including the Zoning Ordinance, flood damage prevention ordinance, (Article 15.52) environmental review ordinance (Chapter 18 Placer County Code) and applicable chapters of the California Building Code.

West and East Placer Stormwater Quality Design Manuals

The West and East Placer Stormwater Quality Design Manuals have been developed by the County to provide a consistent approach to stormwater management. The intent of the manuals is to promote LID goals that minimize adverse impacts of stormwater runoff on water quality, biological integrity of receiving waters, and beneficial uses of waterbodies. Goals also include minimizing the percentage of impervious surfaces on land development projects and implementing mitigation measures to approximately preserve the overall pre-development water balance through infiltration, evapotranspiration, and capture and use of stormwater. The manuals promote minimizing pollutant loadings from impervious surfaces through the use of properly designed, technically appropriate stormwater controls, including source control measures or good housekeeping practices, LID planning and design strategies, and treatment control BMPs. The manuals guide proper selection, design and maintenance of stormwater BMPs to address pollutants generated by land development, minimize post-development surface flows and velocities, and assure long-term functionality of BMPs (Placer County 2016, 2017).

Placer County Stormwater Management Manual

The Placer County stormwater management manual (SWMM) is a guidance manual produced by the Placer County Flood Control District and Water Conservation District to provide consistent, specific guidance and requirements for stormwater management, including regulation of the development process, to achieve stormwater management objectives. The manual presents policy, guidelines, and specific criteria for the development and management of natural resources, facilities and infrastructure for stormwater management. The SWMM applies primarily to the developing areas of Placer County that extend westward from Colfax to Sutter County (Placer County 1990).

Environmental Setting

Regional Setting

Surface Water

Placer County is made up of several sub-watersheds. The following sub-watersheds are in the project area: Upper Bear, Upper Coon-Upper Auburn, Lower American, Upper American, Upper Yuba, and Truckee. The County plans to develop a watershed management plan for each of its drainage basins. The general direction of drainage within the county is west-southwest.

The Upper Bear watershed encompasses 1,228 square kilometers (km^2) with headwaters originating approximately 20 miles west of the Sierra Nevada in northern Placer County, within the boundaries of the Tahoe National Forest. Water from the Drum Canal and Spaulding Lake flows into the Bear River, and enters the river at the Drum Afterbay. Flowing out of the Drum Afterbay is the Middle Bear River. Prior to the Bear River flowing into Rollins Reservoir, it merges with Steephollow Creek, the largest tributary in the upper watershed. The Bear River discharges from Rollins

Reservoir and flows southwest into Lake Combie near the community of Meadow Vista. The Bear River turns west and is fed by Wolf Creek and flows into Camp Far West Reservoir, the largest waterbody in the Bear River watershed. The Bear River joins the Feather River south of Yuba City/Marysville. Bear River flow patterns are typical of foothill streams with high winter and spring flows and very low summer and fall flows. Bear River flows are regulated almost entirely by several storage reservoirs and numerous diversions (Sacramento River Watershed Program n.d.[a]).

The Upper Coon-Upper Auburn watershed contains 1,124 km^2, with headwaters of Auburn Ravine and Coon Creek in the western Sierra Nevada foothills near the city of Auburn. Markham Ravine, which is between Auburn Ravine (south) and Coon Creek (north), originates just east of Lincoln. Auburn Ravine, Markham Ravine, and Coon Creek all discharge flows into the East Side Canal in southeastern Sutter County (Placer County n.d.). Water management practices in Auburn Ravine and Coon Creek are different than most small east side foothill tributary streams. Since these watersheds are relatively small, very little of the stream flow is from natural runoff. Most of the stream flow is water imported from the Yuba, Bear, and American River watersheds through various means to meet domestic and agricultural needs in western Placer County and southeastern Sutter County. While winter stream flows are dominated by discharges from wastewater treatment facilities and runoff from rainfall events, summer flows are dominated by irrigation water deliveries to farms, golf courses, and ranches on the valley floor. As small foothill streams, waterflow in the Upper Coon-Upper Auburn watershed is unique compared to typical stream flows that gradually decline over the spring through early fall until the first rainstorm event occurs (Placer County 2002).

The Lower American River watershed encompasses 758 km^2, originates from Folsom Lake, and flows 30 miles to its confluence with the Sacramento River near downtown Sacramento. Within western Placer County, the Lower American River watershed contains numerous creeks including Coon Creek, Markham Ravine, Auburn Ravine, Pleasant Grove Creek, Curry Creek, and Dry Creek. Most of these creeks enter the floodplain drainage areas of the Natomas Cross Canal and Natomas East Main Drainage Canal in southern Sutter and northern Sacramento Counties (Sacramento River Watershed Program n.d.[b]).

The Upper American River watershed contains 2,623 km^2. The Upper American River watershed originates at the crest of the Sierra Nevada just west of Lake Tahoe, within the Tahoe and Eldorado National Forest boundaries. The Upper American River has three forks: North, Middle, and South. Major streams in the watershed are the Rubicon River, Duncan Creek, Long Canyon Creek, and Silver Creek. The main reservoirs and lakes in the watershed include French Meadows, Hell Hole, Union Valley, Ice House, Lake Valley, Loon Lake, Silver Lake, Slab Creek, and Stumpy Meadows. The North Fork American River originates in eastern Placer County and flows west. It receives the Middle Fork American River 4 miles below the North Fork Reservoir Dam near the town of Auburn. Placer County Water Agency owns five hydroelectric plants on the Middle Fork American River (Sacramento River Watershed Program n.d.[c]).

The Upper Yuba watershed encompasses 3,483 km^2, and contains three forks: North, Middle, and South Yuba. Headwaters of the North Yuba River are in mountains of the Tahoe National Forest. Primary tributaries include Canyon Creek and Slate Creek. The river flows into the New Bullards Bar Reservoir, which is impounded by the New Bullards Bar Dam, after which the North Yuba River joins with the Middle Yuba to form the Yuba River. The Middle Fork flows north into Jackson Meadows Reservoir, and receives waters from Kanaka Creek and Grizzly Creek. The South Yuba River originates at the crest of the Sierra Nevada, near the town of Soda Springs. Numerous snow-fed tributaries enter the river before the South Yuba River flows into Lake Spaulding, and draining to

the east shore of Englebright Lake, and ultimately to the Feather River. There are more than 100 jurisdictional dams or diversions in the Yuba River watershed, which convey water to local users and to users in the Bear and North Fork American River watersheds. Flows in the watershed are typical of Sacramento Valley tributaries with headwaters in the Sierra Nevada, with highest flows in winter and spring, and decreasing flows in late spring (Sacramento River Watershed Program n.d.[d]).

The Truckee watershed encompasses 3,154 km^2. Unlike most watersheds, the Truckee watershed originates in a lake (Lake Tahoe) and ends in a lake (Lake Pyramid), 40 miles north of Reno, Nevada. Waters flow northeast, the opposite direction most watersheds west of the continental divide flow. Within Placer County, the watershed includes the drainage areas surrounding the Truckee River between Lake Tahoe and the town of Truckee and the Martis Creek drainage south and east of Truckee.

Groundwater

Due to the high elevation, the majority of Placer County is not within a recognized groundwater basin. In these areas, groundwater could occur in pockets. However, project areas located in the western portion of the county overlie the Sacramento Valley–North American Groundwater Basin. South of Truckee is the Olympic Valley and the southern portion of the Martis Valley Groundwater Basins.

The North American groundwater subbasin encompasses 351,000 acres, within the eastern central portion of the larger Sacramento Groundwater Basin. The North American groundwater subbasin is bound by the Bear River to the north, the Feather River to the west, and the Sacramento River to the south. The eastern boundary is a north-south line extending from the Bear River south to Folsom Lake, and is the approximate edge of the alluvial basin, where little or no groundwater flows into or out of the groundwater basin from the rock of the Sierra Nevada. Recharge in the basin includes natural recharge and infiltration of rainfall, as well as applied water recharge (California Department of Water Resources 2006a).

The Olympic Valley Groundwater Basin encompasses 700 acres and lies on the eastern slope of the Sierra Nevada. It extends about 2.5 miles west from the Truckee River to the crest of the Sierra Nevada at Granite Chief (at the base of the Squaw Valley ski slopes at Squaw Creek). Groundwater recharge is primarily from infiltration of precipitation as well as stream flow where the water table altitude is higher than the water surface altitude of the stream (California Department of Water Resources 2006b).

The Martis Valley Groundwater Basin encompasses 35,600 acres and is an intermontane, fault-bounded basin east of the Sierra Nevada crest. The Martis Valley is the principal topographic feature within the basin, with the basin extending to the north and west of the well-defined valley. Water level elevations within the Martis Valley are controlled by the complex stratification of the hydrogeologic units, topographic relief, and groundwater flow barriers (California Department of Water Resources 2006c).

Groundwater levels in the North American Groundwater Basin are in decline (California Department of Water Resources n.d.). However, the Olympic Valley and Martis Valley Groundwater Basins have no documented groundwater level declines.

Water Quality

Water quality in a typical surface waterbody is influenced by processes and activities that take place within the watershed. Development in the county has stressed the natural environment. For example, loss of riparian vegetation, stream bank erosion, and sedimentation of the streams have contributed to the decline of water quality in Dry Creek. The Bear River contains a large volume of mining sediment stored in its main channel that is subject to continual erosion. The high volume of mining sediment, in combination with restricting levees, has caused the Lower Bear channel to become deeply incised. Areas of the watershed have been severely degraded by historic hydraulic mining and mercury contamination (Sacramento River Watershed Program n.d.[a]). American River water is generally characterized as high quality that is low in alkalinity, mineral content, and organic contamination. Turbidity levels in the American River tend to be higher in the winter than summer because of higher flows associated with winter storms (Sacramento River Watershed Program n.d.[b]).

Generally, water quality in the American River is considered to be very good from headwaters to the confluence with the Sacramento River. Streams in the upper watershed are typically clear, cold streams that are naturally highly oxygenated, low in dissolved ions and nutrients, and exhibit low in-stream plant or algal growth. However, erosion from land use activities, roads, and recreational use throughout the watershed contribute to in-stream sediment problems (Sacramento River Watershed Program n.d.[c]). The Yuba River watershed contains a significant amount of sediment and mercury as a result of hydraulic mining that occurred in the mid to late 19th century. Mercury is present in the bottoms of rivers and reservoirs and is transported by erosion processes and can be converted into methylmercury. Temperature is also a significant water quality concern in the Yuba River watershed. Warming water temperatures can be attributed to dams, water diversions, inadequate shading by limited riparian canopy, and low in-stream flows (Sacramento River Watershed Program n.d.[d]). Water quality in the Truckee River and Martis Creek is considered good to excellent and capable of supporting a variety of beneficial uses (California Department of Water Resources 2006c).

The Central Valley Regional Basin Plan and the Lahontan Region Basin Plan specify beneficial uses that apply to waterbodies with potential to be affected by future development resulting from implementation of the project. The 303(d)-listed impairments for major waterbodies within Placer County are shown in Table 3.10-1 and are based on the 2014/2016 California Integrated Report.

Table 3.10-1. Water Quality Impairments within Major Waterbodies in the Project Area

Waterbody	Listed Impairments per 2006 303(d) List	Potential Sources	USEPA TMDL Report Completion
Bear River, Lower (below Camp Far West Reservoir)	Chlorpyrifos	Agriculture	Est. 2026
	Copper	Source Unknown	Est. 2021
	Mercury	Source Unknown	Est. 2023
Bear River, Upper (from Combie Lake to Camp Far West Reservoir, Nevada and Placer Counties)	Mercury	Source Unknown	Est. 2015
American River, North Fork	Mercury	Source Unknown	Est. 2027

Waterbody	Listed Impairments per 2006 303(d) List	Potential Sources	USEPA TMDL Report Completion
Folsom Lake	Mercury	Source Unknown	Est. 2027
Truckee River	Sedimentation/ Siltation	Channel Erosion, Construction/Land Development, Erosion/ Siltation, Highway/Road/ Bridge Construction, Natural Sources, Nonpoint Source, Range Grazing-Riparian and/or Upland, Recreational and Tourism Activities (non-boating) | Silviculture, Snow skiing activities, Streambank Modification/Destabilization	09/16/2009

Source: California State Water Resources Control Board 2018.
USEPA = U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
TMDL = total maximum daily load
Est. = estimated completion date

Stormwater and legacy sites have impaired the Middle Truckee River (from the outlet of Lake Tahoe at Tahoe City to the California/Nevada state line) by sediment. Local dam releases, snowmelt, thunderstorms, and stormwater runoff contribute to turbidity spikes, which temporarily increase sediment concentrations (although below the 90th percentile annual threshold) that affect the in-stream aquatic beneficial uses. The Lahontan Regional Water Board developed the Truckee River TMDL for sediment to address the sediment impairment.

Waterbodies throughout the county are designated as impaired for mercury. Sources of mercury include runoff from historic mines, urban runoff, wastewater discharges, atmospheric deposition, and resuspension of historic deposits of mercury-laden sediment already in waterbodies. Most of the historic mercury deposits date back to the Gold Rush of the 19th century, when mercury was mined throughout the Coastal Range and used in the Sierra Nevada to extract gold. The largest source of mercury is the Central Valley, where rivers carry mercury from remote regions. However, mercury's impairment category is being re-considered for placement on the Section 303(d) list. Based on readily available data, there is sufficient justification in favor of placing this water segment–pollutant combination on the Section 303(d) list in the Water Quality Limited Segments category. Federal regulation defines a "water quality limited segment" as "any segment [of a surface waterbody] where it is known that water quality does not meet applicable water quality standards, and/or is not expected to meet applicable water quality standards, even after application of technology-based effluent limitations required by CWA sections 301(b) or 306".

Groundwater

Many areas of good-quality groundwater exist in the North American subbasin, although some areas of the basin have marginal groundwater quality. Elevated levels of total dissolved solids/specific conductance, chloride, sodium, bicarbonate, boron, fluoride, nitrate, iron manganese, and arsenic may be of concern in some locations within the subbasin (California Department of Water Resources 2006a). Within the Martis Valley Groundwater Basin, organic constituents were low or undetected in 98 percent of primary aquifers. One or more inorganic constituents were present at high concentrations in about 20 percent of the primary aquifers and at moderate concentrations in 13

percent of primary aquifers. For groundwaters analyzed in the Martis area, trace elements were present at high concentrations in about 19 percent of the primary aquifers, and in moderate concentrations in about 4 percent. Arsenic was the trace element that most frequently occurred at high and moderate concentrations. Three trace elements with non-regulatory health-based benchmarks—boron, molybdenum, and strontium—also were detected at high concentrations (Fram and Belitz 2012).

Flooding

As illustrated in Figure 3.10-1, the majority of the project area is outside of the 100-year floodplain, within FEMA Zone X (unshaded) (Federal Emergency Management Agency 2020). FEMA Zone X (unshaded) is an area of minimal flood hazard, usually depicted on FIRMs as above the 500-year flood level. However, some small areas projected for potential growth are within the 100-year floodplain, within FEMA Zone AE. Areas adjacent to waterbodies such as the Truckee River and Squaw Creek are within the 100-year floodplain. The project area is approximately 90 miles east of the Pacific Ocean. Therefore, the project area is not subject to inundation by a tsunami. There are several large waterbodies in Placer County, including lakes in seismically active areas with a potential for seiche risks. However, there are no reservoirs adjacent to the project area, and there have been no history of seiches in the project area.

3.10.2 Environmental Impacts

The environmental analysis in this section focuses on the two main components of the project: (1) amendments to the Land Use Element in the County's General Plan, Zoning Ordinance, and Community Design Manual, and (2) the potential locations for the new dwelling units that could be constructed as a result of changes to the Zoning Ordinance (a total of 194 units distributed throughout the county).

The general land use pattern allowed by the housing-related code amendments is evaluated in the following discussions for its potential to adversely affect hydrology and water quality.

The analysis in this section also considers the impacts from the potential development of dwelling units in targeted areas throughout the county. As a result of project implementation, a total of 194 units could be constructed, as noted below. While these units could be developed as a result of project implementation, the project itself does not propose any site-specific development.

- 50 units in the Roseville area (South Placer County)
- 13 units in the Loomis/Newcastle area (foothill region)
- 49 units in the Auburn/Bowman area (foothill region)
- 82 units in the eastern county (High Sierra region), including:
    - 31 units near Sugar Bowl
    - 4 units near Squaw Valley
    - 42 units near SR 89
    - 5 units near Northstar

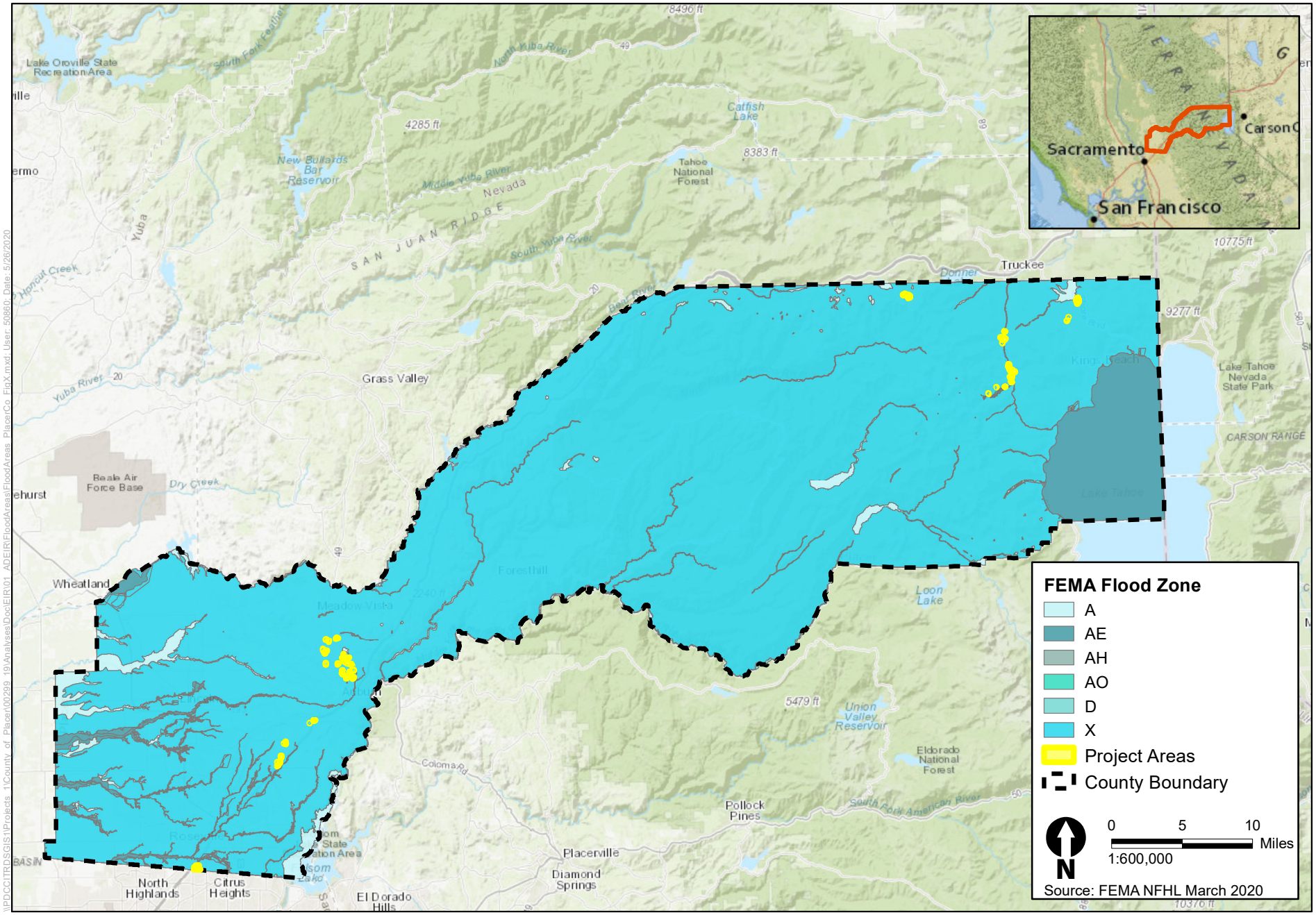


Figure 3-10.1
FEMA Flood Zones within the Project Area

Methods for Analysis

All elements of the project were analyzed by comparing baseline conditions, as described in the *Environmental Setting*, to conditions during construction and/or operations. Evaluation of potential hydrology and water quality impacts is based on a review of existing documents and studies that address water resources in the vicinity of the project area. The analysis focuses on issues related to surface hydrology, groundwater supply, surface and groundwater quality, and flood hazards.

Thresholds of Significance

In accordance with Appendix G of the State California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines, the proposed project would be considered to have a significant effect if it would result in any of the conditions listed below.

- Violation of any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or other substantial degradation of surface or groundwater quality.
- Substantial decrease of groundwater supplies or substantial interference with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin.
- Substantial alteration of the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner that would result in substantial erosion or siltation onsite or offsite.
- Substantial alteration of the existing drainage pattern of the site or area that would increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner that would result in flooding on- or offsite.
- Creation of or contribution to runoff water that would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff.
- Alteration of the existing drainage pattern in a manner that would impede or redirect flood flows.
- In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk of release of pollutants as a result of project inundation.
- Conflict with or obstruction of implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan.

Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Impact WQ-1: Violation of any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or other degradation of surface or groundwater quality (less than significant with mitigation)

Construction

Construction activities related to future development resulting from implementation of the project such as grading, stockpiling of spoil materials, and other construction-related ground-disturbing activities could result in short-term water quality impacts associated with soil erosion and subsequent sediment transport to adjacent properties, roadways, or watercourses via storm drains. Sediment transport to local drainage facilities such as drainage inlets, culverts, and storm drains could result in reduced storm flow capacity, resulting in localized ponding or flooding during storm

events. Construction activities could also generate dust, settlement, litter, oil, and other pollutants that could temporarily contaminate water runoff from the project site.

However, a final Drainage Report would be submitted prior to construction activities, as required by Mitigation Measure WQ-1a. The report would identify water quality protection features and methods to be used during construction. In addition, construction activities must comply with the NPDES Construction General Permit, the Statewide Phase II MS4 Permit, and Placer County General Plan and ordinances, which contain standards to ensure that water quality is not degraded. As part of the Construction General Permit, standard erosion control measures and BMPs would be identified in a SWPPP and would be implemented during construction to reduce sedimentation of waterways and loss of topsoil. In Placer County, any fill or excavation greater than 250 cubic yards or cuts or fills over 4 feet in depth requires a grading permit, regulated by the Placer County Grading Ordinance, although additional grading restrictions apply in the Tahoe Basin. Compliance with the County's grading permit and the Construction General Permit would require use of BMPs to restrict soil erosion and sedimentation and restrict non-stormwater discharges from the construction site as well as release of hazardous materials. As a performance standard, BMPs to be selected would represent the best available technology that is economically achievable and best conventional pollutant control technology to reduce pollutants.

Other potential water quality impacts include chemical spills into storm drains or groundwater aquifers if proper minimization measures are not implemented. However, required BMPs would be implemented to reduce pollutants in stormwater and other nonpoint-source runoff. Measures range from source control to treatment of polluted runoff. BMPs can include watering active construction areas to control dust generation during earthmoving activities; using water sweepers to sweep streets and haul routes; and installing erosion control measures (e.g., silt fences, staked straw bales/wattles, silt/sediment basins and traps, check dams, geofabric, sandbag dykes) to prevent silt runoff to public roadways, storm drains, or waterways. As appropriate, disturbed soil would be revegetated as soon as possible with the appropriate selection and schedule of plants.

Disturbed surfaces would not be left without erosion control measures in place during the rainy season, which generally occurs between October 15 and April 15. In addition to compliance with the Construction General Permit, the project would also be required to comply with local stormwater quality and grading erosion, and sediment control ordinances. These requirements involve development and implementation of an erosion and sediment control plan specific to the construction site to minimize water quality impacts. No surface water features are expected to be within targeted growth areas; therefore, construction would not involve dredge and fill activities.

The project would be required to comply with the County's MS4 requirements and the NPDES Construction General Permit. Post-construction measures must also meet the County's volume and flow-based sizing of permanent post-construction BMPs for stormwater quality protection guidelines. Further, projects would be designed to reduce flows leaving the project site to levels required by the Placer County SWMM by temporarily detaining a portion of the post-development runoff and associated polluted runoff. Compliance with these requirements would ensure that construction activities do not result in a violation of water quality standards or waste discharge requirements, or otherwise result in water quality degradation. Potential impacts on water quality from construction activities associated with the project would be potentially significant. However, compliance with Mitigation Measure WQ-1a would reduce impacts to ***less than significant with mitigation.***

Operation

Water quality in urban developments is influenced by processes and activities that take place within the watershed. The quality of the stormwater runoff from the project area and surrounding development is affected primarily by discharges from both point and nonpoint sources. Point and nonpoint sources include outfalls, winter storms, overland flow, exposed soil, roofs, parking lots, and streets. Water quality in the vicinity of the project area is directly affected by stormwater runoff that contains fertilizers, pesticides, automobile and traffic pollutants (e.g., oil, grease, metals), sediment with associated pollutants from soil erosion, trash, and other pollutants. Pollutants accumulate on impervious areas and are mobilized during precipitation events. "First flush" storm events, when pollutants that have accumulated are concentrated with little dilution by the initial storm event of the season, have the largest impact on water quality in receiving waters. However, adverse impacts on water quality are temporary, and are limited to wet weather runoff.

Future development resulting from implementation of the project would result in an increase in impervious surfaces. Increased impervious surfaces result in increased runoff rates and volumes, and associated pollutants such as automobile and pesticide use. Increased stormwater runoff would also increase the potential for erosion and sedimentation. These impacts could also result in increased pollutant loading to surface waters as well as degraded groundwater quality. However, future project operations would comply with the appropriate MS4 permit (Mitigation Measure WQ-1d and Mitigation Measure WQ-1f) and the Placer County SWMM, as required. In addition, a stormwater quality plan would be developed and implemented for new and redevelopment projects, as required by the West and East Placer Storm Water Quality Design Manuals. Structural and non-structural BMPs would be implemented to control the discharge of pollutants into stormwater. Water quality treatment facilities/ BMPs would be designed according to applicable guidance (Mitigation Measure WQ-1b). Mitigation Measure WQ-1b requires storm drainage from on- and off-site impervious surfaces (including roads) to be collected and routed through specially designed catch basins, vegetated swales, vaults, infiltration basins, water quality basins, or filters, for entrapment of sediment, debris and oils/greases or other identified pollutants. In addition, surface parking areas would be designed to direct runoff toward landscaping, bio-retention areas, or other water collection and treatment areas, as required by the Placer County Design Guidelines development standards (DS-21F). The use of permeable materials, swales, slightly sunken yards, and small basins to retain rainwater and allow infiltration would also be considered in project design (DG-43). The Placer County Design Manual also includes general provisions for landscaping and related site improvements required to manage drainage and stormwater (DG-37). Implementation of these stormwater treatment areas, landscape features, and open space areas would allow water to percolate into the ground, thereby treating stormwater runoff through biological uptake, and reducing the discharge of pollution to the storm drain system. Any potential contaminants would be filtered, minimizing adverse effects on groundwater quality. In addition, implementation of Mitigation Measure WQ-1c would discourage illegal dumping with the placement of appropriate signage at all storm drain inlets and catch basins within the project area.

With implementation of the stormwater quality plan and compliance with the NPDES Construction General Permit and County MS4 (Mitigation Measure WQ-1d and Mitigation Measure WQ-1f), impacts on surface water quality from the project would be minimized. As required by the Placer County Stormwater Quality Ordinance, BMPs would be designed to ensure that pollutants contained in project-related stormwater discharges are reduced to the maximum extent practicable and that non-stormwater discharges are prevented from leaving the site, both during and after construction (Mitigation Measure WQ-1e). The Placer County *Guidance Document for Volume and Flow-based*

sizing of Permanent Post-construction Best Management Practices for Stormwater Quality Protection provides the recommended design methodology for volumetric and flow-based treatment control stormwater BMPs for use in unincorporated Placer County, and the cities within Placer County (Placer County Stormwater Coordination Group 2005). Implementation of sustainable site design features such as stormwater treatment areas, surface landscaping design, and permeable materials would reduce stormwater runoff flows and associated pollutants and treat stormwater runoff. As required by Mitigation Measure WQ-1b, all permanent BMPs would be maintained to ensure effectiveness. In addition, the NPDES Construction General Permit emphasizes runoff reduction through onsite stormwater reuse, interception, evapotranspiration and infiltration through non-structural controls and conservation design measures (e.g., downspout disconnection, soil quality preservation/enhancement, interceptor trees). Future development projects resulting from project implementation would be designed and maintained in accordance with city, County, and Central Valley and Lahontan Regional Water Boards water quality requirements, such as the County MS4, and General Plan policies. Project impacts would be potentially significant. With implementation of Mitigation Measures, the project would not violate any water quality standards or degrade water quality. The impact would be ***less than significant with mitigation***.

Mitigation Measures WQ-1a: Submit a Drainage Report

A Drainage Report will be submitted in final format. The final Drainage Report will be reviewed in concert with the Improvement Plans to confirm conformity between the two. The report will be prepared by a Registered Civil Engineer and will, at a minimum, include: A written text addressing existing conditions, the effects of the proposed improvements, all appropriate calculations, watershed maps, changes in flows and patterns, and proposed on- and off-site improvements and drainage easements to accommodate flows from this project. The report will identify water quality protection features and methods to be used during construction, as well as long-term post-construction water quality measures. The final Drainage Report will be prepared in conformance with the requirements of Section 5 of the Land Development Manual and the Placer County Stormwater Management Manual that are in effect at the time of Improvement Plan submittal.

Mitigation Measure WQ-1b: Design Water Quality Treatment Facilities/Best Management Practices

Water quality treatment facilities/Best Management Practices (BMPs) will be designed according to the guidance of the California Stormwater Quality Association Stormwater Best Management Practice Handbooks for Construction, for New Development / Redevelopment, and for Industrial and Commercial (or other similar source as approved by the Engineering and Surveying Division (ESD)).

Storm drainage from on- and off-site impervious surfaces (including roads) will be collected and routed through specially designed catch basins, vegetated swales, vaults, infiltration basins, water quality basins, filters, etc. for entrapment of sediment, debris and oils/greases or other identified pollutants, as approved by the Engineering and Surveying Division (ESD). BMPs will be designed in accordance with the West or East Placer Storm Water Quality Design Manual for sizing of permanent post-construction Best Management Practices for stormwater quality protection. No water quality facility construction will be permitted within any identified wetlands area, floodplain, or right-of-way, except as authorized by project approvals.

All permanent BMPs will be maintained as required to ensure effectiveness. The applicant will provide for the establishment of vegetation, where specified, by means of proper irrigation. Proof of on-going maintenance, such as contractual evidence, will be provided to ESD upon request. The project owners/permittees will provide maintenance of these facilities and annually report a certification of completed maintenance to the County DPW Stormwater Coordinator, unless, and until, a County Service Area is created and said facilities are accepted by the County for maintenance. Contractual evidence of a monthly parking lot sweeping and vacuuming, and catch basin cleaning program will be provided to the ESD upon request. Failure to do so will be grounds for discretionary permit revocation. Prior to Improvement Plan or Final Map approval, easements will be created and offered for dedication to the County for maintenance and access to these facilities in anticipation of possible County maintenance.

Mitigation Measure WQ-1c: Protect Storm Drain Inlets

The project will include the message details, placement, and locations showing that all storm drain inlets and catch basins within the project area will be permanently marked/embossed with prohibitive language such as "No Dumping! Flows to Creek." or other language /graphical icons to discourage illegal dumping as approved by the Engineering and Surveying Division (ESD). ESD-approved signs and prohibitive language and/or graphical icons, which prohibit illegal dumping, will be posted at public access points along channels and creeks within the project area. The Homeowners' / Property Owners' association and/or Property Owner is responsible for maintaining the legibility of stamped messages and signs.

Mitigation Measure 1d: Compliance with National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Requirements

For projects within the East or West Phase II Permit Area, the following mitigation measure applies. If a project is located within the permit area covered by Placer County's Small Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) Permit (State Water Resources Control Board National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES)), project-related storm water discharges are subject to all applicable requirements of said permit.

The project will implement permanent and operational source control measures as applicable. Source control measures will be designed for pollutant generating activities or sources consistent with recommendations from the California Stormwater Quality Association (CASQA) Stormwater BMP Handbook for New Development and Redevelopment, or equivalent manual, and will be shown on the Improvement Plans.

The project is also required to implement Low Impact Development (LID) standards designed to reduce runoff, treat storm water, and provide baseline hydromodification management as outlined in the West OR East Placer Storm Water Quality Design Manual.

Mitigation Measure WQ-1e: Compliance with Placer County Stormwater Quality Ordinance

For projects outside the Phase II Permit Area, the following mitigation measure applies. The Improvement Plans will include BMPs designed to ensure that pollutants contained in project-related storm water discharges are reduced to the maximum extent practicable and that non-storm water discharges are prevented from leaving the site, both during and after construction, as required by Placer County's Stormwater Quality Ordinance (Placer County Code, Article 8.28).

Mitigation Measure WQ-1f: Storm Water Quality Report

For projects within East or West Phase II Permit Area, the following mitigation measure applies. Per the State of California NPDES Phase II MS4 Permit, this project is a Regulated Project that creates and/or replaces 5,000 square feet or more of impervious surface. A final Storm Water Quality Plan (SWQP) will be submitted, either within the final Drainage Report or as a separate document that identifies how this project will meet the Phase II MS4 permit obligations. Site design measures, source control measures, and Low Impact Development (LID) standards, as necessary, will be incorporated into the design and shown on the Improvement Plans. In addition, per the Phase II MS4 permit, projects creating and/or replacing one acre or more of impervious surface (excepting projects that do not increase impervious surface area over the pre-project condition) are also required to demonstrate hydromodification management of storm water such that post-project runoff is maintained to equal or below pre-project flow rates for the 2 year, 24-hour storm event, generally by way of infiltration, rooftop and impervious area disconnection, bioretention, and other LID measures that result in post-project flows that mimic pre-project conditions.

Impact WQ-2: Substantial decrease of groundwater supplies or substantial interference with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin (less than significant)

The project area is predominantly outside a recognized groundwater basin. However, some small areas of anticipated growth are within a groundwater basin and impacts on groundwater resources may occur. In the event groundwater is encountered during construction of a future development project, dewatering would be conducted on a one-time or temporary basis during the construction phase and would not result in a loss of water that would substantially deplete groundwater supplies. After dewatering activities are completed, water levels would return to pre-construction conditions. The water supply for construction activities (e.g., dust control, concrete mixing, material washing) would most likely come from nearby hydrants and existing surface supplies and/or would be trucked to the site.

Natural groundwater recharge in the project area occurs primarily from infiltration of rainfall and applied water recharge. New impervious areas can reduce infiltration capacities so that more precipitation runs off into storm sewers or nearby surface waters instead of infiltrating and recharging the underlying aquifer. However, development associated with project implementation would not substantially interfere with groundwater recharge because it would not increase groundwater demand or decrease the size of groundwater recharge areas. The Placer County Design Manual includes development standards for open space and landscaping for townhouses, multifamily developments, and mixed-use developments (DS-5, DS-8, DS-12, DS-13). General provisions for landscaping and related site improvements are also required to manage drainage and stormwater (DG-37) and landscape guidelines and standards for water-efficient landscaping (DG-39). Implementation of landscaped and open space areas would allow for groundwater recharge. After project implementation, recharge in the area would continue to occur through infiltration of precipitation and applied water recharge.

Surface parking areas would be designed to direct runoff toward landscaping, bio-retention areas, or other water collection and treatment areas (DS-21F). Additionally, the use of permeable materials, swales, slightly sunken yards, and small basins to retain rainwater and allow infiltration would be considered in the design for future projects (DG-43). These stormwater treatment areas, landscape

features, and open space areas would allow for groundwater infiltration, allowing water to percolate into the ground, thereby providing increased benefits for groundwater recharge. Operation of future development project are not anticipated to utilize groundwater supplies. Therefore, the project would not substantially decrease groundwater supplies, interfere with groundwater recharge, or impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin. The proposed project's impact on groundwater supplies and recharge would be ***less than significant***.

Impact WQ-3: Substantial alteration of existing drainage patterns in a manner that would result in substantial erosion or siltation onsite or offsite; Substantial increase in the amount of surface runoff in a manner that would result in flooding onsite or offsite; Creation of or contribution to runoff water that would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff; Alteration of the existing drainage pattern in a manner that would impede or redirect flood flows (less than significant with mitigation)

During construction of future projects resulting from project implementation, stormwater drainage patterns could be temporarily altered. However, projects would be required to implement BMPs, required in the SWPPP, to minimize the potential for erosion or siltation in nearby storm drains and temporary changes in drainage patterns during construction. Construction BMPs would capture and infiltrate small amounts of sheet-flow into the ground such that offsite runoff from the construction site would not increase, ensuring that drainage patterns are not significantly altered. Measures required by the NPDES Construction General Permit would also limit site runoff during construction and would not alter stormwater drainage patterns. BMPs would be implemented to control construction site runoff, ensure proper stormwater control and treatment, and reduce the discharge of pollution to the storm drain system. If project ground disturbance exceeds one acre, prior to any construction commencing, the applicant would obtain a Waste Discharger Identification WDID number generated from the State Regional Water Quality Control Board's Stormwater Multiple Application & Reports Tracking System (SMARTS). This serves as the Regional Water Quality Control Board approval or permit under the NPDES construction stormwater quality permit (Mitigation Measure GEO-2.3). Further, a Drainage Report would be submitted prior to construction activities, and would identify water quality protection methods to be implemented during construction (Mitigation Measure WQ-1a) Therefore, construction would not substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the area in a manner that would result in substantial erosion or siltation or increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner that would result in flooding on- or offsite.

Although the impervious surface area under future project conditions is unknown, impervious surface area is assumed to increase from existing conditions. The amount of impervious surface cover is related to stormwater runoff. Larger areas of impervious surface are associated with larger volumes and flows of stormwater runoff. Therefore, stormwater flows would increase with future development. However, incorporating sustainable site design features into project design would reduce stormwater runoff associated with impervious surfaces. Sustainable site design features such as stormwater treatment areas, surface landscaping design, and permeable materials would increase permeability and reduce stormwater runoff flows and associated pollutants. In addition, the NPDES Construction General Permit requires dischargers to maintain pre-development drainage rates. Implementation of Mitigation Measure GEO-2 requires Improvement Plans to be prepared and submitted for review and approval. The plans would indicate all physical improvements for the project, pertinent topographical features both on and off site, and existing and proposed utilities and

easements. Further, Improvement Plans would indicate all proposed grading, drainage improvements, vegetation and tree removal. All work would comply with provisions of the County Grading Ordinance (Ref. Article 15.48, Placer County Code) and Stormwater Quality Ordinance (Ref. Article 8.28, Placer County Code) that are in effect at the time of submittal (Mitigation Measure GEO-2.2). As required by Mitigation Measure WQ-3a, the Improvement Plan submittal and final Drainage Report would provide details indicating that stormwater run-off peak flows and volumes would be reduced to at least pre-project conditions through the installation of detention/retention facilities. Detention/retention facilities would be designed in accordance with the requirements of the Placer County Stormwater Management Manual or other regulatory document that are in effect at the time of submittal.

Surface parking areas would be designed to slow stormwater flow and to direct runoff toward landscaping, bio-retention areas, or other water collection and treatment areas (DS-21F). Additionally, the use of permeable materials, swales, slightly sunken yards, and small basins to retain rainwater and allow infiltration would be considered in project design (DG-43). These stormwater treatment areas, landscape features, and open space areas would slow water, allowing it to percolate into the ground, thereby providing increased benefits for groundwater recharge.

Mitigation Measure WQ-3b requires the Improvement Plans and Informational Sheet(s) filed with a Final Map(s), to indicate the limits of the future, unmitigated, fully developed, 100-year flood plain (after grading), as needed. In addition, finished house pad elevations would be a minimum of two feet above the 100-year flood plain line (or finished floor -three feet above the 100-year floodplain line, as required by Mitigation Measure WQ-3c. In accordance with Chapter 16 of the Placer County Code, minor subdivision design, including, but not limited to, proposed drainage structures, lot access, and other proposed drainage improvements, would conform to good engineering practice to control flooding and stormwaters within the subdivision. Future projects would be required to install drainage improvements conforming to the County's Land Development Manual within the subdivision boundaries and/or within easements acquired for that purpose. All storm drainage designs would also conform to the Placer County Flood Control and Water Conservation District Stormwater Management Manual.

Further, Placer County Codes require that detention facilities within or near the boundary of a project to be designed to reduce flows leaving a project to levels required by the Placer County SWMM by temporarily detaining a portion of the post-development runoff. In the event that stormwater runoff reductions do not meet post-construction condition requirements, additional hydromodification treatment measures are required for projects creating and/or replacing 1 acre or more of impervious surface that create a net increase in impervious surface. The required performance standard for hydromodification control consists of maintaining post-project runoff at or below pre-project flow rates for the 2-year, 24-hour storm event. If this standard can be achieved through the implementation of site design measures and stormwater treatment/baseline hydromodification controls, then no further stormwater controls would be required. If post-construction peak flows do not meet this standard, then additional storage capacity with flow control at the discharge point must be incorporated into the design, as required by the West and East Placer Storm Water Quality Design Manuals.

Project impacts would be potentially significant. However, implementation of Mitigation Measures would reduce potential impacts. Therefore, the project would not result in substantial increases in the amount of surface runoff in a manner that would result in flooding, result in adverse impacts

related to drainage capacity, and other associated impacts. The impact would be ***less than significant with mitigation***.

Mitigation Measures WQ-3a: Storm Water Requirements in Improvement Plan

The Improvement Plan submittal and final Drainage Report will provide details showing that storm water run-off peak flows and volumes will be reduced to at least pre-project conditions through the installation of detention/retention facilities. Detention/retention facilities will be designed in accordance with the requirements of the Placer County Stormwater Management Manual or other regulatory document that are in effect at the time of submittal, and to the satisfaction of the Engineering and Surveying Division (ESD) and will be shown on the Improvement Plans. The ESD may, after review of the project's final Drainage Report, delete this requirement if it is determined that drainage conditions do not warrant installation of this type of facility. Maintenance of detention/retention facilities by the homeowner's association, property owner's association, property owner, or entity responsible for project maintenance will be required. No detention/retention facility construction will be permitted within any identified wetlands area, floodplain, or right-of-way, except as authorized by project approvals.

Mitigation Measure WQ-3b: Flood Plain Requirements

On the Improvement Plans and Informational Sheet(s) filed with a Final Map(s), show the limits of the future, unmitigated, fully developed, 100-year flood plain (after grading) for any drainageway with a tributary area of 20 acres or more and designate same as a building setback line unless greater setbacks are required by other conditions contained herein.

Mitigation Measure WQ-3c: Building Elevation Reporting Requirements

On the Improvement Plans and Informational Sheet(s) filed with a Final Map(s), show that finished house pad elevations will be a minimum of two feet above the 100-year flood plain line (or finished floor -three feet above the 100-year floodplain line). The final pad elevation will be certified by a California registered civil engineer or licensed land surveyor and submitted to the Engineering and Surveying Division. This certification will be done prior to construction of the foundation or at the completion of final grading, whichever comes first. No building construction is allowed until the certification has been received by the Engineering and Surveying Division and approved by the floodplain manager. Benchmark elevation and location will be shown on the Improvement Plans and Informational Sheet (s) to the satisfaction of Development Review Committee.

Impact WQ-4: In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk of release of pollutants as a result of project inundation (less than significant with mitigation)

The project is not within a planned tsunami inundation area as depicted on the Tsunami Inundation Map for Emergency Planning prepared by the California Emergency Management Agency and California Geological Survey and is therefore not subject to inundation by a tsunami. There are no reservoirs adjacent to the project site; therefore, the project would not be prone to inundation by a seiche. The project area is predominantly outside of the designated FEMA 100-year floodplain and would not be subject to inundation by a flood. However, a small portion of the project area is within the 100-year floodplain (FEMA Zone AE) or other local 100-year floodplain and may be subject to inundation by a flood.

Prior to construction activities, a final Drainage Report would be submitted, and would identify water quality protection methods to be used during construction (Mitigation Measure WQ-1a). During construction activities associated with future development, stormwater BMPs would be implemented, as required by federal, county, and local policies to minimize degradation of water quality associated with stormwater runoff or construction-related pollutants. In addition, construction and maintenance activities would comply with local stormwater ordinances, stormwater requirements established by the appropriate MS4 requirements (Mitigation Measure WQ-1d and Mitigation Measure WQ-1f), and regional waste discharge requirements. Other measures in the SWPPP would include a range of stormwater control BMPs (e.g., installing silt fences, staked straw wattles, or geofabric to prevent silt runoff to storm drains or waterways). Operation would comply with the County Stormwater Management and Discharge Control Ordinance, stormwater requirements established by the County's MS4 requirements, and regional waste discharge requirements. Water quality treatment facilities/BMPs would be designed according to applicable guidance (Mitigation Measure WQ-1b). Stormwater retention is a key feature in the County's stormwater management program and compliance with County's LID regulations. Due to limitations of discharge outlets, onsite retention is an important feature to minimize flooding and associated risk of pollutant release (APF-3). The use of permeable materials, swales, slightly sunken yards, and small basins to retain rainwater, allow infiltration, and filter pollutants contained in runoff would be considered in project design (DG-43). In addition, no water quality facility would be permitted within the limits of the local or FEMA floodplain. Project impacts would be potentially significant. However, with implementation of mitigation measures, in a flood hazard zone, the risk of release of pollutants as a result of project inundation would be ***less than significant with mitigation***.

Impact WQ-5: Conflict with or obstruction of implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan (no impact)

Commonly practiced BMPs would be implemented to control construction site runoff and to reduce the discharge of pollutants to storm drain systems from stormwater and other nonpoint-source runoff. As part of compliance with permit requirements during ground-disturbing or construction activities, implementation of water quality control measures and BMPs would ensure that water quality standards would be achieved, including the water quality objectives that protect designated beneficial uses of surface and groundwater, as defined in the basin plan. Construction runoff would also have to comply with the appropriate water quality objectives for the region. The NPDES Construction General Permit also requires stormwater discharges not to contain pollutants that cause or contribute to an exceedance of any applicable water quality objectives or water quality standards, including designated beneficial uses. BMPs for stormwater runoff would be incorporated into all multifamily designs, as required by the Placer County Design Manual Design Guideline DG-43. Incorporation of sustainable site design features and compliance with the County's standards for LID would also reduce stormwater runoff flows and associated pollutants.

In addition, implementing of the appropriate General Plan policies would require the protection of groundwater recharge areas and groundwater resources, as required by a sustainable groundwater management plan. Further, the project would not result in adverse impacts on the local groundwater aquifer. Implementation of stormwater control BMPs during construction, as required by the NPDES Construction General Permit, would reduce the discharge of pollutants and adverse impacts on water quality. Incorporation of landscaping and site improvements to manage stormwater, as required by Placer County Design Manual Design Guideline DG-37, would also reduce stormwater runoff flows and associated pollutants.

The project would be in compliance with water quality requirements and would, therefore, not conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan. There would be ***no impact***.

3.10.3 References Cited

California Department of Water Resources. n.d. SGMA Basin Prioritization Dashboard. Available: https://gis.water.ca.gov/app/bp-dashboard/final/. Accessed: May 11, 2020.

California Department of Water Resources. 2006a. *Bulletin 118 Sacramento Valley Groundwater Basin North American Subbasin*. January 20. Available: https://water.ca.gov/LegacyFiles/pubs/groundwater/bulletin_118/basindescriptions/5-21.64.pdf. Accessed: May 18, 2020.

California Department of Water Resources. 2006b. *Bulletin 118 Olympic Valley Groundwater Basin*. January 20. Available: https://water.ca.gov/LegacyFiles/pubs/groundwater/bulletin_118/basindescriptions/6-108.pdf. Accessed: May 18, 2020.

California Department of Water Resources. 2006c. *Bulletin 118 Martis Valley Groundwater Basin*. January 20.

California State Water Resources Control Board. 2018. 2014/2016 Integrated Report (Clean Water Act Section 303(d) List/305(b) Report)—Statewide. San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board. USEPA approved: April 6, 2018. Available: https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/tmdl/integrated2014_2016.shtml. Accessed: May 18, 2020.

Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board. 2018. *Water Quality Control Plan for the Sacramento River and San Joaquin River Basins, Fifth Edition (Basin Plan).* May.

Federal Emergency Management Agency. 2020. GIS Web Services for the FEMA National Flood Hazard Layer Available: https://hazards.fema.gov/femaportal/wps/portal/NFHLWMS. Accessed March 12, 2020.

Fram, M.S., and Belitz, Kenneth. 2012. Groundwater Quality in the Tahoe and Martis Basins, California: U.S. Geological Survey Fact Sheet 2011-3143, 4 p.

Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board. 2019. *The Water Quality Control Plan for the Lahontan Region, (Basin Plan).* October 29.

Placer County. n.d. Auburn Ravine/Coon Creek Ecosystem Restoration Plan Summary.

Placer County. 1990. Placer County Flood Control and Water Conservation District Stormwater Management Manual. September 1.

Placer County. 2002. Auburn Ravine/Coon Creek Restoration Plan Chapter 4: Water Resources Management. June 28.

Placer County. 2016. West Placer Storm Water Quality Design Manual. Revised May 2018. April.

Placer County. 2017. East Placer Storm Water Quality Design Manual. Revised May 2018. May.

Placer County Stormwater Coordination Group. 2005. Guidance Document for Volume and Flow-based sizing of Permanent Post-construction Best Management Practices for Stormwater Quality Protection. May 25.

Sacramento River Watershed Program. n.d.(a). Bear River Watershed.

Sacramento River Watershed Program. n.d.(b). Lower American River Watershed.

Sacramento River Watershed Program. n.d.(c). Upper American River Watershed.

Sacramento River Watershed Program. n.d.(d). Yuba River Watershed.

3.11 Land Use and Planning

This section evaluates the potential environmental impacts that could result from conflicts with land use policies that could result from buildout of the Proposed Housing-Related Code Amendments (project). A description of Placer County's (County) regulatory setting and existing characteristics/environmental setting is followed by an analysis focused on the relationship between the project and existing plans and policies, and the relationship with proposed and existing adjacent land uses. Excerpts from the relevant County planning documents and ordinances are presented under *Regulatory Setting*; complete copies of the documents and ordinances may be obtained by contacting the Placer County Planning Department.

For the most part, direct and indirect physical impacts resulting from project implementation are not addressed in this section, but rather in their appropriate technical sections of the environmental impact report (EIR). For example, direct impacts during construction such as construction equipment emissions and noise are addressed in Section 3.3, *Air Quality*, and Section 3.13, *Noise*, respectively.

Comments received on the Notice of Preparation regarding land use included concerns around the proposed changes to zoning and how the proposed General Plan and zoning changes would affect the provision of affordable housing.

3.11.1 Existing Conditions

Regulatory Setting

There are no federal laws or regulations pertaining to land use and planning that are relevant to the project.

Sacramento Area Council of Governments Policy Documents

As the metropolitan planning organization (MPO) and Council of Governments for the Sacramento region, the Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG) is engaged in projects and programs related to regional transportation planning, affordable housing, economic forecasting, and land use planning. The common thread in SACOG's planning efforts is regional collaboration. SACOG serves as a forum for studying and resolving regional issues and challenges while fostering cooperation among the 6 counties and 22 city governments in the Sacramento region, which includes Placer County and its incorporated cities (Sacramento Area Council of Governments 2020a). SACOG has prepared several policy documents that are applicable to the project.

Metropolitan Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy

Senate Bill (SB) 375, signed by Governor Schwarzenegger in September 2008, aligns regional transportation planning efforts, regional greenhouse gas (GHG) emission reduction targets, and land use and housing allocation. SB 375 requires MPOs to adopt a sustainable communities strategy (SCS) or alternative planning strategy, showing prescribed land use allocation in the regional transportation plan of each MPO. The California Air Resources Board (CARB), in consultation with

the MPOs, is to provide each affected region with reduction targets for GHGs emitted by passenger cars and light trucks in their respective regions for 2020 and 2035.

SACOG serves as the MPO for Sacramento, Placer, El Dorado, Yuba, Sutter, and Yolo Counties, excluding those lands located in the Lake Tahoe Basin. SACOG adopted its Metropolitan Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (MTP/SCS) 2036 in 2012 and completed an update adopted on February 18, 2016. This MTP/SCS provides the regional plan for transportation investments integrated with projected land use, as well as funding constraints the region can reasonably expect to see through 2036 (Placer County 2020a). SACOG was tasked by CARB to achieve a 7 percent per-capita reduction compared to 2012 emissions by 2020 and a 16 percent per-capita reduction by 2035, which CARB confirmed the region would achieve by implementing its SCS (Sacramento Area Council of Governments 2016). In June 2017, CARB released the proposed update for the SB 375 targets, tasking SACOG to achieve a 7 percent and a 19 percent per-capita reduction by 2020 and 2035, respectively. These targets have since been approved (California Air Resources Board 2017). SB 375 pertains to the combination of land use and transportation strategies to reduce GHG emissions such that regional targets are achieved. For more information, see Section 3.8, *Greenhouse Gas Emissions*.

Sacramento Region Blueprint

SACOG provides planning and transportation funding for the region and has crafted a long-term, smart growth vision for the Sacramento region: the Sacramento Region Blueprint. In 2004, the SACOG Board of Directors approved the Preferred Blueprint Scenario for the 2050 "Blueprint Project." The Blueprint Project includes growth principles to help guide development in the region including those for transportation, mixed-use development, housing, existing assets, natural resource conservation (Sacramento Area Council of Governments 2020b).

Rural-Urban Connections Strategy

SACOG implemented the Rural-Urban Connections Strategy project, incorporating policies and strategies to address the challenges and needs of rural areas within the counties served. The Rural-Urban Connections Strategy seeks not only to support the main land use and economic activity, agriculture, but also to conserve open lands and the ecosystem services they provide (Sacramento Area Council of Governments 2020c).

Allocation of Regional Housing Needs Allocations

SACOG also adopted the final Plan for Allocation of Regional Housing Needs Allocations (RHNA) in September 2012. SACOG has allocated 5,031 new housing units to unincorporated Placer County for the January 1, 2013 to October 31, 2021 planning period. Of these 5,031 units, 3,258 units are to be affordable to moderate-income households and below, including 1,365 very-low-income units, 957 low-income units, and 936 moderate-income units (Placer County 2013).

Placer County General Plan

The Placer County Board of Supervisors adopted the Placer County General Plan in 1997, as well as its update in May 2013. The General Plan Policy Document is divided into two main parts. Part I describes the Countywide Land Use Diagram and allowable uses and standards for each of the designations appearing on the diagram. Part I also describes standards for land use buffer zones and

depicts the Countywide Circulation Plan Diagram, standards for the roadway classification system on the diagram, and standards for transit corridors.

Part II contains the goals, policies, standards, implementation programs, and quantified objectives. Part II is divided into ten elements (e.g., Land Use, Housing). Each element includes several goal statements relating to different sub-topics or different aspects of the topics addressed in the section. For each goal statement there are several policies which amplify the goal statement and a set of related implementation programs describing briefly the proposed action, the agencies or departments with primary responsibility for carrying out the program, the time frame for accomplishing the program, and the funding source. Elements of the General Plan include: Land Use, Housing, Transportation and Circulation, Public Facilities and Services, Recreational and Cultural Resources, Natural Resources, Agricultural and Forestry Resources, Health and Safety, Noise, and Administration and Implementation.

The following subsections provide key goals and policies and land use designations that are applicable to the project.

Goals and Policies

The *Land Use Element* of the Placer County General Plan contains the following goals and policies that are applicable the project:

Goal 1.A. To promote the wise, efficient, and environmentally-sensitive use of Placer County lands to meet the present and future needs of Placer County residents and businesses.

Policy 1.A.1. The County will promote the efficient use of land and natural resources.

Policy 1.A.2. The County shall permit only low-intensity forms of development in areas with sensitive environmental resources or where natural or human-caused hazards are likely to pose a significant threat to health, safety, or property.

Policy 1.A.3. The County shall distinguish among urban/suburban and rural areas to identify where development will be accommodated and where public infrastructure and service will be provided. This pattern shall promote the maintenance of separate and distinct communities.

Policy 1.A.4. The County shall promote patterns of development that facilitate the efficient and timely provision of urban infrastructure and services.

Program A-4: *Minimum Density Standard.* Due to the loss of multi-family sites to single-family construction, the County shall adopt a Zoning Ordinance amendment to set a minimum density standard for single-family homes in the Multi-Family Residential (RM) zoning district, and prohibit the development of single-family homes in the zoning district unless built to the new minimum density.

Program A-9*: Studio Apartments.* The County shall update the Zoning Ordinance to ease development standards and/or provide density bonuses to encourage construction of studio apartments.

Goal 1.B. To provide adequate land in a range of residential densities to accommodate the housing needs of all income groups expected to reside in Placer County.

Policy 1.B.1. The County shall promote the concentration of new residential development in higher density residential areas located along major transportation corridors and transit routes.

Policy 1.B.2. The County shall encourage the concentration of multi-family housing in and near downtowns, village centers, major commercial areas, and neighborhood commercial centers.

Policy 1.B.3. The County shall encourage the planning and design of new residential subdivisions to emulate the best characteristics (e.g., form, scale, and general character) of existing, nearby neighborhoods.

Policy 1.B.4. The County shall ensure that residential land uses are separated and buffered from such major facilities as landfills, airports, and sewage treatment plants.

Policy 1.B.5. The County shall require residential project design to reflect and consider natural features, noise exposure of residents, visibility of structures, circulation, access, and the relationship of the project to surrounding uses. Residential densities and lot patterns will be determined by these and other factors. As a result, the maximum density specified by General Plan designations or zoning for a given parcel of land may not be realized.

Policy 1.B.6. The County shall require new subdivided lots to be adequate in size and appropriate in shape for the range of primary and accessory uses designated for the area.

Policy 1.B.7. The County shall require residential subdivisions to be designed to provide well-connected internal and external street and pedestrian systems with clear, unobstructed pedestrian paths of travel.

Policy 1.B.8. The County shall discourage the development of isolated, remote, and/or walled residential projects that do not contribute to the sense of community desired for the area.

Policy 1.B.9. The County shall require that all residential development provide private and/or public open spaces in order to insure that each parcel contributes to the adequate provision of light, air, and open space.

Policy 1.D.2: The County shall require new commercial development to be designed to minimize the visual impact of parking areas from public roadways and existing residential uses.

Policy 1.D.3: The County shall require that new, urban, community commercial centers be located adjacent to major activity nodes and major transportation corridors. Community commercial centers should provide goods and services that residents have historically had to travel outside of the area to obtain.

Policy 1.D.5: The County shall encourage existing and new downtowns/village centers to provide a variety of goods and services, both public and private.

Policy 1.D.6: The County shall promote use of first floor space in new buildings in downtowns/village centers for retail, food service, financial institutions, and other high-volume commercial uses.

Policy 1.D.7: The County shall encourage new downtowns/village centers and new commercial projects and areas to be designed to maintain a continuous retail facade on all street frontages, except for public plazas and pedestrian passages between the front and rear of buildings.

Policy 1.D.9: The County shall encourage parking in downtowns/village centers to be consolidated in well-designed and landscaped lots or in well-located parking structures.

Program 1.3: New specific plans shall include design standards and guidelines for the development of downtown/village centers.

Goal 1.K. To protect the visual and scenic resources of Placer County as important quality-of-life amenities for County residents and a principal asset in the promotion of recreation and tourism.

Policy 1.K.1. The county shall require that new development in scenic areas (e.g., river canyons, lake watersheds, scenic highway corridors, ridgelines and steep slopes) is planned and designed in a manner which employs design, construction, and maintenance techniques that: (a) Avoids locating structures along ridgelines and steep slopes; (b) Incorporates design and screening measures to minimize the visibility of structures and graded areas; (c) Maintains the character and visual quality of the area.

Policy 1.K.2. The county shall require that new development in scenic areas be designed to utilize natural landforms and vegetation for screening structures, access roads, building foundations, and cut and fill slopes.

Policy 1.K.3. The county shall require that new development in rural areas incorporates landscaping that provides a transition between the vegetation in developed areas and adjacent open space or undeveloped areas.

Policy 1.K.4. The county shall require that new development incorporates sound soil conservation practices and minimizes land alterations. *[See General Plan for the full list of guidelines that land alterations should comply with.]*

Policy 1.K.5. The county shall require that new roads, parking, and utilities be designed to minimize visual impacts. Unless limited by geological or engineering constraints, utilities should be installed underground and roadways and parking areas should be designed to conform to the natural terrain.

Policy 1.K.6. The county shall require that new development on hillsides employ design, construction, and maintenance techniques that: (a) Ensure that development near or on portions of hillsides do not cause or worsen natural hazards such as erosion, sedimentation, fire, or water quality concerns; (b) Include erosion and sediment control measures including temporary vegetation sufficient to stabilize disturbed areas; (c) Minimize risk to life and property from slope failure, landslides, and flooding; and, (d) Maintain the character and visual quality of the hillside.

Goal 1.M. To work toward a jobs-housing balance.

Policy 1.M.1: The County shall concentrate most new growth within existing communities emphasizing infill development, intensified use of existing development, and expanded services, so individual communities become more complete, diverse, and balanced.

Policy 1.M.2: The County shall encourage large residential projects to be phased or timed to occur simultaneously with development that will provide primary wage-earner jobs.

Policy 1.N.5: The County shall encourage flexibility in development standards to accommodate uses that provide a substantial economic benefit to the community.

Goal 1.O. To promote and enhance the quality and aesthetics of development in Placer County.

Policy 1.O.1: Except as otherwise provided in the Design Guidelines of an approved Specific Plan, the County shall require all new development to be designed in compliance with applicable provisions of the Placer County Design Guidelines Manual.

Policy 1.O.2: The County shall require that specific plans include design guidelines for all types of development within the area covered by the plan.

Policy 1.O.3: The County shall require that all new development be designed to be compatible with the scale and character of the area. *[See General Plan for the full list of design and location criteria.]*

Policy 1.O.4: The County shall require that new rural and suburban development be designed to preserve and maintain the rural character and quality of the County.

Policy 1.O.9: The County shall discourage the use of outdoor lighting that shines unnecessarily onto adjacent properties or into the night sky.

Policy 1.O.10: The County shall require that in downtowns/village centers the tallest buildings be clustered in the core area and that building heights transition down to the scale of buildings in the surrounding area.

The *Housing Element* of the Placer County General Plan contains the following goals policies that are applicable the project:

Goal A. To provide new housing opportunities to meet the needs to existing and future Placer County residents in all income categories.

Policy A-1: The County shall maintain an adequate supply of appropriately zoned land with public services to accommodate housing needs of existing and future residents.

Policy A-2: The County shall ensure that its adopted policies, regulations, and procedures do not add unnecessarily to the cost of housing while still attaining other important County objectives.

Policy A-3: The County shall continue efforts to streamline and improve the development review process, and to eliminate any unnecessary delays in the processing of development applications.

Policy A-4: The County shall encourage innovative subdivision design and a range of housing types within larger-scale development projects to encourage mixed-income communities (e.g., single-family detached homes, second units, duplexes, live-work units).

Policy A-5: The County shall facilitate the development of higher-density multi-family development in locations where adequate infrastructure and public services are available by permitting residential uses in commercial zones, allowing flexible development standards, and providing other incentives.

Policy A-6: The County shall encourage residential development of high architectural and physical quality.

Policy A-7: Placer County shall continue to implement the policies and requirements of the Placer County Design Guidelines Manual, Landscape Design Guidelines, and community design elements of the various community plans.

Policy A-8: Residential projects proposed within Compatibility Zones C1 and C2 of any municipal airport shall conform to the criteria set forth in Table 2A of Chapter 2 of the Placer County Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan (2000). Potential development sites within these Zones have not been counted in the Housing Element Inventory of Vacant Parcels.

Policy B-10. The County shall continue to implement the following incentive programs for the construction of affordable housing: Allow second residential units with single-family residences; Allow mobile homes and manufactured housing in all residential zoning districts; Allow "hardship mobile homes" as second residential units in residential and/or agricultural zones; and Allow relief from parking standards and other specified development standards on developments for seniors and low-, very low-, and extremely low-income residents.

Policy B-11: To preserve homeownership and promote neighborhood stability, the County shall attempt to alleviate individual and community issues associated with foreclosures.

Program B-3: Flexible Development Standards. The County shall amend engineering standards and the subdivision and zoning ordinances to allow flexibility in certain development standards as incentives for affordable housing developments. The County shall ensure that adjusting development standards for affordable housing does not result in lower quality housing or higher replacement or maintenance costs in the future, and shall consider site and potential occupancy characteristics when amending development standards. *[See General Plan for the full list of standards the County shall evaluate.]*

Program B-4. Density Bonus. The County shall use the density bonus ordinance to encourage rental and for-sale housing. The County shall promote the benefits of this program to the development community by posting information on their web page and creating a handout to be distributed with land development applications.

Program B-10: Second Units/Multi-Generational Housing. The County shall explore the possibility of streamlining the approval process for second units, as well as allowing second units on smaller parcels than what is currently allowed. The County shall adopt new rules to allow second units on parcels less than 10,000 square feet in size (eliminating need for 1.5 times base zoning minimum parcel size requirement).

Program B-12: Multifamily Housing on Commercial Sites. To facilitate the construction of high-density housing on commercially-zoned sites, the County shall consider amending the Zoning Ordinance provisions for multi-family housing use. These revisions may include amending the zoning ordinance to allow multi-family dwellings of 20 or fewer units/acre as a permitted use by right in the C1 and C2 zone districts. This could also include a Zoning Text Amendment to permit multifamily housing that contains an affordable housing component at 30 units per acre on commercial sites.

Program B-17: Rental Assistance Program. The County shall strive to secure funding for a security deposit assistance program to assist extremely low-income and very low-income individuals and households in emergency situations to prevent homelessness or assist those living in transitional housing secure permanent rental housing. The County shall explore options for providing assistance, which could include no-interest loans or grants to apply towards costs associated with rental housing, such as security deposits, first and last month's rent, and utility deposits.

Program C-2. Employee Housing Program. The County shall initiate a review of Policy C-2 to consider specific issues including: the appropriateness of the application of the employee housing requirement to small commercial/professional office projects (i.e., smaller than 2 acres in project area), the financial feasibility of requiring development to mitigate for 50 percent of the housing demand, and the impact of the requirement on attracting new commercial projects. The review shall also consider formalizing procedures for calculating employee housing obligations and assess the need to require the submittal of a housing mitigation plan by project applicants. If such a submittal is required, the following methods of providing housing shall be considered: (a) Construction of housing on site; (b) Construction of housing off site; (c) Dedication of land for housing; and (d) Payment of an in-lieu fee.

The *Transportation and Circulation Element* of the Placer County General Plan contains the following goals policies that are applicable the project:

Goal 3.A. To provide for the long-range planning and development of the County's roadway system to ensure the safe and efficient movement of people and goods.

Policy 3.A.9: The County shall strive to meet the level of service standards through a balanced transportation system that provides alternatives to the automobile.

Policy 3.A.10: The County shall plan and implement a complete road network to serve the needs of local traffic. This road network shall include roadways parallel to regional facilities so that the regional roadway system can function effectively and efficiently. Much of this network will be funded and/or constructed by new development.

Goal 3.C. To maximize the efficient use of transportation facilities so as to: 1) reduce travel demand on the County's roadway system; 2) reduce the amount of investment required in new or expanded facilities; 3) reduce the quantity of emissions of pollutants from automobiles; and 4) increase the energy-efficiency of the transportation system.

Goal 3.D. To maximize the efficient use of transportation facilities so as to: 1) reduce travel demand on the County's roadway system; 2) reduce the amount of investment required in new or expanded facilities; 3) reduce the quantity of emissions of pollutants from automobiles; and 4) increase the energy-efficiency of the transportation system.

Program 3.13. The County shall prepare and adopt land use and design standards for areas within designated transit corridors consistent with the policies and standards in this Policy Document. The County shall also develop design standards that can be applied in all urban/suburban areas to promote transit accessibility and use, and require the provisions of transit amenities as conditions of project approval.

Land Use Designations

Standards of building intensity for residential uses are stated in this General Plan in terms of the maximum number of dwelling units per net acre, the allowable range of dwelling units per net acre, or the number of principal dwelling units allowed per legal lot. Standards of population density for residential uses can be derived by multiplying the maximum number of dwellings per net acre by the average number of persons per dwelling unit, which for purposes of this General Plan is assumed to be 2.50.

The land use designations used in the General Plan are intended to generally portray overall land use patterns throughout the unincorporated areas of the county rather than precisely define the specific land uses appropriate on each parcel of land. The land use policies and standards of the General Plan are implemented on a day-to-day basis through zoning, which imposes specific development standards on any proposed land use. For residential areas, Placer County land use designations currently include the following:

- **Rural Residential (RR).** This designation is applied to areas generally located away from cities and unincorporated community centers, in hilly, mountainous, and/or forested terrain and as a buffer zone where dispersed residential development on larger parcels would be appropriate and compatible with smaller-scale farming and ranching operations. Typical uses allowed include detached single-family dwellings and secondary dwellings; agricultural uses such as crop production and grazing, equestrian facilities, and limited agricultural support businesses such as roadside stands, farm equipment, and supplies sales; resource extraction uses; various facilities and services that support residential neighborhoods such as churches, schools, libraries, and childcare and medical facilities; parks; and necessary public utility and safety facilities. Minimum lot acreage is 1 to 10 acres with no requirement for the amount of dwelling units per acre.
- **Low Density Residential (LDR).** This designation is applied to urban or urbanizing areas suitable for single-family residential neighborhoods, with individual homes on lots ranging in area from 10,000 square feet to 1 acre. Typical land uses allowed include detached single-family dwellings, secondary dwellings, residential accessory uses, churches, schools, parks, golf courses, childcare facilities, and necessary public utility and safety facilities. This designation also includes low-medium density residential uses, which includes two to five dwelling units per acre.
- **Medium Density Residential (MDR).** This designation is applied within urban areas to single-family residential neighborhoods where some lower-density multifamily housing may also be appropriate. Typical land uses allowed include: detached and attached single-family dwellings, secondary dwellings, smaller-scale multifamily dwellings (e.g., duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes), and residential accessory uses; churches, schools, parks, golf courses, childcare facilities; and necessary public utility and safety facilities. Minimum lot acreage is 3,500 to 10,000 square feet with five to ten dwelling units per acre.
- **High Density Residential (HDR).** This designation provides for residential neighborhoods of grouped or clustered single-family dwellings, duplexes, apartments, and other multifamily attached dwellings such as condominiums. This designation is applied within urban areas where residential development will be near transportation corridors, downtowns, village centers, other major commercial centers, schools and community services. Typical land uses allowed include: detached and attached single-family dwellings, secondary dwellings, all types of multifamily dwellings (e.g., duplexes, apartments, senior housing projects), and residential accessory uses; churches, schools, parks, golf courses, childcare facilities; and necessary public utility and safety facilities. Minimum lot acreage is 3,500 to 10,000 square feet with 10 to 21 dwelling units per acre.

In addition to the residential land uses, the following existing land use designation also applies to the project:

- **General Commercial (GC).** This designation identifies a variety of urban commercial areas including shopping districts, service commercial areas, office areas, and neighborhood-serving

commercial centers. This designation is applied within urban areas where the commercial development will be near major transportation corridors, and within downtowns, village centers, or other major commercial areas or centers. Typical land uses allowed include: all types of retail stores, restaurants, and shopping centers (limited in extent where necessary to maintain compatibility with adjoining land uses, such as in a neighborhood commercial center), offices, service commercial uses, mixed use, recreation, education, and public assembly uses, medical services, childcare facilities, necessary public utility and safety facilities, and similar and compatible uses. Developments including multifamily dwellings as the primary land use or as part of a mixed-use project may also be allowed where appropriate.

It is important to note that the Placer County General Plan does not have a traditional mixed-use designation that allows housing and commercial or employment uses. Some community plans include a mixed-use designation, but they vary in how they direct implementation of the mixed-use designation. Some community plans are more policy-oriented in their direction while others include regulatory elements.

Placer County Zoning Ordinance

The County Zoning Ordinance, Chapter 17 of the Placer County Code, was adopted by the County Board of Supervisors in July 1995 (Edition #1). The Zoning Ordinance, Tenth Edition, was revised in 2011. The Zoning Ordinance, which is consistent with the County General Plan and applicable community plans, regulates the use of land, buildings, and structures, and establishes minimum regulations and standards for the development of land in Placer County.

The Zoning Ordinance does not include a stand-alone mixed-use zone district but has a combining zone, Town Center Commercial (–TC), that can be used in combination with any residential or commercial district, where the combining district has been identified in a community plan. The community plan would specify the types of uses allowed or not allowed within the combining district and any development standards that would supersede those contained in the underlying zoning. This is a first step at addressing mixed-use development, but is limited in its application. The –TC combining district is currently only applied in the Tahoe Basin Area Plan and the Sheridan Community Plan.

Placer County also allows multifamily residential uses in the General Commercial and Commercial Planned Development zone; however, that allowance does not explicitly address mixed-use. Some services, recreation, education and public assembly uses can also be accommodated within the multifamily residential zone, but mixed use is not explicitly addressed. Accommodating multifamily within commercial zones and service uses within residential zones creates flexibility with regard to the uses allowed, but on its own does not ensure that the regulations and standards are intentional in promoting a vibrant and successful mixed-use district and appropriate for the desired physical development of mixed use. It also does not provide an appropriate zoning structure for an incentive program.

The following list shows the various zone districts of the Placer County Zoning Ordinance that can be used to consistently implement each land use designation used in the Placer County General Plan. In addition to these basic zone districts, a variety of combining zones described in the Zoning Ordinance may be used to implement the General Plan. This list is not comprehensive, but covers the zoning that is applicable to residential uses throughout the county.

- **RR Land Use Designation**

- *Residential-Agricultural (RA):* The purpose of the RA zone district is to stabilize and protect the rural residential characteristics of the area to which it is applied and to promote and encourage a suitable environment for family life, including agricultural uses.
- *Residential-Forest (RF):* The purpose of the RF district is to provide opportunities for rural residential living in the forested, mountainous or foothill areas of Placer County.
- *Farm (F):* The purpose of the F zone is to provide areas for the conduct of commercial agricultural operations that can also accommodate necessary services to support agricultural uses, together with residential land uses at low population densities. The maximum density for single-family dwellings in the F zone shall be one unit per parcel of the minimum lot area required by the Zoning Ordinance (Minimum Parcel Size), except where additional units are approved pursuant to Sections 17.56.230 (Single-family dwellings, density), or 17.56.200 (Secondary dwellings).

- **LDR Land Use Designation**
  - *RA:* See above.
  - *Residential Single-Family (RS):* The RS district is intended to provide areas for residential development characterized by detached single-family homes in standard subdivision form.
- **MDR Land Use Designation:**
  - *RS:* See above.
  - *Residential Multi-Family (RM):* The RM district is intended to provide areas for residential neighborhoods of single-family dwellings, multiple single-family dwellings on one lot, halfplexes, duplexes, apartments, and other multiple-family attached dwelling units such as condominiums. It is intended that new development in this district utilize innovative site planning, provide onsite recreational amenities and be located near major community facilities, business centers, and/or major streets.
- **HDR Land Use Designation:**
  - *RM:* See above.
  - *Combining Density Limitation (-DL):* See below.
- **GC Land Use Designation:**
  - *Commercial Planned Development (CPD):* The purpose of the CPD zone district is to designate areas appropriate for mixed-use community shopping centers, office parks, and other similar developments, where excellence in site planning and building design are important objectives. Allowed density for multifamily residential development is one unit for each 2,000 square feet (sf) of site area.
  - *Neighborhood Commercial (C1):* The C1 district is intended to provide areas for small-scale, day-to-day convenience shopping and services for residents of the immediate neighborhood, which encourages pedestrian and bicycle access, and which is planned and designed to be compatible with surrounding residential areas. Allowed density for multifamily residential development is one unit for each 2,000 sf of site area; except in the Lake Tahoe area, where maximum density is one unit for each 3,000 sf of site area.
  - *General Commercial (C2):* The C2 zone district is intended to provide areas for the continued use, enhancement, and new development of retail, personal service, entertainment, office

and related commercial uses that will attract patrons from all areas of the community and region. The C2 district will be located mainly along major transportation corridors. Allowed density for multifamily residential development is one unit for each 2,000 sf of site area.

- *Heavy Commercial (C3):* The C3 zone district provides areas for intensive service commercial uses primarily of a nonretail nature, some of which require outdoor storage or activity areas. Limited retail and office uses are allowed to the extent that they are compatible with the heavy commercial uses. Residential uses are conditionally permitted for employee housing and home occupation.
- *Highway Service (HS):* The HS district provides areas for commercial uses and services oriented toward the traveling public. Such areas are located along major traffic corridors at principal intersections. Allowed density for multifamily residential development is one unit for each 2,000 sf of site area.
- *Office and Professional (OP):* The OP district is intended primarily for the development and operation of professional and administrative offices and personal services, rather than retail trade. New development in such areas is intended to be planned and designed so as to be relatively compatible with residential uses. Residential uses are conditionally permitted for employee housing and home occupation.
- *Resort (RES):* The RES district is applied to mountainous areas, water-oriented, or other areas with significant natural amenities and commercial recreational potential, with good access to major highways. The maximum density for single-family dwellings in the RES zone is one unit per parcel of the minimum lot area required by the Zoning Ordinance, except where additional units are approved pursuant to Section 17.56.230 (Single-family dwellings, density), or 17.56.200 (Secondary dwellings).

In addition, combining district regulations provide guidelines applicable to the combining districts established by Section 17.06.010 of the County Code (Zone and combining districts established). The combining districts are used in combination with the zone districts to address special needs or characteristics of the areas of Placer County to which they are applied, including but not limited to potential hazards and/or land use conflicts created by aircraft overflight, flooding, unique community character or visual quality. The following combining districts, which apply to all General Plan land use designations, would be applicable to the project:

- *Agriculture (-AG):* The purpose of the -AG combining district is to identify residential areas where parcel sizes and neighborhood conditions are suitable for the raising and keeping of a variety of farm and exotic animals, in addition to household pets, without compatibility problems with surrounding residential uses.
- *Aircraft Overflight (-AO):* The purpose of the -AO combining district is to regulate land uses in the vicinity of public airports and below areas where aircraft perform approach and departure maneuvers, recognizing that certain land uses and site development characteristics may conflict with the safe and efficient operation of airports and aircraft. The intent of this combining district is to protect people and property both in the air and on the ground by regulating buildings and structures that may affect navigable airspace, consistent with federal regulations, and to minimize noise and other conflicts between airport operations and surrounding land uses.
- *Building Site (-B):* The purpose of the -B combining district is to provide for different parcel sizes in new subdivisions than would otherwise be required by an applicable zone district, based upon special characteristics of the site or area to which the combining district is applied,

including but not limited to sensitive environmental characteristics, limited resource capacities, and community character.

- *Use Permit Required (-UP):* The purpose of the -UP combining district is to identify sensitive areas of Placer County where any proposed use or development will raise significant land use policy issues and/or community concerns and, therefore, should not be considered for approval or disapproval without the level of public participation and review afforded by the conditional or minor use permit process (Section 17.58.130).
- *Density Limitation (-DL):* The -DL combining district provides special minimum lot size and density standards for certain areas where residential development may occur, where sensitive site characteristics or other special circumstances exist. -DL prohibits residential uses in zoning districts that would otherwise allow such uses.
- *Design Review (-Dc, -Dh, -Ds):* The purpose of the design review (-Dc, -Dh, -Ds) combining districts is to provide special regulations to protect and enhance the aesthetic character of lands and buildings within public view; to protect historic buildings; to minimize any adverse impacts of conflicting land uses; to enhance tourism through the protection of lands and buildings having unique aesthetic characteristics; and to provide special project review procedures for lands and uses which by their nature require special attention to landscaping, circulation, and/or energy conservation.
    - *Design Scenic Corridor or Sierra (-Dc, -Ds):* The -Dc or -Ds designations will be applied only to (1) areas of special natural beauty and aesthetic interest that constitute a basic resource in the county economy, the preservation of which in its most nearly natural state would enhance tourism; or (2) areas, places, sites, structures or uses where application of the design review combining district will serve to carry out the other purposes stated in subsection A of the relevant section of the zoning code.
    - *Design Historical (-Dh).* The -Dh designation will be applied only to areas, places, sites, structures or uses that have special historical interest. In adopting the -Dh designation, the board will first make findings of fact that identify the specific historical interest, and state that a significant percentage of the buildings covered by the -Dh classification were constructed before 1920.
- *Development Reserve (-Dr):* The purpose of the -Dr combining district is to provide for the future development of limited residential, commercial or industrial uses in areas that are identified by the general plan (or any community plan adopted pursuant thereto) for such uses, but which: (1) may not be prepared at the time the district is adopted to accommodate the planned levels of full development until additional infrastructure or resources have been provided, or additional population growth has occurred; or (2) may require special treatment as provided for in specific or general plans.
- *Planned Residential Development (-PD):* the purpose of the -PD combining district is to identify areas where development can occur within the context of a planned development and where a residential density for the planned unit development must be determined by the county to guide the design of the proposed project pursuant to the requirements and standards of Section 17.54.080 (Planned residential developments).
- *Town Center Commercial (-TC):* the purpose of the -TC district is to be an overlay district which allows flexibility in the underlying zone district regulations (including both permitted use types and development standards) by reference to regulations adopted in a community plan, area

plan, master plan, or specific plan which applies to the property so classified. A zoning reclassification may combine the -TC district with any residential or commercial district, where said combining district has been identified in a community plan, area plan, master plan, or specific plan.

Placer County Specific, Community, and Area Plans

A number of the unincorporated communities in the county are covered by adopted community plans, in addition to the County General Plan. Community and specific plans are required to be consistent with the Placer County General Plan and are intended to provide more detail for a particular geographic area of Placer County.

A total of 23 community plans[1] have been adopted under the General Plan to provide a more detailed focus on specific geographic areas within the unincorporated County. The goals and policies included within the Community Plans supplement, but do not supersede, the goals and policies contained within the General Plan. Under the State Planning and Zoning Law (Gov. Code § 65450 et seq.) and County Code Section 17.02.050, subd.(D)(3), a specific plan may be adopted or amended if it is consistent with the General Plan. If conflicts occur between the County Code and a specific plan, the provisions of the specific plan apply.

There are nine specific plans awaiting development in unincorporated Placer County. If fully developed, these will include 42,208 residential units, including roughly 22,500 single-family housing units and 17,740 multifamily units, as well as 2,000 additional units expected to function as student housing and tourist units. All but two specific plans are in the western county, adjacent to the incorporated cities. Two specific plans are in the urban growth areas of Roseville and Lincoln: the Brookfield Residential-Amoruso Specific Plan (2,827 housing units) and the Lincoln Village 5 Specific Plan (8,244 housing units).

The largest specific plan proposed in the unincorporated area is the Placer Vineyards Specific Plan, which would include 13,982 housing units, including 10,254 single-family units and 3,728 multifamily units. Other major specific plans in the western county include the Placer Ranch Specific Plan, the Regional University Specific Plan, Bickford Ranch Specific Plan. Placer Ranch would produce 5,827 housing units. The Regional University Specific Plan would include mostly higher density single-family and multifamily housing, with up to 4,387 housing units, plus an additional 1,155 housing units reserved for student, faculty, and retirement housing. The Bickford Ranch project would provide 1,890 single-family housing units at fairly low densities.

The two specific plans located in the eastern county include the Martis Valley West Parcel and the Village at Squaw Valley Specific Plan. The former plan would include 760 large-lot luxury single-family homes that are primarily intended for the second home market. The Village at Squaw Valley would include 900 beds, which would be contained within multi-room condominium units. While there are no specific plans currently adopted in the central county, the Placer County Government Center Master Plan is currently under development on approximately 200 acres of County-owned land in the North Auburn area. While the majority of the planned campus will house various local government functions, planning is under way to possibly include additional affordable and market-

[1] Includes the plans in unincorporated portions of Placer County, as listed in Table 3.11-1, plus two specific plans in the cities of Roseville and Lincoln: Brookfield Residential-Amoruso Specific Plan and the Lincoln Village 5 Specific Plan.

rate housing, which represent important affordable housing opportunity sites within the unincorporated county (Placer County 2019a).

Table 3.11-1 summarizes the various community plans, specific plans, and area plans in unincorporated Placer County. The project includes targeted amendments to the Placer County General Plan, Zoning Ordinance, maps, and Community Design Manual, which would apply to the listed plans. In addition, the project includes targeted growth areas as indicated in Figure 2-3 in Chapter 2, Project Description. Table 3.11-1 also notes if the growth areas are located within a county plan.

Table 3.11-1. Community, Specific, and Area Plans in the County

Document	Date	General Planning Area	Growth Area Within Plan Area?
Alpine Meadows General Plan	Adopted: 1968	Bear Creek Valley on the west side of the Truckee River, approximately 5 miles from Tahoe City and 12 miles from Truckee.	No
Auburn/Bowman Community Plan	Adopted: 1994 Updated: 1999	Approximately 40 square miles, and the boundaries are the American River to the east, the Bear River to the north, the Ophir plan area to the west, and the Newcastle/ Shirland Tract area to the south.	Yes; parcels in Auburn
Bickford Ranch Specific Plan	Adopted: 2004 Updated: 2015	Approximately 1,927.9-acre Bickford Ranch property in southern Placer County generally bound by Sierra College Boulevard, between SR 193, English Colony Way, and Union Pacific Railroad.	No
Colfax General Plan	Adopted: 1990	City of Colfax and surrounding unincorporated area.	No
Dry Creek/West Placer Community Plan	Adopted: 1990	Approximately 9,200 acres in the southwest corner of Placer County bounded by Baseline Road on the north, Sutter County to the west, Sacramento County to the south, and the City of Roseville to the east.	No
Foresthill Divide Community Plan	Adopted: 2008	Approximately 109 square miles located in the foothills of the western slope of the Sierra Nevada Mountains in central Placer County.	No
Granite Bay Community Plan	Adopted: 2012 Updated: 2017	Approximately 26 square miles generally bound by Dick Cook Road to the north, Sierra College Boulevard on the west, Folsom Lake to the east, and the Sacramento County line to the south.	No
Horseshoe Bar/Penryn Community Plan	Adopted: 1994	Approximately 25 square miles south of the unincorporated area of Newcastle and the city of Auburn, north of Granite Bay, west of Folsom	Yes; parcels in Penryn

Document	Date	General Planning Area	Growth Area Within Plan Area?
	Updated: 2005	Lake, and east of Loomis, Rocklin, and Roseville.	
Martis Valley Community Plan	Adopted: 2003	Martis Valley consists of an area of land that is approximately 70 square miles near the Town of Truckee in the central Sierra Nevada Mountains. The Martis Valley is in both Nevada and Placer Counties, encompassing approximately 44,800 total acres. Within Placer County, however, Martis Valley consists of approximately 25,570 acres, or roughly 57% of the total acreage of the valley.	Yes; parcels in Northstar
Meadow Vista Community Plan	Adopted: 1996	Approximately 7,000 acres located in the Placer County foothills approximately 7 miles northeast of the City of Auburn.	No
Newcastle/Ophir Area General Plan (NO)	Adopted: 1983	Approximately 9 square miles in the foothills immediately west of the city of Auburn.	No
Placer Ranch Specific Plan	Adopted: 2019	Approximately 2,213 acres within southern portion of the Sunset Area Plan (see below).	No
Placer Vineyards Specific Plan	Adopted: 2007 Last Updated: 2016	Approximately 5,230 acres of land located in the southwest corner of Placer County, bounded to the north by Baseline Road, to the south by the Sacramento County line, to the west by the Sutter County line and Pleasant Grove Road, and to the east by Dry Creek and Walerga Road.	No
Regional University Specific Plan	Adopted: 2008 Updated: 2019	Approximately 1,159 acres in the unincorporated portion of southwest Placer County. The site is located south of Pleasant Grove Creek between Brewer Road and the western boundary of the City of Roseville.	No
Sheridan Community Plan	Adopted: 2015	Approximately 21.5 square miles, generally bounded by Yuba County to the north, Sutter County on the west, Karchner Road on the east, and Waltz and Nader Roads on the south	No
Squaw Valley Area General Plan	Adopted: 1983	Approximately 4,700 acres within Squaw Valley.	Yes; parcels in Squaw Valley
Tahoe Basin Area Plan	Adopted: 2017	Approximately 50,000 acres of land in the Tahoe Basin, including the communities of Kings Beach/Stateline, Tahoe City, Carnelian Bay, Dollar	No

Document	Date	General Planning Area	Growth Area Within Plan Area?
		Point, Sunnyside, Homewood, Tahoe Vista, and Tahoma.	
Village at Squaw Valley Specific Plan	Adopted: 2016	Main Village is an approximately 85-acre site located at the west end of Olympic Valley. The area is generally bounded by Squaw Valley Road on the north, ski lifts and related ski operations on the south, lodging, single-family homes, and undisturbed areas to the west, and the meadow and golf course to the east	No
Weimar/Applegate/ Clipper Gap General Plan	Adopted: 1980	Approximately 32 square miles generally bounded by Weimar Cross Roads to the north, Placer Hills Road and Interstate 80 on the west, and the North Fork of the American River on the east and south.	No

Placer County Design Guidelines

Placer County has adopted design guidelines, and procedures are established under the County Zoning Ordinance for the performance of design review (Section 17.54.100 of the Placer County Code). The design guidelines are applicable to all commercial, industrial, and multifamily development located in the -Dc (Design Scenic Corridor), -Ds (Design Sierra), and -Dh (Design Historic) zoning districts. These zoning districts include special regulations to protect and enhance the aesthetic character of lands and buildings within public views and buildings and areas that have unique aesthetic characteristics. The County's design guidelines are applicable to all commercial, industrial, and multifamily development and identify principles related to the height, bulk, color, and scale of buildings. Other subjects covered include architectural design, site planning, parking and circulation, and signs. Specific site planning and design criteria are included for commercial, industrial, and multifamily development (Placer County 2003).

The County has prepared new design guidelines, which are not yet adopted. The *Design Manual: Development Standards and Design Guidelines for Multi-Family and Mixed-Use Development* (Design Manual) (Placer County 2019b) provides guidelines for achieving high-quality design for relevant housing types in unincorporated Placer County. The Design Manual is part of the proposed project and its implementation is discussed further below. The policies in the Design Manual would help guide the design of the new units that could result as part of the General Plan and zoning changes proposed under the project. Conformance with the Placer County Code is required for any project approval; the Design Manual provides additional direction regarding building design and site planning. The Design Manual aims to be prescriptive enough to create a framework for designing individual buildings and to carry out the vision in the County's General Plan and applicable Specific Plans and Master Plans, but flexible enough to allow for creativity and innovation in design of individual projects. The Design Manual is intended as a regulatory tool rather than a set of policies, meaning development applications must be consistent with the Design Manual in order to be approved. The Design Manual does not modify or supersede other County documents, such as the Historic Design Guidelines, Landscape Design Guidelines, Rural Design Guidelines, Water Efficient

Landscaping Requirements, the West and East Placer Storm Water Quality Design Manuals, and requirements for Low Impact Development.

Placer County Sustainability Plan

The *Placer County Sustainability Plan: A Greenhouse Gas Emission Reduction Plan and Adaptation Strategy* (PCSP) (Placer County 2020a) demonstrates Placer County's commitment to reduce GHG emissions and enhance community resiliency to long-term changes associated with climate-related hazards such as droughts and wildfires. The PCSP is a comprehensive road map that outlines various programs and policies that will be undertaken by the community and the County to achieve the most significant GHG emission reductions in the unincorporated county. In addition to reducing GHG emissions, implementation of the PCSP will help achieve multiple community-wide goals, such as lowering energy costs, reducing air and water pollution, supporting local economic development, and improving public health and quality of life within Placer County. The PCSP allows decision makers and the community to understand the sources and magnitude of local emission sources, establish goals to reduce emissions, and prioritize steps to achieve targets.

Placer County Conservation Program

The goal of the Placer County Conservation Program (PCCP) (Placer County 2020b) is to provide an effective framework to protect, enhance, and restore the natural resources in specific areas of western Placer County, while streamlining environmental permitting for covered activities. Within this framework, the PCCP will achieve conservation goals for certain special status species and natural communities, comply with state and federal environmental regulations, accommodate anticipated urban and rural growth, and permit the construction and maintenance of needed infrastructure. The PCCP plan area is western Placer County and specific conservation activity areas in neighboring Sutter County.

Environmental Setting

Regional Setting

Placer County encompasses approximately 1,500 square miles in northeastern California. As of May 2020, Placer County comprised of the following: incorporated cities (7.3 percent of the total county area), unincorporated county (47.2 percent), federal land (44.2 percent), state land (1.2 percent), and Tribal land (0.13 percent) (Placer County 2020c). Placer County contains suburban, rural, agricultural, and forest landscapes, stretching from the Sacramento suburb of Roseville in the west to the Nevada border in the east. Interstate (I-) 80 bisects the county, connecting South Placer County and the foothills with the Sierra/Tahoe area.

The western part of Placer County, which is part of the Sacramento Valley, contains the cities of Roseville, Rocklin, Lincoln, and Loomis, as well as the unincorporated communities of Sheridan and Granite Bay. The central part of Placer County consists of the foothill region, which includes the cities of Auburn and Colfax, and the unincorporated communities of Foresthill, Penryn, Newcastle, Applegate, Weimar, Gold Run, Meadow Vista, Dutch Flat, Alta, and Baxter. The eastern part of Placer County is the High Sierra region, which includes the resort communities and ski areas around Lake Tahoe. The unincorporated communities in this area include Tahoe City, Tahoe Vista, Carnelian Bay, Homewood, Kings Beach, Tahoma, Emigrant Gap, Soda Springs, and Squaw Valley.

Almost 98 percent of the vacant residential land throughout the county (by acreage) is zoned for single-family development, including more than 6,900 sites and nearly 72,000 acres of land. The majority of this land is located in the F and RF zoning districts. These districts allow only one primary residential unit per parcel and feature relatively large average parcel sizes; thus, the potential per-acre residential yields in these districts are relatively low. The largest potential residential yield, by number of units, is generated in the RS district, followed by the F and RA zoning districts (Placer County 2019a).

Only around 1 percent of the total land zoned for residential development in unincorporated Placer County is designated for multifamily development. This includes dedicated residential zoning districts, like the RM district, as well as nonresidential districts that allow multifamily development, such as the C1 and C2 districts, among others. There are 97 sites covering 110 acres in the residential-only RM district, which could yield between 798 and 2,393 residential units. Multifamily housing development on mixed-use and commercially zoned sites could produce up to 1,627 additional multifamily housing units, if these sites are built out exclusively with residential uses. To the extent that these sites build out with commercial uses, the multifamily buildout capacity would be significantly reduced. There are also 137 remaining sites that were identified in the Placer County Housing Element as prime opportunities for multifamily residential development, but which have not yet been developed. Based on the buildout estimates reported in the Housing Element, these sites have a capacity of up to 9,326 units. In addition to the single-family and multifamily land discussed in this section, there are two areas in the eastern county that are not well covered in the vacant sites inventory. While the parcel database identifies vacant sites within the Olympic Valley and Lake Tahoe Basin, the nature of the land use regulations in those areas precludes the rapid identification of site development capacity. However, based on information provided by Placer County staff, there is capacity for development of an additional 553 residential units under the Squaw Valley Area General Plan (Placer County 2019a).

For descriptive purposes in this section, the county is divided into three regions: South Placer County, the foothill region, and the High Sierra region. A description of each region and the existing conditions at the parcels that could be developed with new housing units under the project is provided in the following subsections. Table 3.11-2 summarizes the existing uses, land use designations, and zoning of the proposed housing parcels.

Table 3.11-2. Existing Uses, Land Use Designations, and Zoning of Proposed Housing Parcels

Jurisdiction	Existing Uses	Land Use Designations	Zoning
South Placer County			
Roseville	Vacant; single-family residential half-plex; single-family residential duplex; single-family residential condo; residential auxiliary improvements	Medium Density Residential	RS-AG
Foothill Region			
Loomis	Vacant; single-family residential half-plex	Low Density Residential; Medium Density Residential	RS-AG-B-40; RS-B-20
Penryn	Single-family residential half-plex	Medium Density Residential	RS

Jurisdiction	Existing Uses	Land Use Designations	Zoning
Newcastle	Single-family residential half-plex; vacant commercial	Low Density Residential	RS; RS-B-43
North Auburn	Mobile home outside of park; vacant subdivided residential; single-family residential condo; single-family residential duplex; single-family residential half- and tri-plex; residential auxiliary improvements	Low Medium Density Residential; Low Density Residential; Medium Density Residential;	RS; RS-AG-AO; RS-B-10; RS-B-8; RS-AG-B-40; RS-AO; RS-AG-B-40-AO; RS-AG-B-43-AO; RS-B-10-AO; RS-AG-B-100-AO; RS-AG-B-20-AO; RS-B-20-AO; RS-AG-B-10-AO
High Sierra Region			
Sugarbowl	Vacant; vacant, subdivided residential; single-family residential, half-plex	Medium Density Residential	RS-B-20
Northstar	Vacant; single-family residential, half-plex	Low Density Residential	RS; RS-B-43-AO
Squaw Valley	Vacant; single-family residential, half-plex	Low Density Residential – Density Factor 10	RS
State Route 89	Vacant; vacant, subdivided residential; single-family residential duplex; single family residential, half-plex	Low Density Residential	RS-B-40

Source: Placer County 2020

South Placer County

The western part of Placer County, which is part of the Sacramento Valley, contains a mix of land uses. This part of the county, called South Placer, contains the cities of Roseville, Rocklin, Lincoln, and Loomis, as well as the unincorporated communities of Sheridan and Granite Bay. South Placer County also supports the bulk of the county's agricultural activities, along with suburban neighborhoods, commercial and industrial development, and manufacturing facilities. South Placer County includes open land containing grazing, field crops, and other agricultural uses. The dominant form of developed land is large suburban subdivisions primarily resulting from annexation of developed and undeveloped agricultural land adjacent to the cities of Roseville, Rocklin, and Lincoln. Some unincorporated development exists at an urban scale in the Dry Creek/West Placer area west of Roseville.

All existing parcels proposed for new housing under the project are located in southern Roseville and are either vacant or developed with single-family residential half-plexes, single-family residential duplexes, single-family residential condo, or residential auxiliary improvements. The parcels are all currently zoned RS with a combining district -AG and a land use designation of MDR.

Foothill Region

The central portion of Placer County consists of the foothill region, which includes the cities of Auburn/Bowman and Colfax, and the unincorporated communities of Foresthill, Penryn, Newcastle, Applegate, Weimar, Gold Run, Meadow Vista, Dutch Flat, Alta, and Baxter. The foothill region is a

transitional area from the urbanized uses in South Placer County to the more rural and wild landscapes of the High Sierra region. The dominant land use in the Foothill Region is very low density rural residential (typically one dwelling per 5 to 20 acres) or agriculture (primarily in the form of pasture land). Most of the I-80 corridor and the adjoining portion of the north foothills area is well established and already subdivided into 20-acre or smaller parcels.

The parcels that would be developed under the project in the foothill region include various zoning and land use designations. In Loomis, the parcels are currently either vacant or developed with single-family residential half-plexes with land use designations of LDR and MDR. Zoning includes RS with combining districts of -AG and -B. In Penryn, the proposed parcels for housing development include single-family residential half-plexes with MDR land use designation and RS zoning. The proposed housing in Newcastle would be developed on parcels that are currently developed with single-family residential half-plexes or vacant commercial with land use designations of LDR and RS zoning with combining district of -B. Parcels in North Auburn include existing land uses such as mobile homes outside of a park; vacant subdivided residential; single-family residential condo; single-family residential duplex; single-family residential half- and tri-plex; and residential auxiliary improvements. Land use designations include LDR and MDR and RS zoning with combining districts of -AG, -AO, and -B.

High Sierra Region

The eastern part of Placer County is the High Sierra/Lake Tahoe region. The High Sierra region includes resort communities and ski areas around Lake Tahoe. This area is an internationally known resort area with visitors coming to hike, fish, golf, ski, and enjoy the outdoors. Tourism and recreation are the dominant land uses in the region. This region's population is concentrated in towns and small communities, which include urban centers, residential neighborhoods, small commercial nodes that serve the residential neighborhoods, recreation areas, and undeveloped stretches of wild and rural landscapes. Urban areas are dominated by commercial uses, public service activities, and residential uses. Rural transition areas are a combination of human-made development and natural landscape features. In the High Sierra Region, rural transitional areas include most areas along State Route (SR) 28 and SR 89, including Tahoe Vista, Carnelian Bay, Sunnyside, Homewood, and other remote residential areas. Rural areas are dominated by natural elements and processes, including most of the backcountry areas and higher elevation areas outside of residential neighborhoods.

New or expanded housing developments under the project would occur in Sugarbowl, Northstar, Squaw Valley, and along the SR 89 corridor. In Sugarbowl the parcels have a land use designation of MDR and RS zoning with a combining district of -B. The properties are currently either vacant or include single-family residential with half-plexes. The land use designation for the parcels in Northstar, Squaw Valley, and the SR 89 corridor is LDR and RS zoning with combining districts of -B and -AO. The existing parcels are either vacant or include single-family residential duplexes or half-plexes.

3.11.2 Environmental Impacts

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requires that an EIR consider whether a proposed project may conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation that was adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental impact. This environmental determination differs from the larger policy determination of whether a proposed project is consistent with a

jurisdiction's general plan. The former determination (intended for consideration in a CEQA document) is based on, and limited to, a review and analysis of environmental effects. The latter determination, by comparison, is made by the decision-making body of the jurisdiction and based on the jurisdiction's broad discretion to assess whether a proposed project would conform to the policies and objectives of its general plan/specific plan as a whole. In addition, the broader general plan consistency determination takes into account all evidence in the record concerning the project characteristics, its desirability, as well as its economic, social, and other non-environmental effects.

Conflicts of a project with land use policies do not, in and of themselves, constitute significant environmental impacts. Policy conflicts are considered environmental impacts only when they result in direct environmental effects. Decision makers would need to consider the consistency of the proposed development with applicable plans and policies that do not directly relate to physical environmental issues when determining whether to approve or deny the project.

Methods for Analysis

Assessment of consistency and compatibility of the project with surrounding development is based on aerial imagery, data from Placer County, and land use analysis. The below environmental analysis focuses on the two main components of the project: (1) amendments to the Land Use Element in the County's General Plan, Zoning Ordinance, and Community Design Manual, and (2) the potential locations for the new dwelling units that could be constructed as a result of changes to the zoning ordinance (a total of 194 units distributed throughout the county).

Thresholds of Significance

In accordance with Appendix G of the State CEQA Guidelines, the proposed project would be considered to have a significant effect if it would result in any of the conditions listed below.

- Physical division of an established community.
- Conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect.

Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Impact LU-1: Physical division of an established community (less than significant)

To physically divide an established community, a project must introduce or expand an element that creates a hindrance to safe and efficient movement throughout the community. An example of a type of project that could physically divide an established community is a new highway or railroad that passes through a community. These types of projects may hinder safe pedestrian and bicycle crossings and create a real or perceived disconnection in the community. Aerial imagery was analyzed to determine if buildout of the project would divide an existing community, which could include restricting access within a community or isolating existing communities (e.g., by removing roads used to access existing communities). The analysis focuses on structures and development, consistent with proposed land uses that would be present after buildout of the project.

The project would include updates to the General Plan, Zoning Ordinance, and Community Design Manual, which increases the housing development potential in the county. Although the amendments would allow for increased housing density, they are generally consistent with existing uses. Construction activities associated with an increase in residential development and related

infrastructure would be distributed and temporary in any one location and, therefore, would not divide or isolate an established community. The development that could occur as a result of project implementation would be located on sites either developed, underutilized, or in close proximity to existing development. With implementation of the project, new land use designations and zoning, such as mixed use and multifamily, would be permitted throughout the county.

Design standards for the new development, as outlined in the Design Manual, would ensure connections that allow pedestrians, bicyclists, and automobiles to move easily around the community. These improvements would improve mobility and connectivity. In addition, the Design Manual would guide development using the physical form of the land as the main organizing principle, rather than separating land by different uses. This would allow for greater predictability in building development and would not physically divide any existing communities.

Furthermore, future development that could occur with project implementation would be required to be consistent with the General Plan policies and Zoning Ordinance that promote cohesive and compatible neighborhoods and that prevent new development from dividing existing uses where different land uses abut one another. Policy 1.B.7 of the County General Plan requires residential subdivisions to be designed to provide well-connected internal and external street and pedestrian systems with clear, unobstructed pedestrian paths of travel. In addition, Policy 1.B.8 discourages the development of isolated, remote, and/or walled residential projects that do not contribute to the sense of community desired for the area. Compliance with these General Plan policies would ensure that future development would not divide an existing community. Compliance with the regulations in the County's Zoning Ordinance would also ensure the organized development of new housing projects. Therefore, adoption of the project would result in a ***less than significant impact*** with respect to the physical division of an established community.

Impact LU-2: Conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect (less than significant)

This impact analysis discusses future development consistency with land use plans, policies, or regulations that have been adopted to avoid or mitigate an environmental effect. If the plans or policies would not serve to avoid or mitigate an environmental effect, they are not considered in this analysis. Consistency with applicable land use plans, policies, and regulations that concentrate on specific environmental topics (e.g., noise, GHG emissions) are discussed in the relevant topical chapters of this Draft EIR.

Placer County General Plan and Zoning Ordinance

The General Plan and Zoning Ordinance are the primary planning documents for the County. The proposed updates are intended to ensure consistency between the General Plan and the Zoning Ordinance. The General Plan is the overarching planning document for the County and the project involves amending the General Plan and Zoning Ordinance to increase consistency. Under the project, amendments to the General Plan would: allow residential unit density to be measured using floor area when part of a mixed-use project; reduce minimum parcel sizes for cluster housing projects; and add multifamily residential and mixed-use commercial development as a permissible land use within specific zone districts. The purpose of these amendments is to allow more flexibility for residential development on infill sites. The amendments to the Land Use Element in the General Plan are summarized in Table 2-3 (Chapter 2, *Project Description*).

Goals and Policies

The goals and policies of the General Plan are established to guide daily decision making for the development and conservation in the county. The General Plan's policies have been prepared to reduce and/or avoid impacts on the environment as a result of future development to the extent feasible. The proposed amendments are intended to focus on addressing the county's lack of available housing and provide a framework for future housing development. The proposed amendments would update and streamline the County's design standards and guidelines for multifamily and mixed-use development. Table 3.11-3 summarizes the proposed amendments under the project and a list of the applicable General Plan goals, policies, and programs.

Table 3.11-3. Proposed Amendments and General Plan Consistency

New Amendments	Consistency with General Plan
General Plan Amendments	
GP-1. Allow residential densities when part of a mixed-use project or within a mixed-use zone to be measured using FAR in GC and HDR Land Use Designations by amending General Plan Table 1-2 to: • Increase HDR Land Use Designation FAR to 2.0 to be consistent with GC Land Use Designation FAR • Add note to table to acknowledge the allowance of smaller lot size than shown in table when project is consistent with mixed-use projects and cluster housing project standards and allow up to 30 units per acre.	Goal A; Policies 1.A.2, 1.A.3, 1.A.4, 1.B.1, 1.B.2, 1.B.5, 1.B.6, 1.D.5, 1.D.7, 1.M.2, 1.N.5, A-1, A-2, A-3, A-4, A-5; Program A-4, B-14
GP-2. Amend General Plan Table 1-3 (General Plan Land Use Designations and Consistent Zoning Districts) to: • Allow General Commercial (C-2), Commercial Planned Development (CPD) or Mixed-Use (MU) zone districts within the HDR Land Use Designation • Allow Residential Multifamily (RM) zoning in the GC Land Use Designation • Add note to table to acknowledge the allowance of smaller lot size than shown in table when project is consistent with cluster housing project standards.	
Zoning Map Amendments	
ZM-1. Create a new mixed-use zone district. ZM-2. Revise -B, -UP and -DL combining zone district on all Commercial and Multifamily zones where adequate infrastructure and public services are available and replace with -Dc, Ds and Dh.	Policies 1.A.2, 1.A.3, 1.A.4, 1.D.5; Program A-4, B-12
Zoning Text Amendments	
MU-1. Create a mixed-use zone district. MU-2. Establish Standards and Guidelines for Multi-family and Mixed Use Development for mixed-use and multifamily development MU-3. Create a mixed-use development land use.	Goals 3.A, 3.D; Policies 1.A.1, 1.A.2, 1.A.3, 1.A.4, 1.B.1, 1.B.2, 1.D.5, 1.D.6, 1.M.1, 1.N.5, A-1, A-2, A-3, A-4, A-5, A-7, 3.A.9, 3.A.10; Programs 1.2, A-4, B-3, B-4, B-12, B-14
RD-1. Revise Density allowed in Mobile Home Parks to allow for 12 units per acre with improved design standards	Policies 1.A.2, 1.A.3, 1.A.4, 1.D.5, 1.D.6, A-4; Program A-4, B-12
WF-1. Where currently permissible, allow with zoning clearance the construction of mobile homes, recreational homes or tiny houses when they	

New Amendments	Consistency with General Plan
are for caretaker or employee housing, with the exception of FOR and timberland production zones. WF-2. Define Tiny Houses on Wheels and allow for use as a single-family and secondary dwelling	Goals 1.B, 1.M; Policies 1.A.2, 1.A.3, 1.A.4, 1.M.1, A-1, B-11; Program C-2
DS-1. Include flexible parking standards DS-2. Include flexible building heights DS-3. Reduce or remove lot coverage standards in commercial and higher density residential zones including when part of a mixed-use project or areas where adequate infrastructure and public services are available DS-4. Update development standards for Multifamily Residential Zone District DS-5. Exclude secondary dwellings (e.g., accessory dwelling units) from maximum floor area requirements for residential accessory structures	Goals 3.C, 1.K, 1.O; Policies 1.A.3, 1.A.4, 1.B.1, 1.B.2, 1.B.5, 1.B.6, 1.B.7, 1.B.8, 1.B.9, 1.D.2, 1.D.3, 1.D.5, 1.D.9, 1.K.1, 1.K.2, 1.K.3, 1.K.4, 1.K.5, 1.K.6, 1.N.5, 1.M.1, 1.O.1, 1.O.2, 1.O.3, 1.O.4, 1.O.9, 1.O.10, A-6; Programs 1.3, B-3, 3.13
BR-1. Increase by-right development and administrative level review subject to zoning compliance through: • Design Review • Development and Design Standards for Mixed Use and Multifamily • Add Infill Definition	Policies 1.A.3, 1.A.4, 1.D.5, B-11; Programs A-4, A-5, B-10, B-12
DB-1. Bring Density Bonus Ordinance into compliance with new State Density Bonus law; include adoption of procedures and timelines for review DB-2. Further expand Density Bonus provisions beyond state requirements to all for up to 100% Density Bonus for mixed-use projects and residential zoned areas where adequate infrastructure and public services are available DB-3. Establish dwelling unit equivalence standards DB-4. Establish density bonus code to allow duplexes, triplexes and fourplexes on Single-Family (RS) and Residential Multifamily (RM) residential zones where adequate infrastructure and public services are available	Goals A-3, A-5; Policies 1.A.1, 1.A.3, 1.A.4, 1.B.1, 1.B.2, 1.B.3, 1.B.5, 1.B.6, 1.M.1, A-5, F-7; 7.A.8; Programs 1.2, A-1, A-4, A-9, B-1, B-3, B-4, B-12; Table 5-1
CH-1. Allow for different types of cluster housing, including tiny house communities; agriculture-, conservation-, and open space-oriented communities; cottage housing; and cohousing CH-2. Revise Combining Zone Planned Development (-PD) and related ordinance and process to streamline the review and approval process	Goal 6.E; Policies 1.A.3, 1.A.4, 1.B.1, 1.B.3, A-8
DG-1. Prepare a standalone Community Design Manual for Mixed Use and Multi-family Development that updates adopted Community Design Guidelines for these development types, and develop a clear design review process for mixed-use and multifamily projects DG-2. Develop a clear process and forms for CEQA streamlining including the development of a design review checklist.	Goals 1.K, 1.O; Policies 1.A.3, 1.A.4, 1.B.3, 1.B.4, 1.B.5, 1.B.7, 1.B.9, 1.K.1, 1.K.2, 1.K.3, 1.K.4, 1.K.5, 1.K.6, 1.O.1, 1.O.2, 1.O.3, 1.O.4, 1.O.9, A-6; Programs B-10, 3.13

FAR = Floor Area Ratio
GC = General Commercial
HDR = Higher Density Residential

The project would be generally consistent with the goals and policies contained in the County General Plan, as listed in Table 3.11-3. The ultimate determinations of General Plan consistency would be made by the County Board of Supervisors and the County Planning Commission. The ultimate finding of general plan consistency does not require that a project be entirely consistent with each individual general plan policy. A proposed project can be generally consistent with a

general plan, even if it does not promote every applicable goal and policy. The project, assuming approval of the proposed amendments to the General Plan, Zoning Map, and Zoning Ordinance, would be generally consistent with applicable goals, policies, and programs, resulting in a ***less than significant impact***.

Land Use Designations

Table 1-2 ("Development Standards by Land Use Designation") and Table 1-3 ("General Plan Land Use Designations and Consistent Zoning Districts") of the General Plan would be revised to allow for new standards for HDR and GC land use designations. Changes include: increasing HDR Floor Area Ratio to 2.0 to be consistent with GC Floor Area Ratio; allowing C-2, CPD, or MU zone districts within the HDR land use designation; and allowing RM zoning in the GC land use designation. These changes are summarized Table 3.11-3.

The existing housing development parcels include land use designations of LDR and MDR. These parcels are generally surrounded by properties with similar residential land uses. Although the revised land use designations would allow for an increase in development intensity, the future development would focus on residential uses. In addition, the project would adhere to goals and policies in the County's General Plan. Policy 1.B.3 of the General Plan encourages the planning and design of new residential subdivisions to emulate the best characteristics (e.g., form, scale, and general character) of existing, nearby neighborhoods. In addition, Policy 1.B.5 require residential project design to reflect and consider natural features, noise exposure of residents, visibility of structures, circulation, access, and the relationship of the project to surrounding uses. Compliance with these policies would ensure that, while residential development would increase compared to existing conditions under the project, the new land use designations would be compatible with the surrounding uses. Therefore, proposed land uses would be consistent with the existing surrounding environment and land use designations, resulting in a ***less than significant impact***.

Placer County Zoning Ordinance and Zoning Map

Under the project, the Zoning Ordinance would be amended to allow for more variation of development within the existing zone districts. Overall, the amendments to the Zoning Ordinance would result in the addition of a new zone district (MU), including new standards and guidelines; an increase in the allowable density of mobile home parks; the additional allowance of construction workforce housing; updates to the development standards, including standards for parking, building heights, and lot coverage standards; updates to the review for by-right development; updates to the Density Bonus Ordinance; updates to the Planned Development Ordinance; and allow for cluster housing.

Zoning Map amendments would include the removal of limiting combining zone district overlays multi-family and commercially zoned parcels where adequate public services are available and replace with the Design Review combining district. The purpose of this amendment is to streamline approval and provide greater predictability for desired commercial, multifamily and mixed-use projects that conform to adopted development standards and design guidelines. The Zoning Map amendments would revise -B, -UP and -DL combining zone districts on all Commercial and RM zones where adequate infrastructure and public services are available and replace with -Dc, -Ds and -Dh combining districts. These combining districts would provide special regulations to protect and enhance the aesthetic character of lands, buildings, and historic buildings within a public view and in areas that have unique aesthetic characteristics.

Revisions to the Zoning Ordinance and Zoning Map would allow for increases in housing development. However, upon adoptions of these amendments, the project would be consistent with the Zoning Ordinance and Zoning Map. In addition, rezoning would occur on parcels that are either developed, underutilized, and/or in close proximity to existing similar development. Therefore, assuming approval of the proposed Zoning Ordinance and Zoning Map amendments, the project would be consistent with the Zoning Ordinance, resulting in a ***less than significant impact***.

Placer County Specific, Community, and Area Plans

A number of the unincorporated communities within the county are covered by adopted community plans, in addition to the County General Plan. Community and specific plans are required to be consistent with the Placer County General Plan and are intended to provide more detail for a particular geographic area of Placer County. The project includes targeted amendments to the Placer County General Plan, Zoning Ordinance, maps, and Community Design Manual, which could be applicable to the various plans throughout the county. In addition, the project includes specific housing development sites. As shown in Table 3.11-1, some housing development sites are included in the following plans: Auburn/Bowman Community Plan, Horseshoe Bar/Penryn Community Plan, Martis Valley Community Plan, and the Squaw Valley Area General Plan.

If conflicts occur between the County General Plan/Zoning Code and a specific plan, then the provisions of the specific plan apply. None of these specific plans are proposed for amendment as part of the project. In general, the project would help implement the various goals included in the community plans, particularly those related to encouraging density and housing in appropriate areas. Therefore, the project would not result in conflicts with existing county specific, community, and area plans, resulting in a ***less than significant impact***.

Placer County Design Guidelines

Placer County has adopted design guidelines, and procedures are established under the County Zoning Ordinance. The County has prepared the Design Manual (Placer County 2019b) to provide guidelines for achieving high-quality design for relevant housing types in unincorporated Placer County. The manual implements various General Plan policies that address the county's lack of available housing and supports the County's efforts to have higher-density, mixed-use, transit-oriented, and infill development at locations identified in the General Plan, specific special plans, and zoning. The Design Manual is also intended to streamline the project approval process for multifamily and mixed-use projects, making it easier to obtain approvals for projects that include an affordable housing component as well as market-rate housing. The policies in the Design Manual would help implement the new units that could result as part of the General Plan and zoning changes proposed under the project.

As part of the process to update the Design Manual, the County would ensure that they are consistent with both current and proposed policy, regulations, and planning practices. Design guidelines are also useful in reducing delays and providing greater certainty for the development review process. Design guidelines that are reflective of the community's valued character can help to manage the public's expectations for projects that are subject to a public review process. Design guidelines can also reduce subjectivity in the review of a project's design by administrators and decision makers. Therefore, since the Design Guidelines would be updated to reflect the proposed amendments to the General Plan, Zoning Map, and Zoning Ordinance, the project would be consistent with the Design Guidelines and result in a ***less than significant impact***.

Placer County Sustainability Plan

The PCSP will help achieve multiple community-wide goals, such as lowering energy costs, reducing air and water pollution, supporting local economic development, and improving public health and quality of life within Placer County. The PCSP allows decision makers and the community to understand the sources and magnitude of local emission sources, establish goals to reduce emissions, and prioritize steps to achieve targets.

The project as proposed addresses part of the County's larger efforts to address several countywide objectives regarding GHG reductions. The PCSP identifies specific strategies that will assist with these objectives while reducing GHG emissions (Placer County 2020a). One of the primary objectives of the Placer County Housing Strategy and Development Plan (a component of the project) is to reduce vehicle miles traveled per capita by shortening commute distances for those who commute within Placer County for education or work, or other metric for vehicle miles traveled as determined appropriate by the County under SB 743 legislation.

The proposed zoning amendments to include mixed uses and employee housing could reduce the amount of travel and commutes within or outside of the county, with workers living closer to home. This compact development model proposed under the project focuses future residential development near services and jobs, which provides multiple social and economic benefits such as increased local workforce capacity with reduced need for commuting and vibrant mixed-use hubs/nodes, infrastructure efficiency and natural resource protection, and affordable housing by design. This would promote the PCSP goal of reducing air pollution, supporting local economic development, and improving the overall quality of life within the county. Therefore, the project would help to promote the goals of the PCSP and would result in a ***less than significant impact***.

Please refer to Section 3.8 for a further discussion of the County's PCSP.

Sacramento Area Council of Governments Policy Documents

SACOG is engaged in projects and programs related to regional transportation planning, affordable housing, economic forecasting, and land use planning. Consistency with the transportation planning–related documents are discussed in Section 3.16, *Transportation*.

Placer County prepared the Existing Conditions and Land Supply Assessment to support the larger Placer County Housing Strategy and Development Plan (Placer County 2019a). This assessment supports the SACOG RHNA by outlining a housing demand and supply assessment to document anticipated future demand for housing in unincorporated Placer County. The assessment identifies that unincorporated areas of Placer County may experience demand through 2040 of between 10,358 and 23,857 new housing units. This includes between 7,251 and 16,700 units in the western county, 2,072 to 7,771 units in the Auburn area, and 1,036 and 2,386 units in the eastern county. The project represents a component of a larger effort to implement elements of the Placer County Housing Strategy and Development Plan.

The proposed General Plan amendments would allow residential unit density to be measured using floor area when part of a mixed-use project; reduce minimum parcel sizes for cluster housing projects; and add multifamily residential and mixed-use commercial development as a permissible land use within specific zone districts. Zoning text amendments would include updating the County's Density Bonus Ordinance to bring it consistent with state law, and expand the Density Bonus Ordinance to allow for a greater density bonus up to 100 percent when part of a mixed-use infill project, establish dwelling unit equivalence standards, and allow additional density in the single-

family residential zone district and mobile home parks. These proposed General Plan amendments and zoning text amendments would support the RHNA goals of increasing available housing throughout the county. Therefore, the project would be consistent with SACOG policy documents, resulting in ***less than significant impacts***.

Impact LU-3: The project, in combination with other foreseeable development in the SACOG region, would not be inconsistent with applicable land use plans, policies, and regulations (less than significant)

CEQA requires that an EIR consider whether a proposed project may conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation that was adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental impact. This environmental determination differs from the larger policy determination of whether a proposed project is consistent with a jurisdiction's general plan. Regional growth in general is reviewed for consistency with adopted land use plans and policies by the individual cities and counties in the geographic context in accordance with the requirements of CEQA, which require findings of plan and policy consistency prior to approval of entitlements for development. Analysis of project consistency with land use policies or regulations adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental impact is similarly evaluated for each individual project and addressed in the analysis for each specific resource area. For example, if an individual project were to result in the division of an established community, this would be addressed in the land use section of that project's EIR or other environmental document. The environmental evaluation for the project would also include an analysis of the division of an established community on a cumulative basis.

Because consistency with land use plans and policies is inherently a project-specific issue, and each jurisdiction would decide on project consistency at the project-level, there would be no cumulative impact as a result of cumulative development in the SACOG region. Implementation of the project would be generally consistent with the existing and proposed plans, including the adopted General Plan. Therefore, the project's cumulative impact would be a ***less than significant impact***.

3.11.3 References Cited

California Air Resources Board. 2017. *Proposed Update to the SB 375 Greenhouse Gas Emission Reduction Targets*. June 2017. https://ww3.arb.ca.gov/cc/sb375/staff_report_sb375_target_update_june_full_report.pdf. Accessed June 12, 2020.

Placer County. 2003. Placer County Design Guidelines Manual. https://www.placer.ca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/10136/Design-Guidelines-Manual-PDF. Accessed June 1, 2020.

Placer County. 2013. Placer County General Plan. 2013-2021 Housing Element. Part I: Policy Document. https://www.placer.ca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/9439/Housing-Element-Policy-Document-PDF. Accessed April 20, 2020.

Placer County. 2019a. *Placer County Housing Strategy and Development Plan: Recommendations Report*. June 2019. Available: https://www.placer.ca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/37642/Housing-Strategy-and-Development-Plan-PDF?bidId. Accessed June 12, 2020.

Placer County. 2019b. *Design Manual: Development Standards and Design Guidelines for Multi-Family and Mixed-Use Development*. Public Review Draft. September 30, 2019.

Placer County. 2020a. *Placer County Sustainability Plan: Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction Plan and Adaptation Strategy*. Adopted January 28, 2020. https://www.placer.ca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/42940/PCSP-ADOPTION?bidId=. Accessed June 12, 2020.

Placer County. 2020b. *Placer County Conservation Program: Western Placer County Habitat Conservation Plan/Natural Community Conservation Plan*. February 2020. https://www.placer.ca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/44657/Placer-County-Conservation-Program---Volume-I-PDF

Placer County. 2020c. Government Jurisdictions in Placer County. May 17.

Sacramento Area Council of Governments. 2016. *Metropolitan Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy: Building a Sustainable System*. https://www.sacog.org/sites/main/files/file-attachments/mtpscs_complete.pdf?1489089196. Accessed June 12, 2020.

Sacramento Area Council of Governments. 2020a. *About SACOG*. Available: https://www.sacog.org/about-sacog. Accessed: June 10, 2020.

Sacramento Area Council of Governments. 2020b. *Sacramento Region Blueprint*. https://www.sacog.org/sacramento-region-blueprint. Accessed: June 10, 2020.

Sacramento Area Council of Governments. 2020c. *Rural-Urban Connections Strategy*. https://www.sacog.org/rural-urban-connections-strategy. Accessed: June 10, 2020.

3.12 Mineral Resources

This section addresses the potential impacts of Placer County's (County) proposed General Plan amendments, Zoning Ordinance update, and the development of design standards and guidelines for mixed-use development (project) on mineral resources. It describes the existing conditions of the project area and identifies the applicable state plans, policies, and laws and local plans, policies, and regulations.

No comments on the Notice of Preparation were received regarding mineral resources.

3.12.1 Existing Conditions

Regulatory Setting

Federal

There are no federal plans, policies, regulations or laws related to mineral resources applicable to the project.

State

The Surface Mining and Reclamation Act of 1975

The Surface Mining and Reclamation Act of 1975 (SMARA) (California Public Resources Code [PRC] §§ 2710–2796) encourages the production, conservation, and protection of the state's mineral resources. PRC Section 2207 provides annual reporting requirements for all mines in the state, under which the State Mining and Geology Board is also granted authority and obligations. SMARA provides for the use of a system of Mineral Resource Zone (MRZ) classifications that reflect the known or inferred presence and significance of a given mineral resource. The MRZ classifications are based on available geologic information, including geologic mapping and other information on surface exposures, drilling records, and mine data, and on socioeconomic factors such as market conditions and urban development patterns.

Local

Placer County General Plan

The 2013 Placer County General Plan Update provides an overall framework for development of the county and the protection of its natural and cultural resources. The General Plan contains a Land Use Element, which describes goals and policies designed to encourage commercial mining operations within areas designated for such extraction, where environmental, aesthetic, and adjacent land use compatibility impacts can be adequately mitigated. Specifically, it contains the following policies and programs related to mineral resources:

Policies

Policy 1.J.1. The County shall require new mining operations to be designed to provide a buffer between existing or likely adjacent uses, minimize incompatibility with nearby uses, and adequately mitigate their environmental and aesthetic impacts.

Policy 1.J.2. The County shall require that new non-mining land uses adjacent to existing mining operations be designed to provide a buffer between the new development and the mining operations. The buffer distance will be based upon an evaluation of noise, aesthetics, drainage, operating conditions, topography, lighting, traffic, operating hours and air quality.

Policy 1.J.3. The County shall discourage the development of any uses that would be incompatible with adjacent mining operations or would restrict future extraction of significant mineral resources.

Policy 1.J.4. The County shall discourage the development of incompatible land uses in areas that have been identified as having potentially significant mineral resources.

Policy 1.J.5. The County shall require that all mining operations prepare and implement reclamation plans that mitigate environmental impacts and incorporate adequate security to guarantee proposed reclamation.

Policy 1.J.6. The County shall require that plans for mining operations incorporate adequate measures to minimize impacts to local residents and County roadways.

Implementation Program

The County should, in consultation with the California Division of Mines and Geology, evaluate the relative value of potentially-significant mineral deposits identified in the General Plan Background Report and designated as MRZ in relationship to other mineral resources of the same type in the county or region. If these mineral deposits are determined to be easily replaced by other substitute deposits, the County should continue to apply existing policies and plans to allow extraction of these resources. If these deposits are found not to be easily substituted, the County should amend the Countywide General Plan or applicable community plan as necessary to direct incompatible growth away from these sites.

Placer County Zoning Code

The Placer County Zoning Code includes a section intended to create and maintain effective and comprehensive surface mining and reclamation policies and regulation in order to carry out the requirements of SMARA (PRC § 2710 et seq.) and the California Code of Regulations adopted pursuant thereto (14 California Code of Regulations § 3500 et seq.). The section permits the processing of materials mined onsite (e.g., gravel plants) and the retail sales of mined and processed materials from the mine site, subject to the conditions of a conditional use permit.[1]

Environmental Setting

Placer County has been a valuable source of mineral resources dating back to 1850, when gold was discovered in the county. Between 1850 and World War II, the county produced a variety of minerals including gold, silver, copper, lead, zinc, chromite, and small amounts of tungsten and manganese. The county also produced industrial minerals including quarts, limestone, asbestos, clay, and mineral paint. Current mineral extraction activity includes sand and gravel used in aggregate products for construction as well as clay, stone, and gold (Placer County 1994).

Pursuant to SMARA, the California State Mining and Geology Board oversees the MRZ classification system. The MRZs characterize varying degrees of mineral potential within an area. MRZ-1 indicates there is no mineral potential. The MRZ-2 and MRZ-3 categories indicate varying to degrees of known or inferred resources present. MRZ-4 indicates there is not enough information to conclude whether or not mineral resources are present. MRZ-2 and MRZ-3 zones can be found throughout the county (California Department of Conservation 1995). The Placer County General Plan permits the

[1] Placer County Code Section 17.56.270 Surface mining and reclamation.

extraction of minerals in only one of its land use designations: Timberland, regardless of whether areas zoned MRZ-2 and MRZ-3 appear in other land use designations. The Timberland land use designation is only present in the east side of the county (Placer County 2013) and none of the project area on the east side of the country are located within the Timberland designation. The areas potentially affected by the proposed project are within land use designations such as City, Rural Residential, or Urban/Suburban.

3.12.2 Environmental Impacts

This section discusses potential impacts of the proposed project in relation to mineral resources.

Methods for Analysis

This section describes the methods for analyzing the impacts of implementing the proposed project. Criteria from Appendix G of the State California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines were used to determine whether the proposed project would have a significant impact related to mineral resources. Impacts related to mineral resources were assessed based on review of applicable documents including the Placer County General Plan, the General Plan Environmental Impact Report (EIR), and the California Department of Conservation Division of Mines and Geology's Mineral Land Classification of Placer County.

The proposed project is comprised of targeted amendments to the General Plan, Placer County Zoning Ordinance, Zoning Maps, and Community Design Guidelines Manual, which would provide a framework for future housing development within the county. The *Placer County General Plan Update: Countywide General Plan EIR* analyzed the impacts associated with General Plan policies and land use diagram regarding mineral resources and determined that with the implementation of General Plan programs and policies, impacts would be less than significant (Placer County 1994). Therefore, this analysis examines how the proposed project's changes to the General Plan, Placer County Zoning Ordinance, Zoning Maps, and Community Design Guidelines Manual would affect that determination. The specific changes included in the proposed project can be found in Table 2-3 in Chapter 2.

Thresholds of Significance

In accordance with Appendix G of the State CEQA Guidelines, the proposed project would be considered to have a significant effect if it would result in any of the conditions listed below.

- Loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state.
- Loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan, or other land use plan.

Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Impact MIN-1: Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state (no impact)

The proposed project is comprised of targeted amendments, or changes, to the Placer County General Plan, Placer County Zoning Ordinance, Zoning Maps, and Community Design Guidelines

Manual. While these changes could provide the framework for the future development of up to 194 units, no specific development projects are proposed as part of these changes. In addition, none of the changes proposed affect the Timberland land use classification, which is the only classification which allows for the extraction of minerals. All the parcels affected by these changes are within other land use designations which do not allow for the extraction of minerals. Therefore, changes resulting from the project would not substantively amend any policy or ordinance in a way that would affect the availability of a known mineral resource. There would be ***no impact***.

Impact MIN-2: Result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan, or other land use plan (no impact)

The proposed project would facilitate housing development by allowing for more variation of development in areas where infrastructure and development already exists. The proposed changes to the Placer County General Plan, Placer County Zoning Ordinance, Zoning Maps, and Community Design Guidelines Manual would only affect parcels that are either already developed or designated for residential development uses and would not allow for mineral extraction. No changes included in the proposed project would affect a parcel where mineral resource extraction is permitted. Therefore, changes to these plans, ordinances, and maps would not affect any plan-identified mineral resource recovery site. There would be ***no impact***.

3.12.3 References Cited

California Department of Conservation. 1995. Mineral Land Classification of Placer County, California. Division of Mines and Geology. Available: https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=&ved=2ahUKEwiKsaTNquTpAhXwlHIEHYxHAZgQFjAAegQIARAB&url=ftp%3A%2F%2Fftp.consrv.ca.gov%2Fpub%2Fdmg%2Fpubs%2Fofr%2FOFR_95-10%2FOFR_95-10_Text.pdf&usg=AOvVaw2FPLTO3QU2aHD83zoQAUMZ. Accessed: June 2, 2020.

Placer County. 1994. *Countywide General Plan: Final Environmental Impact Report*. July 26. Prepared by: Crawford Multari & Starr, DKS Associates, Psomas and Associates, Jones & Stokes Associates, Recht Hausrath & Associates, J. Laurence Mintier & Associates. Available: https://www.placer.ca.gov/2981/General-Plan-Environmental-Impact-Report. Accessed: May 18, 2020.

Placer County. 2013. *Placer County General Plan*. Part I: Land Use/Circulation Diagrams and Standards. Available: https://www.placer.ca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/8572/Land-Use-and-Circulation-PDF. Accessed: May 26, 2020.

3.13 Noise

This section addresses the potential impacts of Placer County's (County) proposed General Plan amendments, Zoning Ordinance update, and the development of design standards and guidelines for mixed-use development (project) on related to noise and vibration. It describes the existing conditions of the project area and identifies the applicable plans, policies, laws, and regulations. The analysis identifies the potential impacts of the project and identifies mitigation measures to reduce the level of impacts.

Comments received on the Notice of Preparation included concerns over how higher-density development will affect the noise environment in the City of Roseville and at rural properties. This analysis considers the noise impacts on existing land uses throughout the county.

3.13.1 Existing Conditions

Noise Fundamentals

Noise is commonly defined as unwanted sound that annoys or disturbs people and potentially causes an adverse psychological or physiological effect on human health. Because noise is an environmental pollutant that can interfere with human activities, evaluation of noise is necessary when considering the environmental impacts of a proposed project.

Sound is mechanical energy transmitted by pressure waves over a medium such as air or water. Sound is characterized by various parameters that include the rate of oscillation of sound waves (frequency), the speed of propagation, and the pressure level or energy content (amplitude). In particular, the sound pressure level is the most common descriptor used to characterize the loudness of an ambient (existing) sound level. Although the decibel (dB) scale, a logarithmic scale, is used to quantify sound intensity, it does not accurately describe how sound intensity is perceived by human hearing. The human ear is not equally sensitive to all frequencies in the entire spectrum, so noise measurements are weighted more heavily for frequencies to which humans are sensitive in a process called *A-weighting*, written as dBA and referred to as A-weighted decibels. Table 3.13-1 provides definitions of sound measurements and other terminology used in this section, and Table 3.13-2 summarizes typical A-weighted sound levels for different noise sources.

Table 3.13-1. Definition of Sound Measurements

Sound Measurements	Definition
Decibel (dB)	A unitless measure of sound on a logarithmic scale that indicates the squared ratio of sound pressure amplitude to a reference sound pressure amplitude. The reference pressure is 20 micro-pascals.
A-weighted decibel (dBA)	An overall frequency-weighted sound level in decibels that approximates the frequency response of the human ear.
Maximum sound level (L_{max})	The maximum sound level measured during the measurement period.
Minimum sound level (L_{min})	The minimum sound level measured during the measurement period.
Equivalent sound level (L_{eq})	The equivalent steady state sound level that in a stated period of time would contain the same acoustical energy.

Sound Measurements	Definition
Percentile-exceeded sound level (L_{xx})	The sound level exceeded "x" percent of a specific time period. L_{10} is the sound level exceeded 10% of the time.
Day-night sound level (L_{dn})	The energy average of the A-weighted sound levels occurring during a 24-hour period, with 10 dB added to the A-weighted sound levels occurring during the period from 10:00 PM to 7:00 AM.
Community noise equivalent level (CNEL)	The energy average of the A-weighted sound levels occurring during a 24-hour period with 5 dB added to the A-weighted sound levels occurring during the period from 7:00 PM to 10:00 PM and 10 dB added to the A-weighted sound levels occurring during the period from 10:00 PM to 7:00 AM.
Peak particle velocity (peak velocity, or PPV)	A measurement of ground vibration defined as the maximum speed (measured in inches per second) at which a particle in the ground is moving relative to its inactive state. PPV is usually expressed in inches/second.
Frequency: hertz (Hz)	The number of complete pressure fluctuations per second above and below atmospheric pressure.

In general, human sound perception is such that a change in sound level of 1 dB typically cannot be perceived by the human ear, a change of 3 dB is just noticeable, a change of 5 dB is clearly noticeable, and a change of 10 dB is perceived as doubling or halving the sound level.

Different types of measurements are used to characterize the time-varying nature of sound. These measurements include the equivalent sound level (L_{eq}), the minimum and maximum sound levels (L_{min} and L_{max}), percentile-exceeded sound levels (such as L_{10}, L_{20}), the day-night sound level (L_{dn}), and the community noise equivalent level (CNEL). L_{dn} and CNEL values differ by less than 1 dB. As a matter of practice, L_{dn} and CNEL values are considered to be equivalent and are treated as such in this assessment.

For a point source, such as a stationary compressor or construction equipment, sound attenuates based on geometry at rate of 6 dB per doubling of distance. For a line source such as free-flowing traffic on a freeway, sound attenuates at a rate of 3 dB per doubling of distance (California Department of Transportation 2013). Atmospheric conditions including wind, temperature gradients, and humidity can change how sound propagates over distance and can affect the level of sound received at a given location. The degree to which the ground surface absorbs acoustical energy also affects sound propagation. Sound that travels over an acoustically absorptive surface, such as grass, attenuates at a greater rate than sound that travels over a hard surface, such as pavement. The increased attenuation is typically in the range of 1–2 dB per doubling of distance. Barriers, such as buildings and topography that block the line of sight between a source and receiver, also increase the attenuation of sound over distance.

Table 3.13-2. Typical A-Weighted Sound Levels

Common Outdoor Activities	Noise Level (dBA)	Common Indoor Activities
	—110—	Rock band
Jet flyover at 1,000 feet		
	—100—	
Gas lawnmower at 3 feet		
	—90—	
Diesel truck at 50 feet at 50 mph		Food blender at 3 feet
	—80—	Garbage disposal at 3 feet
Noisy urban area, daytime		
Gas lawnmower, 100 feet	—70—	Vacuum cleaner at 10 feet
Commercial area		Normal speech at 3 feet
Heavy traffic at 300 feet	—60—	
		Large business office
Quiet urban daytime	—50—	Dishwasher in next room
Quiet urban nighttime	—40—	Theater, large conference room (background)
Quiet suburban nighttime		
	—30—	Library
Quiet rural nighttime		Bedroom at night, concert hall (background)
	—20—	
		Broadcast/recording studio
	—10—	
	—0—	

Source: California Department of Transportation 2013.
dBA = A-weighted decibel

Vibration Fundamentals

Operation of heavy construction equipment, particularly pile driving and other impulsive devices, such as pavement breakers, creates seismic waves that radiate along the surface of the earth and downward into the earth. These surface waves can be felt as ground vibration. Vibration from operation of this equipment can result in effects ranging from annoyance of people to damage of structures. Varying geology and distance result in different vibration levels containing different frequencies and displacements. In all cases, vibration amplitudes decrease with increasing distance.

As seismic waves travel outward from a vibration source, they excite the particles of rock and soil through which they pass and cause them to oscillate. The actual distance that these particles move is usually only a few ten-thousandths to a few thousandths of an inch. The rate or velocity (in inches per second [in/sec]) at which these particles move is the commonly accepted descriptor of the vibration amplitude, referred to as the peak particle velocity (PPV). Table 3.13-3 summarizes typical vibration levels generated by construction equipment (Federal Transit Administration 2018).

Table 3.13-3. Vibration Source Levels for Construction Equipment

Equipment	Peak Particle Velocity at 25 Feet
Pile driver (impact)	0.644 to 1.518
Pile drive (sonic)	0.170 to 0.734
Vibratory roller	0.210
Hoe ram	0.089
Large bulldozer	0.089
Caisson drilling	0.089
Loaded trucks	0.076
Jackhammer	0.035
Small bulldozer	0.003

Source: Federal Transit Administration 2018.

Vibration amplitude attenuates (diminishes) over distance and is a complex function of how energy is imparted into the ground and the soil conditions through which the vibration is traveling. The following equation can be used to estimate the vibration level at a given distance for typical soil conditions. PPV_{ref} is the reference PPV at 25 feet (from Table 3.13-4):

$$PPV = PPV_{ref}\,(25/Distance)^{1.5}$$

Table 3.13-4 summarizes guideline criteria for vibration annoyance potential suggested by the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) (California Department of Transportation 2020).

Table 3.13-4. Guideline Criteria for Vibration Annoyance Potential

	Maximum PPV (in/sec)	
Human Response	**Transient Sources**	**Continuous/Frequent Intermittent Sources**
Barely perceptible	0.04	0.01
Distinctly perceptible	0.25	0.04
Strongly perceptible	0.9	0.10
Severe	2.0	0.4

Source: California Department of Transportation 2020.

Note: Transient sources create a single isolated vibration event, such as blasting or drop balls. Continuous/frequent intermittent sources include impact pile drivers, pogo-stick compactors, crack-and-seat equipment, vibratory pile drivers, and vibratory compaction equipment.

PPV = peak particle velocity
in/sec = inches per second

Table 3.13-5 summarizes guideline criteria for vibration damage potential suggested by Caltrans (California Department of Transportation 2020).

Table 3.13-5. Guideline Criteria for Vibration Damage Potential

Structure and Condition	Maximum PPV (in/sec)	
	Transient Sources	Continuous/Frequent Intermittent Sources
Extremely fragile historic buildings, ruins, ancient monuments	0.12	0.08
Fragile buildings	0.2	0.1
Historic and some old buildings	0.5	0.25
Older residential structures	0.5	0.3
New residential structures	1.0	0.5
Modern industrial/commercial buildings	2.0	0.5

Source: California Department of Transportation 2020.

Note: Transient sources create a single isolated vibration event, such as blasting or drop balls. Continuous/frequent intermittent sources include impact pile drivers, pogo-stick compactors, crack-and-seat equipment, vibratory pile drivers, and vibratory compaction equipment.

PPV = peak particle velocity
in/sec = inches per second

Regulatory Setting

There are no federal, state, or local laws or regulations for vibration that are relevant to the project. However, there are guidelines for assessing the impacts of groundborne vibration, and these are discussed below in *Environmental Setting*. Because there are no laws or regulations for vibration, the following regulatory summary focuses on noise only.

Federal

There are no federal laws or regulations pertaining to noise that are relevant to the project.

State

California Code of Regulations, Title 24, Part 2

Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations, Part 2, California Noise Insulation Standards, establishes minimum noise insulation standards to protect persons within new hotels, motels, dormitories, long-term care facilities, apartment houses, and dwellings other than single-family residences. Under this regulation, interior noise levels that are attributable to exterior noise sources cannot exceed the 45 day-night level (L_{dn}) in any habitable room.

California Administrative Code, Title 4

California requires each local government to implement a noise element as part of its general plan. California Administrative Code, Title 4, has guidelines for evaluating the compatibility of various land uses as a function of community noise exposure. These guidelines are shown in Table 3.13-6.

Table 3.13-6. State Land Use Compatibility Standards for Community Noise Environment

Land Use Category	Community Noise Exposure—L_{dn} or CNEL (dB)						
	50	55	60	65	70	75	80
Residential—low-density single family, duplex, mobile homes							
Residential— multifamily							
Transient lodging—motels, hotels							
Schools, libraries, churches, hospitals, nursing homes							
Auditoriums, concert halls, amphitheaters							
Sports arenas, outdoor spectator sports							
Playgrounds, neighborhood parks							
Golf courses, riding stables, water recreation, cemeteries							
Office buildings, business commercial and professional							
Industrial, manufacturing, utilities, agriculture							

Normally Acceptable: Specified land use is satisfactory, based upon the assumption that any buildings involved are of normal conventional construction, without any special noise insulation requirements.

Conditionally Acceptable: New construction or development should be undertaken only after a detailed analysis of the noise reduction requirements is made and needed noise insulation features are included in the design. Conventional construction, but with closed windows and fresh air supply systems or air conditioning will normally suffice.

Normally Unacceptable: New construction or development should generally be discouraged. If new construction or development does proceed, a detailed analysis of the noise reduction requirements must be made and needed noise insulation features included in the design.

Clearly Unacceptable: New construction or development generally should not be undertaken.

Source: California Governor's Office of Planning and Research 2017.

CNEL = community noise equivalent level.
dB = decibel.
Ldn = day-night level.

Local

Placer County General Plan

Section 9 (the Noise Element) of the Placer County General Plan lists goals, associated policies, and implementation measures related to noise (Placer County 2013). The Noise Element does not include guidelines related to construction activities. However, Tables 3.13-7 and 3.13-8 provide context for generally accepted non-transportation and transportation noise levels in the county.

The maximum allowable noise exposure limits for non-transportation noise sources are shown in Table 3.13-7, and the maximum allowable noise exposure limits for transportation noise sources in Placer County are summarized in Table 3.13-8. Placer County's General Plan does not specifically address construction noise level limits. Construction noise level limits and restrictions on hours for construction are determined on a project-by-project basis through environmental review, conditioning of entitlements, and the application of County Code requirements for individual projects using the General Plan's noise level standards as guidance for acceptable levels.

Table 3.13-7. Placer County Allowable L_{dn} Noise Levels within Specific Zone Districts

Zone District of Receptor	Property Line of Receiving Use	Interior Spaces
Residential adjacent to industrial	60	45
Other residential	50	45
Office/professional	70	45
Transient lodging	65	45
Neighborhood commercial	70	45
General commercial	70	45
Heavy commercial	75	45
Limited industrial	75	45
Highway service	75	45
Shopping center	70	45
Industrial	–	45
Industrial park	75	45
Industrial reserve	–	–
Airport	–	45
Unclassified	–	–
Farm	–[a]	–
Agriculture exclusive	–[a]	–
Forestry	–	–
Timberland preserve	–	–
Recreation and forestry	70	–
Open space	–	–
Mineral reserve	–	–

Table 3.13-7 (Continued)

Source: Placer County 2013:Table 9-1.

Notes:

- Except where noted otherwise, noise exposures will be those which occur at the property line of the receiving use.
- Where existing transportation noise levels exceed the standards of this table, the allowable L_{dn} shall be raised to the same level as that of the ambient level.
- If the noise source generated by, or affecting, the uses shown above consists primarily of speech or music, of if the noise source is impulsive in nature, the noise standards shown above shall be decreased by 5 dB.
- Where a use permit has established noise level standards for an existing use, those standards shall supersede the levels specified in Placer County General Plan Table 9-1 and Table 9-3. Similarly, where an existing use which is not subject to a use permit causes noise in excess of the allowable levels in Placer County General Plan Tables 9-1 and 9-3, said excess noise will be considered the allowable level. If a new development is proposed that will be affected by noise from such an existing use, it will ordinarily be assumed that the noise levels already existing or those levels allowed by the existing use permit, whichever are greater, are those levels actually produced by the existing use.
- Existing industry located in industrial zones will be given the benefit of the doubt in being allowed to emit increased noise consistent with the state of the art at the time of expansion. In no case will expansion of an existing industrial operation be cause to decrease allowable noise emission limits. Increased emissions above those normally allowable should be limited to a one-time 5-dB increase at the discretion of the decision-making body.
- The noise level standards applicable to land uses containing incidental residential uses, such as caretaker dwellings at industrial facilities and homes on agriculturally zoned land, will be the standards applicable to the zone district, not those applicable to residential uses.
- Where no noise level standards have been provided for a specific zone district, it is assumed that the interior and/or exterior spaces of these uses are effectively insensitive to noise.

[a] Normally, agricultural uses are noise insensitive and will be treated in this way. However, conflicts with agricultural noise emissions can occur where single-family residences exist within agricultural zone districts. Therefore, where effects of agricultural noise upon residences located in these agricultural zones is a concern, an L_{dn} of 70 dBA (A-weighted decibel) will be considered acceptable outdoor exposure at a residence.

Table 3.13-8. Placer County Maximum Allowable Noise Exposure for Transportation Noise Sources

	Outdoor Activity Areas[a]	Interior Spaces	
Land Use	**L_{dn}/CNEL**	**L_{dn}/CNEL**	**L_{eq}, dB[b]**
Residential	60[c]	45	–
Transient lodging	60[c]	45	–
Hospitals, nursing homes	60[c]	45	–
Theaters, auditoriums, music halls	–	–	35
Churches, meeting halls	60[c]	–	40
Office buildings	–	–	45
Schools, libraries, museums	–	–	45
Playgrounds, neighborhood parks	70	–	–

Source: Placer County 2013:Table 9-3.

CNEL = community noise equivalent level
dB = decibel
L_{dn} = day-night level
L_{eq} = equivalent sound level

[a] Where the location of outdoor activity areas is unknown, the exterior noise level standard will be applied to the property line of the receiving land use.

[b] As determined for a typical worst-case hour during periods of use.

[c] Where it is not possible to reduce noise in outdoor activity areas to 60 L_{dn}/CNEL or less using a practical application of the best-available noise reduction measures, an exterior noise level of up to 65 dB L_{dn}/CNEL may be allowed provided that available exterior noise level reduction measures have been implemented and interior noise levels are in compliance with this table.

Placer County Noise Ordinance

The Placer County Noise Ordinance (Placer County Code Section 9.36.060) states noise limits for sensitive receptors, as excerpted below.

A. It is unlawful for any person at any location to create any sound, or to allow the creation of any sound, on property owned, leased, occupied or otherwise controlled by such person that:

   1. Causes the exterior sound level when measured at the property line of any affected sensitive receptor to exceed the ambient sound level by five dBA; or

   2. Exceeds the sound level standards as set forth in Table 1 [see Table 3.13-9 of this EIR], whichever is the greater.

B. Each of the sound level standards specified in Table 1 [Table 3.13-9] shall be reduced by five dB for simple tone noises, consisting of speech and music. However, in no case shall the sound level standard be lower than the ambient sound level plus five dB.

C. If the intruding sound source is continuous and cannot reasonably be discontinued or stopped for a time period whereby the ambient sound level can be measured, the sound level measured while the source is in operation shall be compared directly to the sound level standards of Table 1 [Table 3.13-9]. (Ord. 5280-B, 2004)

Table 3.13-9. Placer County Sound Level Standards (onsite)

Sound Level Descriptor	Daytime (7 a.m. to 10 p.m.)	Nighttime (10 p.m. to 7 a.m.)
Hourly L_{eq}, dB	55	45
Maximum level (L_{max}), dB	70	65

Source: Placer County Code, 9.36.060:Table 1.
dB = decibel.
L_{eq} = equivalent sound level.
L_{max} = maximum sound level.

The noise ordinance provides an exemption for construction noise (in Municipal Code Section 9.36.030) so long as all construction equipment is "fitted with factory installed muffling devices and that all construction equipment shall be maintained in good working order." Allowable time periods for construction noise are 6 AM to 8 PM, Monday through Friday; and 8 AM to 8 PM, Saturdays and Sundays.

Other exempted noise in the Noise Ordinance (9.36.030) that is relevant to the project include sources typically associated with residential uses, such as children at play, air conditioners in good working order, etc.; and property maintenance-related sources, such as lawn mowers, edgers, snow blowers, blowers, pool pumps, power tools, etc., if such activities take place between 7 AM and 9 PM.

Environmental Setting

Placer County encompasses approximately 1,500 square miles and has a diverse range of environments and land uses. The western part of Placer County, where the Roseville, Loomis/Newcastle, and Auburn/Bowman areas of the project area located, are more urbanized, while the eastern county area is considerably more rural.

Noise-sensitive land uses are generally defined as locations where people reside or where the presence of unwanted sound could adversely affect the primary intended use of the land. Places where people live, sleep, recreate, worship, and study are generally considered to be sensitive to noise because intrusive noise can be disruptive to these activities. Noise-sensitive land uses in the

project area include residential development, hotels, hospitals, theaters and auditoriums, churches, schools, libraries, playgrounds, and neighborhood parks.

There are several primary sources of noise in the project area. Mobile noise sources are those for transportation purposes and include roadway traffic, railroads, and airports. The most prevalent noise source is roadway traffic, which is a near-constant source of noise, whereas noise from railroads and aircraft are more intermittent by nature. Stationary sources of noise in the area may include aggregate mines, recycling facilities, solid waste transfer stations, agricultural activities, general service commercial and light industrial uses, recreational uses, parks, and school playing fields.

The existing noise environment in the project area can be characterized generally by the level of development in the vicinity of each parcel. The level of development and ambient noise levels tend to be closely correlated. Areas that are not urbanized are relatively quiet, while more urbanized areas are noisier as a result of roadway traffic, industry, and other human activities. Table 3.13-10 summarizes typical ambient noise levels based on level of development.

Table 3.13-10. Population Density and Associated Ambient Noise Levels

	L_{dn}
Rural	40–50
Small town or quiet suburban residential	50
Normal suburban residential	55
Urban residential	60
Noisy urban residential	65
Very noisy urban residential	70
Downtown, major metropolis	75–80
Area adjoining freeway or near major airport	80–90

Source: Hoover and Keith 2000.
L_{dn} = day-night sound level

3.13.2 Environmental Impacts

The environmental analysis in this section focuses on the two main components of the project: (1) amendments to the Land Use Element in the County's General Plan, Zoning Ordinance, and Community Design Manual, and (2) the potential locations for the new dwelling units that could be constructed as a result of changes to the Zoning Ordinance (a total of 194 units distributed throughout the county).

The general land use pattern allowed by the housing-related code amendments is evaluated in the following discussions for its potential to adversely affect noise and vibration levels.

The analysis in this section also considers the impacts from the potential development of dwelling units in targeted areas throughout the county. As a result of project implementation, a total of 194 units could be constructed, as noted below. While these units could be developed as a result of project implementation, the project itself does not propose any site-specific development.

- 50 units in the Roseville area (South Placer County)
- 13 units in the Loomis/Newcastle area (foothill region)

- 49 units in the Auburn/Bowman area (foothill region)
- 82 units in the eastern county (High Sierra region), including:
  - 31 units near Sugar Bowl
  - 4 units near Squaw Valley
  - 42 units near SR 89
  - 5 units near Northstar

Methods for Analysis

Commensurate with the broad scope of the project, noise levels associated with construction activities are evaluated primarily qualitatively using general construction noise levels as reported by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. The general construction noise levels are assumed to be representative of the noise that would occur for the project, and those noise levels are evaluated in the context of the County's municipal code. Similarly, non-transportation sources of noise that would occur during operations (e.g., HVAC equipment, landscaping equipment) are also evaluated qualitatively and discussed in the context of the municipal code.

Traffic noise has been evaluated using the available vehicle volume data provided by the project traffic engineer. The vehicle volume data are used to determine the percentage increases in volumes that would occur on roadways in the project vicinity. Data are not available for every segment, and, for such segments, the project's potential to increase traffic volumes is qualitatively evaluated.

Vibration from construction equipment was evaluated using methods recommended by Caltrans and the Federal Transit Administration using the criteria shown in Tables 3.13-4 and 3.13-5, and the equipment source levels shown in Table 3.13-3.

Thresholds of Significance

In accordance with Appendix G of the State California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, the proposed project would be considered to have a significant effect if it would result in any of the conditions listed below.

- Generation of increased ambient noise levels in the project vicinity in excess of standards established in a local general plan or noise ordinance or applicable standards of other agencies.
- Generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels.
- Placement of project-related activities in the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport land use plan, or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within 2 miles of a public airport or public use airport, resulting in exposure of people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels.

Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Impact NOI-1: Generation of increased ambient noise levels in the project vicinity in excess of applicable standards (less than significant)

Construction Noise

With respect to construction noise, the development that could result from project implementation would require noise-generating construction activity. Throughout the project area, it is expected that most construction activity would occur near noise-sensitive land uses, namely existing residential units on affected parcels and adjacent parcels. The addition of a fourth unit on the affected parcels may require the use of construction equipment very near the existing units. In general, constructing single dwelling units is a low-intensity activity relative to most development projects. However, some heavy-duty equipment may be required to construct the additional housing units.

Data specific to construction of fourth units on affected parcels is not available given the programmatic nature of the project. Alternatively, Table 3.13-11 identifies approximate noise levels that can be expected to occur from multiple types of residential construction activities.

Table 3.13-11. Residential Construction Noise Levels

	Housing Construction Sound Levels by Distance (dB)					
Construction Phase	**50 feet**	**75 feet**	**100 feet**	**200 feet**	**400 feet**	**800 feet**
Ground clearing	85	81	79	73	67	61
Excavation	89	85	83	77	71	65
Foundations	82	79	76	70	64	58
Building/facility construction	81	78	75	69	63	57
Finishing and clean-up	86	83	80	74	68	62

Source: Based on U.S. Environmental Protection Agency 1971.

As shown in Table 3.13-11, at 50 feet, which is a reasonable worst-case assumption for the distance between construction equipment at affected parcels and the nearest existing noise-sensitive land use, noise levels from housing construction would range between 81 and 89 dBA. Based on geometric attenuation, noise from construction activities would attenuate by 6 dB for every doubling of distance; thus, the maximum noise level at 100 feet is 83 dBA, at 200 feet is 77 dBA, etc.

A noise level of 89 dBA would represent a noticeable increase relative to ambient noise levels. As noted in *Regulatory Setting*, construction noise in the county during daytime hours is exempt from regulation if the equipment is fitted with factory-installed muffling devices and in good working order. It cannot be determined with certainty that all future construction activities at affected parcels would be equipped with the factory-installed mufflers and in good working order. However, it is reasonably foreseeable and representative of typical conditions that construction equipment would have its factory-installed mufflers as default and that such devices would not be removed. Similarly, construction equipment is presumed to be in good working order. Although it is possible that some equipment may not meet these standards, this is likely to be a relatively rare occurrence and is not reasonably foreseeable. Construction noise occurring in the non-allowed times of day would be subject to the enforcement of the noise ordinance by law enforcement authorities.

Furthermore, the operation of noncompliant construction equipment would likely be infrequent and the resulting noise would be short-term during construction of the individual housing units. Because of the short-term nature of construction activities and the exemption of construction noise in the County's municipal code, the project would not generate increased ambient noise levels in the project vicinity in excess of applicable standards. This impact would be ***less than significant***.

Traffic Noise

No specific development projects are proposed as part of the project. However, the project would encourage higher-density development within high-density residential and mixed-use developments in four disparate regions throughout the county (Roseville area, Loomis/Newcastle area, Auburn/Bowman area, and eastern county).

The traffic noise–related effects from increasing maximum densities can be estimated by quantifying the approximate increased trip generation. In theory, increasing the maximum density from three dwelling units to four dwelling units per acre would increase trip generation by a maximum factor of 0.33.[1] Increasing traffic by a factor of 1 (a 100 percent increase) would correspond to a 3 dB, or just noticeable, increase in traffic noise. An increase by a factor of 0.33 would correspond to an approximately 0.5 dB increase in traffic noise levels.

The actual increase in traffic noise on roadways, however, would be less than this amount, because there is vehicle traffic on roadways in the county that is not associated with project-affected housing units in the county. Some existing vehicle traffic in the county is comprised of trips to and from units that are on non-affected parcels, or trips that originate outside of or pass through the county. Thus, with a larger pool of existing traffic, the increase in traffic caused by the project would likely result in an increase of less than 0.33.

For further context, traffic volumes generated by the project have been quantified and provided by the project traffic engineer and are shown in Table 3.13-12. As shown in Table 3.13-12, the project's contribution of additional vehicle trips ranges from a low of 19 to a high of 256. Table 3.13-12 also presents the existing daily vehicle volumes on the roadways where data are available, and this includes 8 roadway segments. For the other 10 roadway segments, there are currently no existing vehicle volume data available. The project's proportion of volumes relative to existing daily volumes on the roadways for which data are available (i.e. a percentage increase in volumes) are shown in Table 3.13-12. The maximum known percentage increase in traffic volumes, 1.8 percent, would occur on State Route (SR) 89, south of Interstate (I-) 80. Such an increase in volumes would not yield a noticeable increase in noise, noting again that a 100 percent increase in volumes typically causes a barely noticeable difference in traffic noise.

Although the traffic volume data on all affected existing roadways are not currently known, Table 3.13-12 shows that the increase in volumes caused by the project would be comparably small relative to the total daily existing volumes that would occur on a roadway. Additionally, there is an upper bound to the magnitude of traffic volume increases that could occur by increasing dwelling units from 3 to 4 on affected parcels (0.33). Even the occurrence of this upper bound would not represent a noticeable change in traffic noise. Consequently, the project would not result in noticeable traffic noise increases on roadways in the county, and this impact is ***less than significant***.

[1] 1 additional unit divided by 3 existing units equals 0.33

Table 3.13-12. Existing and Project Traffic Volumes on Roadways in the Project Area

			Project Incremental Effect			
Roadway	**Segment**	**Existing Daily Volumes**	**AM Peak Hour**	**PM Peak Hour**	**Daily Trips**	**% Increase**
Atwood Road	Richardson Dr. to SR 49	8,169	4	4	49	0.6%
Boyington Road	Penryn Rd. to King Rd.	NA	3	4	42	NA
Dry Creek Road	Richardson Dr. to SR 49	NA	3	2	28	NA
Indian Hill Road	Newcastle Rd. to Auburn	5,511	3	3	31	0.6%
Luther Road	SR 49 to Canal St.	NA	4	3	20	NA
New Airport Road	Bell Rd. to SR 49	3,220	4	4	53	1.6%
Orlando Avenue	Auburn Bl. to Cirby Wy.	NA	18	9	256	NA
Richardson Drive	Dry Creek Rd. to Park Dr.	NA	1	2	24	NA
SR 49	Bell Rd. to Atwood Rd.	41,000	2	1	30	0.1%
SR 49	Quartz Dr. to Bell Rd.	39,200	2	2	35	0.1%
Taylor Road	Loomis to Penryn Rd.	NA	3	1	21	NA
Taylor Road	SR 193 to English Colony Wy.	5,534	2	3	23	0.4%
Whyte Avenue	Auburn Bl. to Mariposa Ave.	NA	6	10	115	NA
Sugar Bowl Drive	South of Donner Pass Rd.	NA	23	23	214	NA
Donner Pass Road	West of Sugar Bowl Rd.	NA	9	9	86	NA
Donner Pass Road	East of Sugar Bowl Rd.	NA	14	14	129	NA
SR 89	South of I-80	10,700	21	21	197	1.8%
SR 89	South of Squaw Valley Rd.	10,100	14	14	131	1.3%
SR 267	North of Northstar Dr.	10,900	3	3	29	0.3%
SR 267	South of Northstar Dr.	13,800	2	2	19	0.1%

Sources: Tokarski, pers. comm.
SR = State Route
I- = Interstate
NA = data are not currently available for these segments

Non-Transportation Noise

With respect to other sources of noise that may occur as a result of development associated with project implementation, typical noise from residential uses would be expected, including occasional landscaping noise, air conditioning noise, talking, music, etc. In general, these sources of noise are prevalent throughout the project area and the existing ambient noise environment. The additional housing units that could be constructed as a result of the project could result in contributions of noise from these types of sources to varying degrees. For instance, new housing units would be implemented with air conditioning equipment, but there may only be minimal additional property maintenance (i.e., landscaping) noise with the addition of a single housing unit on a parcel with three existing units. Because these types of noise sources are already common in the project area, the project would not result in noise that is uncharacteristic to the existing environment.

As noted in *Regulatory Setting*, residential sources of noise are mostly exempt from the limits specified in the County's noise ordinance, per section 9.36.030. Property maintenance noise that

occurs before 7 AM or after 9 PM is not exempt, but noise occurring in the non-allowed times of day would be subject to the enforcement of the noise ordinance by law enforcement authorities. Other typical residential noise sources occurring at the additional housing units would be in compliance with the noise ordinance. For this reason, the project would not result in increased ambient noise levels in the project vicinity in excess of applicable standards during the operational phase, and this impact is ***less than significant***.

Impact NOI-2: Generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels (less than significant)

Construction that could result from project implementation would require the use of construction equipment could result in the generation of construction vibration and potentially in the exposure of persons to excessive groundborne vibration. The main concern associated with this type of vibration is annoyance; however, vibration-sensitive instruments and operations can be disrupted at much lower levels than would typically affect other uses. In extreme cases, vibration can cause damage to buildings, particularly those that are old or otherwise fragile. Tables 3.13-4 and 3.13-5 show vibration criteria for annoyance and damage potential suggested by Caltrans.

The potential construction-related vibration impacts depend primarily on the proximity between construction equipment and sensitive receptors, and the size and type of the equipment. Impact pile drivers and other impact equipment, such as impact hammers and clam shovels, have the greatest potential to result in adverse effects, but such equipment would not likely be utilized for small housing unit construction resulting from the project. Even non-impact equipment can generate groundborne vibration, but perceptible groundborne vibration from construction equipment is generally limited to areas within a few hundred feet of construction activities.

Typical vibration levels for various pieces of equipment at a reference distance of 25 feet are included in Table 3.13-13. Table 3.13-13 also shows calculated vibration levels for the equipment at increasing distances, based on typical soil conditions (Federal Transit Administration 2018). The use of a pile driver and other large equipment is not likely, but it is included in this table for informational purposes.

Table 3.13-13. Construction Equipment Vibration Levels at Various Distances

	Distance from Construction (feet)					
	25	50	75	100	175	200
Equipment	Peak Particle Velocity (in/sec)					
Pile driver (impact)	1.518	0.5367	0.2921	0.1898	0.0820	0.0671
Pile drive (vibratory)	0.734	0.2595	0.1413	0.0918	0.0396	0.0324
Vibratory roller	0.210	0.0742	0.0404	0.0263	0.0113	0.0093
Hoe ram	0.089	0.0315	0.0171	0.0111	0.0048	0.0039
Large bulldozer	0.089	0.0315	0.0171	0.0111	0.0048	0.0039
Caisson drilling	0.089	0.0315	0.0171	0.0111	0.0048	0.0039
Loaded truck	0.076	0.0269	0.0146	0.0095	0.0041	0.0034
Jackhammer	0.035	0.0124	0.0067	0.0044	0.0019	0.0015
Small bulldozer	0.003	0.0011	0.0006	0.0004	0.0002	0.0001

Note: Values derived from information in FTA's *Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment* (Federal Transit Administration 2018) using the vibration attenuation equation ($PPV=PPV_{ref}\,(25/Distance)^{1.5}$).

Due to the large geographic scope of the project area, it is expected that construction activity would be dispersed. Construction activity in any single location would be temporary, and the corresponding vibration effects would be short-term. Vibration is a localized effect, so although there could be up to 82 new units in the eastern county area or 50 units in the Roseville area, it is not likely that there would be appreciable overlap in construction activities at an individual parcel, and thus there would be minimal or no overlap in vibration effects from multiple parcels.

At this time, it is not known how close vibration-generating equipment may operate to existing residences or other vibration-sensitive land uses. However, using methods specified in the Federal Transit Authority's *Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment*, the distance within which vibration is estimated to exceed the PPV threshold of 0.1 in/sec can be calculated (Federal Transit Administration 2018). This level of vibration is the threshold at which vibration would be both strongly perceptible and cause potential damage to fragile buildings, based on the criteria in Tables 3.13-4 and 3.13-5.

As a reasonable worst-case scenario, construction equipment could operate at a distance of 25 feet from existing residences or other sensitive land uses. The equipment that would be used for future construction from Table 3.13-13 would likely be limited to a small bulldozer, because the construction of an individual housing unit is a relatively low-intensity construction activity. At 25 feet, the vibration from a small bulldozer would be 0.003 in/sec PPV, which is substantially below the threshold of what is considered perceptible (based on Table 3.13-4) and what would cause damage to the most fragile type of buildings (based on Table 3.13-5).

Although specific details for future construction activities cannot be known with certainty at this time, it is reasonable to conclude that the project would result in small bulldozer use at individual parcels that would not be noticeable or cause damage at existing residences. Consequently, vibration levels from the project would not generate excessive groundborne vibration, and this impact is ***less than significant***.

Impact NOI-3: Placement of project-related activities in the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport land use plan or within 2 miles of a public airport or public use airport, resulting in exposure of people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels (less than significant)

Development resulting from project implementation could increase the density of residential development in some areas and increase the number of residences that could be exposed to aircraft noise if those areas are in the vicinity of airports or airport flight paths. There are three airports in the project areas that may contribute to the ambient noise environment: Auburn Municipal Airport in the Auburn/Bowman project area Blue Canyon-Nyack Airport in the East County project area, and Truckee-Tahoe Airport partially in the eastern county project area and partially in Nevada County. The project would not result in any appreciable changes to noise levels at any of these airports. Thus, the impact of aircraft noise on new occupants at the project site would not require evaluation under CEQA;[2] however, this type of impact is analyzed in the General Plan environmental impact report, and a brief discussion of aircraft noise is included here.

[2] Pursuant to the recent Supreme Court case decision in the *California Building Industry Association* (*CBIA) vs. Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD)* case, CEQA does not require an analysis of how the existing environmental conditions would affect a project's residents or users unless the project would exacerbate those conditions.

Future development resulting from project implementation may occur in areas that are within 2 miles of these airports. Within a 2-mile radius of the Auburn Municipal Airport, there are identified growth areas northwest, west, southwest, and south of the airport. Southeast of the Truckee-Tahoe Airport, there is a potential development area about 1.5 miles away. There are identified growth areas within 2 miles of Blue Canyon-Nyack Airport.

According to Section 9 of the County's General Plan (Policy 9.A.8), new noise-sensitive land uses are not permitted in areas where ambient noise levels exceed the maximum allowable noise exposure limits, included as Table 3.13-8 above, unless the design of the new land uses includes effective mitigation measures to reduce noise in outdoor activity areas and interior spaces to the levels in Table 3.13-8.

Although the project would allow for development in areas that exceed these noise limits due to aircraft noise, the project would not prevent housing units adhering to the requirements of Policy 9.A.8. The effect of aircraft noise on new noise-sensitive land uses is not a required CEQA issue in these circumstances, but the project nevertheless does not prevent compliance with the General Plan for the purpose of reducing aircraft noise. Because the project would not meaningfully affect aircraft noise in the project area, this impact would be ***less than significant***.

3.13.3 References Cited

Printed References

California Department of Transportation. 2013. *Technical Noise Supplement to the Traffic Noise Analysis Protocol*. September. Available: https://dot.ca.gov/-/media/dot-media/programs/environmental-analysis/documents/env/tens-sep2013-a11y.pdf. Accessed: May 21, 2020.

California Department of Transportation. 2020. *Transportation and Construction Vibration Guidance Manual*. April. Available: https://dot.ca.gov/-/media/dot-media/programs/environmental-analysis/documents/env/tcvgm-apr2020-a11y.pdf. Accessed: June 10, 2020.

California Governor's Office of Planning and Research. 2017. *State of California General Plan Guidelines*. Available: http://opr.ca.gov/docs/OPR_COMPLETE_7.31.17.pdf. Accessed: June 2, 2020.

Federal Transit Administration. 2018. *Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment*. FTA-VA-90-1003-06. Office of Planning and Environment. May. Available: https://www.transit.dot.gov/sites/fta.dot.gov/files/docs/research-innovation/118131/transit-noise-and-vibration-impact-assessment-manual-fta-report-no-0123_0.pdf. Accessed: May 21, 2020.

Hoover and Keith. 2000. *Noise Control for Buildings and Manufacturing Plants*.

Placer County. 2013. *Placer County General Plan – Section 9, Noise*. May. Available: https://www.placer.ca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/8568/Noise-PDF. Accessed: June 2, 2020.

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. 1971. *Noise from Construction Equipment and Operations, Building Equipment and Home Appliances*. December 31. Available: https://nepis.epa.gov/Exe/ZyPDF.cgi/9101NN3I.PDF?Dockey=9101NN3I.PDF. Accessed: June 2, 2020.

Personal Communications

Tokarski, David. Senior Transportation Planner, DKS. Personal communication. Electronic mail communication with Erin Efner of ICF on April 22, 2020 about traffic volume data.

3.14 Population and Housing

This section describes the environmental and regulatory setting for population and housing. It also describes impacts on population and housing that would result from implementation of the Proposed Housing-Related Code Amendments (project) and mitigation measures for significant impacts where feasible and appropriate.

No comments were received in response to the Notice of Preparation related to population and housing.

3.14.1 Existing Conditions

Regulatory Setting

State

California Planning Law—General Plan Housing Element

California Planning Law (Government Code § 65302) requires Placer County (County) to adopt a housing element as part of its General Plan. The housing element identifies future housing needs over the spectrum of incomes and provides strategies for meeting those needs. The Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG) assigns the County a set of projected housing numbers, by income level, as part of the regional housing needs allocation (RHNA) process. Under state law, the County must adopt a land use plan and regulatory system that provide sufficient opportunities for, and do not unduly constrain, housing development to meet its share of the allocated housing need. The California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) reviews each housing element for adequacy in meeting the requirements of state law. An adopted housing element that has been approved by HCD is presumed to meet the requirements of state law for the term of the element.

Pursuant to state law, the housing element must be updated every 8 years, based on the SACOG regional housing needs for the next 8-year cycle. The housing numbers reflected in the housing element are projections, not mandatory requirements for housing construction. Actual construction will depend on market conditions, regulatory requirements, and other factors.

California Government Code Section 65584

The state requires regional housing needs plans to be developed by local jurisdictions based on countywide housing projections developed by the HCD. The section below contains a description of the RHNA for the County.

Local

Placer County Housing Element

The County adopted the 2013–2021 Housing Element in May 2013, which outlines the County's RHNA. The intent of the RHNA is to ensure adequate housing opportunities for all income groups. The Housing Element and RHNA apply only to unincorporated areas within Placer County. For the

2013–2021 planning period, the unincorporated areas of Placer County were allocated 5,031 new housing units; the Tahoe Basin was separated out as a subarea and allocated 328 housing units. Incorporated cities within the county have their own RHNA. The county's projected housing needs allocation are shown by income category in Table 3.14-1.

Table 3.14-1. Housing Allocations in Placer County, 2013–2021

	Very Low Income	Low Income	Moderate Income	Above Moderate Income	Total Units
RHNA Allocation	1,365	957	936	1,773	**5,031**
Percent of Total Allocation	27.1%	19.0%	18.6%	35.2%	**100.0%**

Source: Placer County 2013

Placer County Housing Strategy and Development Plan

The County adopted the Placer County Housing Strategy and Development Plan in June 2019 with the overall goal of identifying ways to improve local controls to address the housing crisis within the county and meet the County's RHNA. The report specifically outlines recommendations, such as actions plans and programs, to create more incentives to build affordable and workforce housing; change certain regulations to make the construction of housing easier; advocate for state and federal assistance; and further partnerships in order to meet the RHNA. The action plans and programs outlined in the Plan are based on the findings in the *Placer County Housing Strategy and Development Plan—Existing Conditions and Land Supply Assessment*.

Placer County General Plan

The Placer County General Plan was adopted in May 2013, and the associated General Plan environmental impact report (EIR) was prepared in 1994. The General Plan establishes the land use distribution pattern (e.g., residential, commercial, agricultural, open space) and the maximum intensity and density of future development within the unincorporated areas under the County's jurisdiction. This includes identifying the maximum allowed residential, commercial, mixed-use, and other land use designations described in the General Plan and are depicted in the General Plan land use map. The General Plan allows for the development of a maximum of approximately 193,000 new dwelling units in the unincorporated areas of the county in addition to the existing dwelling units in 1992. However, as explained in the General Plan EIR, the maximum number of dwelling units are likely not to be fully developed, and when other market forces are factored in the General Plan analysis, the total amount of dwelling units to be developed in the unincorporated areas of the county are assumed to be up to approximately 80,600 dwelling units in 2040. Between 2000 and 2007, the unincorporated areas of the county added an average of 860 new housing units per year, and between 2008 and 2018, added 297 new housing units per year (Placer County 2019). Recently, in 2018, an analysis determined that the unincorporated areas of the county still have a remaining maximum development capacity of approximately 79,648 dwelling units under the current General Plan (Placer County 2019). Ultimately, the actual number of additional residences that are built over the next several decades will depend on market conditions, and the availability of public utilities necessary to maximize residential density, among other factors.

The General Plan does not establish a vested right to develop. The General Plan identifies the type, intensity, and density of allowable development on a parcel-by-parcel basis throughout the

unincorporated area. However, a landowner does not have the right to develop their parcel to the maximum potential depicted in the General Plan. The actual level of development that may be allowed depends on a number of factors.

The following goals and policy from the General Plan are relevant to this resource section:

Goal A. To provide new housing opportunities to meet the needs of existing and future Placer County residents in all income categories.

Policy A-1. The County shall maintain an adequate supply of appropriately zoned land with public services to accommodate housing needs of existing and future residents.

Policy A-5. The County shall facilitate the development of higher-density multi-family development in locations where adequate infrastructure and public services are available by permitting residential uses in commercial zones, allowing flexible development standards, and providing other incentives.

Goal B. To encourage construction and maintenance of safe, decent, and sound affordable housing in the county.

Policy B-7. The County shall facilitate expanded housing opportunities that are affordable to the workforce of Placer County.

Placer County Zoning Ordinance

While the General Plan establishes policies to guide the County's land use decision making, the Zoning Ordinance consist of enforceable regulations on the use of county land. By law, counties such as Placer County must adopt a zoning ordinance that is consistent with the adopted General Plan.

The Zoning Ordinance establishes specific zoning classifications (e.g., Single-Family Residential, Commercial) that, when applied to a specific property, describes the range of allowable land uses and basic standards for development (i.e., maximum building height, building setbacks from property lines, required parking spaces) on that property. Each zoning classification has a different set of allowable land uses and development standards. The zoning maps adopted with the ordinance identify the particular zoning classification that applies to each parcel within the unincorporated area under the County's jurisdiction.

Similar to the General Plan, while a zoning designation describes the type and intensity of development that may be allowed, it does not vest a property owner's right to develop at the maximum intensity allowed. The size and shape of the property, the availability of public infrastructure and utilities, development fees (such as the Traffic Impact Fee program, if applicable), owner preferences, and other factors determine how a property is developed within the rules set out in the County's Zoning Ordinance.

Environmental Setting

Placer County is comprised of both suburban and rural areas. It contains substantial suburban development in discrete communities, particularly along Interstate 80 (e.g., Rocklin, Auburn, Roseville), as well as distinctive, smaller communities (e.g., Foresthill, Granite Bay) and scattered residences in the more rural regions in the eastern portion of the county. The population of unincorporated Placer County was estimated at 116,170 persons in 2019 (California Department of Finance 2020a). Placer County has experienced the most growth since 2010 of California's 58 counties (World Population Review 2020). Although Placer County has experienced rapid growth over the past decade, more recently the county's rate of growth has slowed considerably. The county, including the incorporated cities of Roseville, Rocklin, Lincoln, Loomis, Auburn, and Colfax,

grew at a rate of approximately 2.0 percent between January 1, 2019 and January 1, 2020 (California Department of Finance 2020b). Section 3.11, *Land Use and Planning*, provides additional environmental setting information related to land use patterns and growth.

Based on the County's analysis of development potential, which included review of existing lots to determine "maximum development" capacity, and which takes into account General Plan land use designations, parcel size, availability of services, and a reasonable level of development, the land use designations in the current General Plan could accommodate approximately 193,000 new residences in addition those existing in 1992. However, as part of the *Housing Development Strategy Plan* (Placer County 2019), a more recent analysis was conducted in 2018 to determine the existing and anticipated housing demand and supply through 2040 in unincorporated Placer County. The report revealed that there is an estimated maximum housing unit development capacity of 79,648 units in unincorporated Placer County under the current General Plan, Zoning Ordinance, and other design standards.

The estimate of 79,648 residences is not a limit or a goal, and the actual level of residential development may be lower, depending on market forces, the availability of infrastructure, site topography, and other factors that influence development intensity. Nothing commits the County to approving this amount of new residential development. However, it is necessary to estimate future growth for purposes of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) analysis of the project's potential impacts.

3.14.2 Environmental Impacts

The environmental analysis in this section focuses on the two main components of the project: (1) amendments to the Land Use Element in the County's General Plan, Zoning Ordinance, and Community Design Manual, and (2) the potential locations for the new dwelling units that could be constructed as a result of changes to the Zoning Ordinance (a total of 194 units distributed throughout the county).

The general land use pattern allowed by the housing-related code amendments is evaluated in the following discussions for its potential to adversely affect population and housing. An adverse effect would be assumed to occur if development would result in substantial population growth or displacement of people from housing.

The analysis in this section also considers the impacts from the potential development of dwelling units in targeted areas throughout the county. As a result of project implementation, a total of 194 units could be constructed, as noted below. While these units could be developed as a result of project implementation, the project itself does not propose any site-specific development.

- 50 units in the Roseville area (South Placer County)
- 13 units in the Loomis/Newcastle area (foothill region)
- 49 units in the Auburn/Bowman area (foothill region)
- 82 units in the eastern county (High Sierra region), including:
    - 31 units near Sugar Bowl
    - 4 units near Squaw Valley
    - 42 units near SR 89

- 5 units near Northstar

Methods for Analysis

This section describes the methods for analyzing the impacts of implementing the proposed project. Criteria from Appendix G of the State CEQA Guidelines were used to determine whether the project would have a significant impact related to population and housing. Impacts related to population and housing were assessed based on review of applicable documents such as the Placer County General Plan, and General Plan EIR, as well as other local planning documents.

The project would not provide individual project approvals or entitlements for any private or public development project. Accordingly, this project does not provide CEQA coverage for individual development projects but does provide program-level CEQA review of the housing-related code amendments. It is presumed that future projects would tier from the analysis herein in accordance with Section 15168 of the CEQA Guidelines.

Components of the proposed project would include: targeted amendments to the General Plan, Placer County Zoning Ordinance, Zoning Maps, and Community Design Guidelines Manual, which would provide a framework for future housing development within the county, while taking into consideration population growth, economic factors, demographics, and community needs and wants. Specifically, Table 2-3 in Chapter 2, *Project Description*, includes a summary of the proposed changes under the project that would be made to the General Plan, Zoning Ordinance, Zoning Maps, and Community Design Guidelines Manual.

Future land uses changes would primarily occur in accordance with the General Plan. The analysis in the Draft EIR addresses the project's short- and long-term adverse impacts on the natural and built environment, under the assumption that the project would be fully implemented and built out (i.e., that 194 housing units would be constructed). Existing conditions are the baseline against which the significance of the project's potential impacts is evaluated. Therefore, the reasonably foreseeable impacts of the targeted amendments to the General Plan, Zoning Ordinance, Zoning Maps, and Community Design Guidelines Manual, are compared to the existing environment and not to the provisions of the existing General Plan, Zoning Ordinance, Zoning Maps, and Design Guidelines Manual.

Analyzing the project's impacts on population and housing involved a review of the California Department of Finance data, the County's General Plan, and the Placer County Housing Strategy and Development Plan and Existing Conditions and Land Supply Assessment, then measuring the project's population-growth impact against that data.

1994 General Plan EIR Conclusions

The 1994 General Plan EIR (Placer County 1994) did not have a separate population and housing section, but treated population in the Land Use, Housing and Population section, and this analysis is incorporated by reference. Similar to the proposed project, any population growth as a result of the General Plan is indirect in nature because the General Plan does not directly propose any residential development, and only provides the framework for planning and implementation of future development.

The 1994 General Plan EIR found that the General Plan would not induce population growth or result in impacts on housing.

Thresholds of Significance

In accordance with Appendix G of the State CEQA Guidelines, the proposed project would be considered to have a significant effect if it would result in any of the following conditions.

- Creation of substantial unplanned population growth in an area, either directly (e.g., by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (e.g., through extension of roads or other infrastructure).
- Displacement of a substantial number of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere.

Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Impact POP-1: Creation of substantial population growth either directly or indirectly (less than significant)

No specific development projects are proposed as part of the targeted amendments that comprise the project. The General Plan authorizes new development pursuant to its policies and in the locations identified in the General Plan. The project would revise certain General Plan policies, but would not substantively change the planned locations of future development and related growth. Potential impacts related to population are addressed and mitigated through policies, programs, and proposals or adequate infrastructure, promotion of a reasonable balance between jobs and housing, and protection of environmentally sensitive resources. Further, implementation of the project would not result in an increase in population in the county beyond projected growth or substantially beyond what was projected in the county's General Plan. The proposed project's impact on population would be less than significant.

The project would allow residential densities, when part of a mixed-use project or within a mixed-use zone, to be measured using a General Commercial (GC) and High Density Residential (HDR) land use designation. Specifically, the amendment would increase the floor area ratio (FAR) to 2.0 for the HDR land use designation to be consistent with the existing FAR under the GC land use designation. In addition, a smaller lot size would be allowed than currently depicted in General Plan Table 1-2 when a project is consistent with mixed-use projects and cluster housing project standards, and would allow up to 30 units per acre. The actual effect of these changes is not expected to be substantial because the actual density of a project would be influenced by a project's lot size (i.e., smaller lots cannot sustain higher-density development due to setback and height requirements), the availability of public services and utilities, and community demand for this type of development. Historically, the County has not experienced a high demand for mixed-use development within GC and HDR land use designations. Although there is general support for GC, HDR, and Mixed-Use (MU) development, and the 2013 General Plan includes policies and objectives for these types of development, in the past 15 years, the County has only approved two projects (Placer Vineyards and Martis Valley West Parcel Project) with such types of development. Given that up to 79,648 additional residences may be built in the county based on the current General Plan provisions, without the proposed project's targeted amendments, the number of additional residences (which could include up to 194 housing units) attributable to the targeted General Plan amendments would not be a substantial change in the amount of growth associated with implementation of the General Plan.

General Plan Table 2-3 would be amended to allow for MU/Multifamily (MF) uses in certain land use designations. Specifically, General Commercial (C-2), Commercial Planned Development (CPD), or MU zone districts would be allowed within the High Density Residential (HDR) land use designation; MF zoning would be allowed in the GC land use designation; and smaller lot sizes would be allowed than currently depicted in the table when a project is consistent with cluster housing project standards. It is not possible to estimate the number of additional residences beyond the 194 units that could potentially occur in targeted areas that might be built as a result of this change—there are too many variables to support more than speculations. However, given that the amendment could allow residential uses on parcels beyond the identified 194 parcels, it is reasonably foreseeable that there would be situations additional residences could be built on qualifying parcels.

It is not anticipated that the project would induce growth beyond what is projected in the current General Plan. The project's proposed targeted amendments in the General Plan, Zoning Ordinance, Zoning Maps, and Community Design Guidelines Manual to facilitate the development of housing units affect a relatively limited number of parcels that are available for development and accessible to existing infrastructure limit the practical effect of this higher density potential on the projected number of residences. The impact would be ***less than significant***.

Impact POP-2: Displacement of a substantial number of existing housing or people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere (no impact)

The project would not displace existing housing or existing residents; no aspects of the project encourage removal of housing or allow substantial non-residential uses in existing residential areas. As outlined in Section 2.3, *Project Objectives*, or Chapter 2, *Project Description*, the project's objectives include increasing the availability of housing types; better harmonizing housing-related policies, standards, objectives, General Plan policies and zoning; and support new housing construction. Therefore, ***no impact*** would result.

3.14.3 References Cited

California Department of Finance. 2020a. E-1 Population Estimates for Cities, Counties, and the State—January 2018 and 2019. Available: http://www.dof.ca.gov/Forecasting/Demographics/Estimates/e-1// Accessed: April 20, 2020.

California Department of Finance. 2020b. E-1: City/County Population Estimates with Annual Percentage Change. Available: http://www.dof.ca.gov/Forecasting/Demographics/Estimates/e-1/. Accessed: May 28, 2020.

Placer County. 1994. Placer County General Plan EIR.

Placer County. 2013. *Placer County General Plan*. May 2013. Available: https://www.placer.ca.gov/2977/Placer-County-General-Plan. Accessed: June 10, 2020.

Placer County. 2019. *Placer County Housing Strategy and Development Plan Recommendations Report*. June 2019.

World Population Review. 2020. Population of Counties in California (2020). Available: https://worldpopulationreview.com/us-counties/ca/. Accessed: June 1, 2020.

3.15 Public Services, Recreation, and Utilities and Service Systems

This section addresses the potential impacts of Placer County's (County) Proposed General Plan amendments, Zoning Ordinance update, and the development of design standards and guidelines for mixed-use development (project) on public services, recreation and utilities/service systems. It describes the existing conditions of the project area and identifies the applicable plans, policies, laws and regulations.

Comments received on the Notice of Preparation included concerns regarding the project's potential to adversely affect public services, recreational facilities, and utilities/service systems. This analysis considers potential project impacts on public services and utilities.

3.15.1 Existing Conditions

Regulatory Setting

Federal

There are no federal regulations related to public services, utilities, or recreation as they pertain to the proposed project.

State

Mitigation Fee Act (California Government Code §§ 66000–66008)

Enacted as Assembly Bill (AB) 1600, the Mitigation Fee Act requires a local agency establishing, increasing, or imposing an impact fee as a condition of development to identify the purpose of the fee and the use to which the fee is to be put. The agency must also demonstrate a reasonable relationship between the fee and the purpose for which it is charged, and between the fee and the type of development plan on which it is to be levied. The Act came into force on January 1, 1989 (7 California Government Code §§ 66000–66008).

California Green Building Standards Code, Title 24 (CALGreen)

The California Green Building Standards Code (CALGreen) (Part 11, Title 24) was adopted as part of the California Building Standards Code (24 California Code of Regulations). CALGreen applies to the planning, design, operation, construction, use and occupancy of newly constructed buildings and requires the installation of energy- and water-efficient indoor infrastructure for all new projects beginning after January 1, 2011. CALGreen also requires newly constructed buildings to develop a waste management plan and divert at least 50 percent of the construction materials generated during project construction.

The current 2019 Building Energy Efficiency Standards for the State of California were adopted on January 1, 2020. While the 2019 standards do not require zero net energy buildings, they are expected to result in substantially reduced carbon emissions from newly constructed residential and nonresidential buildings throughout California. New requirements under the 2019 standards

include solar photovoltaic systems on all new homes, as well as measures that encourage energy storage technologies, such as batteries, heat pump water heaters, and highly efficient air filters.

California Fire Code

The California Fire Code, also referred to as Title 24 of the California Building Standards Code, exists to establish minimum fire code requirements to ensure good building practices and public safety. It applies to new and existing buildings and structures, and ensures both structural safety and safe ingress and egress for firefighting needs. The code establishes fire safety regulations. The code is revised every 3 years to ensure it remains up to date with the most applicable safety standards.

Urban Water Management Planning Act

All public water agencies providing water to at least 3,000 customers or supplying at least 3,000 acre-feet per year are required to prepare an urban water management plan (UWMP) in accordance with California Water Code Section 10610 et seq. The California Department of Water Resources provides guidance to urban water suppliers on the preparation and implementation of UWMPs, which must be updated at least every 5 years.

Placer County Water Agency's (PCWA) current UWMP is the 2015 plan, which was adopted in June 2016. The UWMP serves as a long-term water resources planning tool to guide sustainable water use associated with growth projections within the service area (Placer County Water Agency 2016a).

Senate Bill 610, Water Supply Assessments

Senate Bill (SB) 610 requires that certain large projects subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) prepare a specified water supply assessment (WSA) (California Department of Water Resources 2003). The WSA must be furnished to the local government for inclusion in any environmental documentation for certain projects (as defined in California Water Code § 10912(a)) subject to CEQA. This legislation also expands the requirements for certain types of information in a UWMP, including an identification of any existing water supply entitlements, water rights, or water service contracts held relevant to the WSA for a proposed project, and a description of water deliveries received in prior years

Senate Bill 1383

In September 2016, Governor Brown signed into law SB 1383, establishing methane emissions reduction targets in a statewide effort to reduce emissions of short-lived climate pollutants (SLCP) in various sectors of California's economy. The new law codifies the California Air Resources Board's Short-Lived Climate Pollutant Reduction Strategy, established pursuant to SB 605, to achieve reductions in the statewide emissions of short-lived climate pollutants.

Since methane is a SLCP produced from the decomposition of organic waste in landfills, the bill established targets to achieve a statewide 50-percent reduction in the level of the disposal of organic waste from the 2014 level by 2020 and 75-percent reduction in the level of the disposal of organic waste from the 2014 level by 2025. The bill requires CalRecycle, in coordination with the Air Resource Board, to adopt regulations to achieve the organic waste reduction targets. The Air Resources Board approved a Short-Lived Climate Pollutant Strategy in 2017.

Assembly Bill 1826

AB 1826 requires that state agencies, businesses, and multifamily complexes that generate specific quantities of organic or solid waste each week enroll in organic recycling programs through an applicable solid waste disposal company. Organic recycling programs may take the form of composting, mulching, or anaerobic digestion. Businesses and multifamily residential housing complexes that generate the following quantities are required to implement organic or solid waste recycling programs under AB 1826:

- Eight or more cubic yards of organic waste per week as of April 1, 2016
- Four of more cubic yards of organic waste per week as of January 1, 2017
- Four or more cubic yards of solid waste per week as of January 1, 2019
- Two or more cubic yards of solid waste per week as of January 1, 2020, if statewide disposal of organic waste is not reduced by half

The California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery (CalRecycle) is currently evaluating whether California has achieved its statewide organic disposal goal of reducing organic waste disposal to 50 percent of 2014 levels by 2020. If this goal is not achieved, organic composting and recycling requirements will be expanded such that businesses that generate 2 or more cubic yards of solid waste per week must comply.

Leroy F. Greene School Facilities Act of 1998 (Senate Bill 50), California Government Code, Section 65995(b), and Education Code Section 17620

SB 50 (funded by bonds sold under Proposition 1A, approved in 1998) limits the power of cities and counties to require mitigation of school facilities impacts as a condition of approving new development and provides instead for a standardized developer fee. SB 50 generally provides for a 50/50 state and local school facilities funding match. SB 50 also provides for three levels of statutory impact fees. The application level depends on whether state funding is available, whether the school district is eligible for state funding, and whether the school district meets certain additional criteria involving bonding capacity, year-round school and the percentage of moveable classrooms in use.

SB 50 amended California Government Code Section 65995, which contains limitations on Education Code Section 17620, the statute that authorizes school districts to assess development fees within school district boundaries. Government Code Section 65995(b)(3) requires the maximum square footage assessment for development to be increased every 2 years, according to inflation adjustments. On January 24, 2018, the State Allocation Board approved increasing the allowable amount of statutory school facilities fees (Level I School Fees) to $4.08 per square foot of assessable space for residential development of 500 square feet or more, and to $0.66 per square foot of chargeable covered and enclosed space for commercial/industrial development.

Local

Placer County General Plan

Section 4, *Public Facilities and Services*, of the Placer County General Plan contains goals, policies, and implementation programs intended to guide development within the county in a way that is consistent with the county's public facility and service infrastructure (Placer County 2013a). Section 8, *Health and* Safety, discusses potential safety hazards throughout Placer County, including fire

hazards. While Section 8 predominantly discusses wildfire hazards, it contains a limited discussion of policies that apply to non-wildfire hazard threats; these policies are included in the list below (Placer County 2013b). For a detailed list of relevant General Plan policies as they pertain to wildfire hazards, please refer to Section 3.18, *Wildfire.* Section 5, *Recreation and Cultural Resources*, of the Placer County General Plan contains goals, policies, and implementation programs intended to guide parkland development within the county in a way that is consistent with the County's recreational goals (Placer County 2013c). Project-relevant goals and policies from the General Plan that relate to public services, utilities, and recreation are presented below.

Public Facilities and Services

Goal 4.A. To ensure the timely development of public facilities and the maintenance of specified service levels for these facilities.

Policy 4.A.1. Where new development requires the construction of new public facilities, the new development shall fund its fair share of the construction. The County shall require dedication of land within newly developing areas for public facilities, where necessary.

Policy 4.A.2. The County shall ensure through the development review process that adequate public facilities and services are available to serve new development. The County shall not approve new development where existing facilities are inadequate unless the following conditions are met.

a. The applicant can demonstrate that all necessary public facilities will be installed or adequately financed (through fees or other means);

b. The facilities improvements are consistent with applicable facility plans approved by the County or with agency plans where the County is a participant; and,

c. The facilities improvements are designed and built to the current standards of the agency providing service.

Policy 4.A.3. The County shall require that new urban development is planned and developed according to urban facility standards.

Policy 4.A.4. The County shall require proposed new development in identified underground conversion districts and along scenic corridors to underground utility lines on and adjacent to the site of proposed development or, when this is infeasible, to contribute funding for future undergrounding.

Policy 4.A.5. The County shall ensure that library facilities are provided to current and future residents in the unincorporated area. The County shall also require new development to fund its fair share of library facilities.

Implementation Program 4.1. The County, in consultation with public service providers, shall establish thresholds beyond which new residential development will be restricted until adequate public services and facilities are provided. The extent of development limitations should reflect the severity of the service and facility needs.

Implementation Program 4.4. The County shall continue to require developers to obtain will-serve letters from all providers of public facilities and services to new development.

Public Facilities and Services Funding

Goal 4.B. To ensure that adopted facility and service standards are achieved and maintained through the use of equitable funding methods.

Policy 4.B.1. The County shall require that new development pay its fair share of the cost of all existing facilities it uses based on the demand for these facilities attributable to the new development; exceptions may be made when new development generates significant public benefits

(e.g., low income housing, needed health facilities) and when alternative sources of funding can be identified to offset foregone revenues.

Policy 4.B.2. The County shall require that new development pay the cost of upgrading existing public facilities or construction of new facilities that are needed to serve the new development; exceptions may be made when new development generates significant public benefits (e.g., low income housing, needed health facilities) and when alternative sources of funding can be identified to offset foregone revenues.

Policy 4.B.3. The County shall require, to the extent legally possible, that new development pay the cost of providing public services that are needed to serve the new development; exceptions may be made when new development generates significant public benefits (e.g., low income housing, needed health facilities) and when alternative sources of funding can be identified to offset foregone revenues. This includes working with the cities to require new development within city limits to mitigate impacts on countywide facilities and services.

Policy 4.B.5. When adopting, amending, and imposing fees and developer exactions, the County shall consider the effects of such fees and exactions on project economics and the County's development goals, and for residential development, housing affordability. This consideration shall recognize any increase in the value of property resulting from County granted entitlements, including the redesignation of agricultural land for development.

Policy 4.B.6. The County shall require the preparation of a fiscal impact analysis for all major land development projects. The analysis will examine the fiscal impacts on the County and other service providers which result from large-scale development. A major project is a residential project with 100 or more dwelling units or mixed use projects, including specific plans with 100 or more dwelling units and 10 acre or more of non-residential land uses (exclusive of open space/greenbelt).

Implementation Program 4.6. The County shall develop and adopt ordinances specifying acceptable methods for new development to pay for new capital facilities and expanded services. Possible mechanisms include development fees, assessment districts, land/facility dedications, and County service areas.

Implementation Program 4.7. The County shall adopt fee schedules for new development to fund needed public facilities and services.

Water Supply and Delivery

Goal 4.C. To ensure the availability of an adequate and safe water supply and the maintenance of high quality water in water bodies and aquifers used as sources of domestic supply.

Policy 4.C.1. The County shall require proponents of new development to demonstrate the availability of a long-term, reliable water supply. The County shall require written certification from the service provider that either existing services are available or needed improvements will be made prior to occupancy. Where the County will approve groundwater as the domestic water source, test wells, appropriate testing, and/or report(s) from qualified professionals will be required substantiating the long-term availability of suitable groundwater.

Policy 4.C.2. The County shall approve new development based on the following guidelines for water supply:

a. Urban and suburban development should rely on public water systems using surface supply.

b. Rural communities should rely on public water systems. In cases where parcels are larger than those defined as suburban and no public water system exists or can be extended to the property, individual wells may be permitted.

c. Agricultural areas should rely on public water systems where available, otherwise individual water wells are acceptable.

Policy 4.C.5. The County shall require that new development adjacent to bodies of water used as domestic water sources adequately mitigate potential water quality impacts on these water bodies.

Policy 4.C.6. The County shall promote efficient water use and reduced water demand by:

a. Requiring water-conserving design and equipment in new construction;

b. Encouraging water-conserving landscaping and other conservation measures;

c. Encouraging retrofitting existing development with water-conserving devices; and,

d. Encouraging water-conserving agricultural irrigation practices.

Policy 4.C.7. The County shall promote the use of reclaimed wastewater to offset the demand for new water supplies.

Policy 4.C.8. When considering formation of new water service agencies, the County shall favor systems owned and operated by a governmental entity over privately- or mutually owned systems. The County will continue to authorize new privately- or mutually-owned systems only if system revenues and water supplies are adequate to serve existing and projected growth for the life of the system. The County shall ensure this through agreements or other mechanisms setting aside funds for long term capital improvements and operation and maintenance.

Policy 4.C.11. The County shall protect the watersheds of all bodies of water associated with the storage and delivery of domestic water by limiting grading, construction of impervious surfaces, application of fertilizers, and development of septic systems within these watersheds.

Policy 4.C.12. The County shall limit the annual rate of growth to 3 percent in areas where domestic water is supplied by individual or community wells. Where surface water supplies provide domestic water, the amount of growth shall be limited to what can be served by available surface water supplies assuming a 4-year drought period and usage of one acre foot of water per year per household.

Sewer Conveyance, Treatment, and Disposal

Goal 4.D. The County shall require wastewater conveyance and treatment facilities that are sufficient to serve the Placer County General Plan proposed density of residential, commercial, and public/institutional uses in a way which protects the public and environment from adverse water quality or health impacts.

Policy 4.D.1. The County shall limit the expansion of urban communities to areas where community and/or public wastewater treatment systems can be provided.

Policy 4.D.2. The County shall require developments outside of an existing sewer service area and needing new connections to public conveyance and treatment facilities to be annexed into the sewer service area providing service

Policy 4.D.3. The County shall require proponents of new development within a sewer service area to provide written certification from the service provider that either existing services are available or needed improvements will be made prior to occupancy.

Policy 4.D.4. The County shall require developments needing new connections to construct wastewater conveyance facilities which are sized and located to provide sewer service based on permitted densities and applicable sewer shed area. Wastewater conveyance systems shall be designed for gravity flow. Where gravity conveyance systems are not feasible, the agency providing service may approve pumping service where a site specific engineering analysis demonstrates the long-term cost effectiveness of pumped facilities.

Policy 4.D.5. The County shall require developments needing new connections to pay their fair share of the cost for future public wastewater facilities which support development based on the Placer County General Plan. The fair share will be based on the demand for these facilities attributable to the new development.

Policy 4.D.6. The County shall discourage extension of sewer service outside of city spheres of influence and community plan areas, except in limited circumstances to resolve a public health hazard resulting from existing development, or where there is a substantial overriding public benefit.

Policy 4.D.7. The County shall promote efficient water use and reduced wastewater system demand by:

a. Requiring water-conserving design and equipment in new construction as required in California law (AB 1881);

b. Encouraging retrofitting with water-conserving devices; and

c. Designing wastewater systems to minimize inflow and infiltration

Implementation Program 4.12. The County shall require developers to meet County requirements and standards for connection to public sewer and obtain a sewer service will-serve letter prior to the County providing sewer service to the new development.

Drainage and Water Quality

Goal 4.E. To manage rainwater and stormwater at the source in a sustainable manner that least inconveniences the public, reduces potential water-related damage, augments water supply, mitigates storm water pollution, and enhances the environment.

Policy 4.E.4. The County shall ensure that new storm drainage systems are designed in conformance with the Placer County Flood Control and Water Conservation District's Stormwater Management Manual and the County Land Development Manual.

Policy 4.E.5. The County shall continue to implement and enforce its Grading, Erosion and Sediment Control Ordinance and Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance.

Policy 4.E.10. The County shall strive to improve the quality of runoff from urban and suburban development through use of appropriate site design measures including, but not limited to vegetated swales, infiltration/sedimentation basins, riparian setbacks, oil/grit separators, rooftop and impervious area disconnection, porous pavement, and other best management practices (BMPs).

Policy 4.E.11. The County shall require new development to adequately mitigate increases in stormwater peak flows and/or volume. Mitigation measures should take into consideration impacts on adjoining lands in the unincorporated area and on properties in jurisdictions within and immediately adjacent to Placer County.

Policy 4.E.12. The County shall encourage project designs that minimize drainage concentrations and impervious coverage and maintain, to the extent feasible, natural site drainage conditions.

Policy 4.E.13. The County shall require that new development conforms with the applicable programs, policies, recommendations, and plans of the Placer County Flood Control and Water Conservation District.

Policy 4.E.14. The County shall require projects that have significant impacts on the quantity and quality of surface water runoff to allocate land as necessary for the purpose of detaining post-project flows, evapotranspiring, infiltrating, harvesting/using, and biotreating stormwater, and/or for the incorporation of mitigation measures for water quality impacts related to urban runoff.

Policy 4.E.15. The County shall require that new development in primarily urban development areas incorporate low impact development measures to reduce the amount of runoff, to the maximum extent practicable, for which retention and treatment is required.

Policy 4.E.18. The County shall, wherever feasible, require that proponents of new projects encase, or otherwise protect from contamination, domestic water supply canals where they pass through developments with lot sizes of 2.3 acres or less; where subdivision roads are constructed within 100 feet upslope or upstream from canals; and within all commercial, industrial, institutional, and multi-family developments.

Policy 4.E.19. The County shall require that proponents of new projects fence domestic water supply canals where they pass through development with lot sizes between 2.3 and 4.6 acres; and on a case-by-case basis as determined by the entity responsible for the canal. This fencing shall be installed inside the project property line, and the proponent or subsequent landowner shall be responsible for fence maintenance. Said fencing shall be designed to impede pedestrian trespass of the canal area and to impede any dumping of materials into the canal.

Landfills, Transfer Stations, and Solid Waste Recycling

Goal 4.G. To ensure the safe and efficient disposal or recycling of solid waste generated in Placer County.

Policy 4.G.1. The County shall require all new urban/suburban development, excluding rural development, to include provisions for solid waste collection.

Policy 4.G.7. The County shall require that all new development complies with applicable provisions of the Placer County Integrated Waste Management Plan.

Implementation Program 4.15. The County shall develop and adopt an ordinance requiring solid waste collection in all new urban/suburban development, excluding rural development, where appropriate.

Law Enforcement Protection

Goal 4.H. To provide adequate law enforcement services to deter crime and to meet the growing demand for services associated with increasing population and commercial/industrial development in the County.

Policy 4.H.2. The County Sheriff shall strive to maintain the following average response times for emergency calls for service:

a. 6 minutes in urban areas

b. 8 minutes in suburban areas

c. 15 minutes in rural areas

d. 20 minutes in remote rural areas

Policy 4.H.4. The County shall require new development to develop or fund sheriff facilities that, at a minimum, maintain the above standards.

Policy 4.H.5. The County shall consider public safety issues in all aspects of commercial and residential project design, including crime prevention through environmental design.

Fire Protection Services

Goal 4.I. To protect residents of and visitors to Placer County from injury and loss of life and to protect property and watershed resources from fires.

Policy 4.I.2. The County shall encourage local fire protection agencies in the County to maintain the following standards (expressed as average response times to emergency calls):

a. 4 minutes in urban areas

b. 6 minutes in suburban areas

c. 10 minutes in rural areas

Policy 4.I.3. The County shall require new development to develop or fund fire protection facilities, personnel, and operations and maintenance that, at a minimum, maintains the above service level standards.

Policy 4.I.9. The County shall ensure that all proposed developments are reviewed for compliance with fire safety standards by responsible local fire agencies per the Uniform Fire Code and other County and local ordinances.

Fire Hazards

Goal 8.C. To minimize the risk of loss of life, injury, and damage to property and watershed resources resulting from unwanted fires.

Policy 8.C.3. The County shall require that new development meets state, County, and local fire district standards for fire protection.

Schools

Goal 4.J. To provide for the educational needs of Placer County residents.

Policy 4.J.5. The County should plan and approve residential uses in those areas that are most accessible to school sites in order to enhance neighborhoods, minimize transportation requirements and costs, and minimize safety problems.

Policy 4.J.6. The County should include schools among those public facilities and services that are considered an essential part of the infrastructure that should be in place as development occurs.

Policy 4.J.11. The County and residential developers should coordinate with the school districts to ensure that needed school facilities are available for use in a timely manner. The County, to the extent possible, shall require that new school facilities are constructed and operating prior to the occupation of the residences which the schools are intended to serve.

Policy 4.J.13. Before a residential development, which includes a proposed general plan amendment, rezoning or other legislative review, can be approved by the Planning Commission or Board of Supervisors, it shall be demonstrated to the satisfaction of the hearing body that adequate school facilities shall be provided when the need is generated by the proposed development.

Public Recreation and Parks

Goal 5.A. To develop and maintain a system of conveniently located, properly-designed parks and recreational facilities to serve the needs of present and future residents, employees, and visitors.

Policy 5.A.1. The County shall strive to achieve and maintain a standard of 10 acres of improved parkland per 1,000 population. The standard shall be comprised of the following:

- 5 acres of improved active parkland per 1,000 population
- 5 acres of passive recreation area or open space per 1,000 residents

Policy 5.A.2. The County shall strive to achieve the following park facility standards:

- 1 mile of recreation trail per 1,000 population

Policy 5.A.3. The County shall require new development to provide a minimum of 5 acres of improved parkland and 5 acres of passive recreation area or open space for every 1,000 new residents of the area covered by the development. The park classification system below should be used as a guide to the type of the facilities to be developed in achieving these standards.

Park Type	Use Description	Desirable Site Characteristics
Mini-Park (≤2 acres)	Specialized facilities that serve a concentrated or limited population or specific group, such as children or senior citizens.	Within neighborhoods and close to high-density housing or housing for the elderly.

Neighborhood Park (2-15 acres)	Area for intense recreational activities, such as field games, court games, playground apparatus, skating, picnicking.	Easily-accessible to neighborhood population (geographically centered with safe walking and bike access).
Community Park (≥15 acres)	Area of diverse environmental quality. May include areas suited for intense recreational activities. May be an area of natural quality for outdoor recreation, such as walking, viewing, and picnicking. May be any combination of the above, depending on site suitability and community need.	May include natural features, such as water bodies. Easily-accessible to neighborhood served.
Linear Park	Area developed for one or more modes of travel, such as hiking, biking, horseback riding, or cross country skiing	Built or natural corridors, such as utility rights-of-way, that link other elements of the recreation system or community facilities, such as school, libraries, commercial areas, and other park areas
Special Use	Areas for specialized or single purpose recreational activities such as golf courses, nature centers, marinas, arenas, outdoor theaters, downhill ski areas, or areas that preserve, maintain, and interpret buildings, sites, and objects of archaeological significance. Also boulevards and parkways	N/A
Conservancy Areas	Protection and management of the natural/cultural environment with recreation use as a secondary objective.	Variable, depending on the resource being protected.

Policy 5.A.5. The County shall require the dedication of land and/or payment of fees, in accordance with state law (Quimby Act and the Mitigation Fee Act) to ensure funding for the acquisition and development of public recreation facilities. The fees are to be set and adjusted as necessary to provide for a level of funding that meets the actual cost to provide for all of the public parkland and park development needs generated by new development.

Policy 5.A.23. The County shall require that park and recreation facilities required in conjunction with new development be developed in a timely manner so that such facilities are available concurrently with new development.

Implementation Program 5.2. As new development occurs, the County shall consider forming County service areas (CSAs) [or other property tax-based revenue mechanisms] that have the authority to receive dedications or grants of land or funds, plus the ability to charge fees for acquisition, development, maintenance and operation of parks, open space, and riding, hiking, and bicycle trails.

Placer County Sanitary Sewer System Master Plan

The Placer County Sanitary Sewer System Master Plan fulfills State Water Resources Control Board adopted Order 2006-0003-DWQ, which requires development of a sewer system master plan for all publicly owned sewer systems more than 1 mile in length. The plan establishes design and performance standards, an operations and maintenance program, an Overflow Emergency Response Plan, a System Evaluation and Capacity Assurance Plan, and monitoring programs for the County's nine public sewer systems (Placer County 2009).

Placer County Parks and Trails Plan

The County is currently preparing a master plan to guide long-term planning and developing of its parks, trails, and other recreational facilities. The Draft Placer County Parks and Trails Master Plan was published in March 2019, and document finalization is in progress. The plan identifies a standard level of service of 5 acres of active park per 1,000 county residents, 5 acres of passive parks/open space per 1,000 people, and 1 mile of recreational trail per 1,000 people. (Placer County 2019a).

Placer County Low-Impact Development Guidebook

The *Placer County Low-Impact Development Guidebook* provides low-impact development (LID) strategies to manage stormwater runoff in the western portion of the county. The guidebook provides LID design guidance for development projects that reduce runoff and pollution and improve water quality and watershed function through the incorporation of various best management practices. Strategies outlined in the guidebook include, but are not limited to, stormwater flowpath disconnection, rainwater and snowmelt harvesting, bioretention, vegetation/landscape design, and permeable pavement (Placer County 2012).

Environmental Setting

Water Supply and Infrastructure

Water Supply

PCWA serves as the primary water resource agency in the county, managing both drinking water and irrigation water used countywide. PCWA water resources are obtained from numerous surface water sources, including, but not limited to, the American River, the Yuba River, and the Bear River. PCWA's service areas span five individual water districts (Placer County Water Agency 2016b).

- District 1: Southern Placer County along its boundary with Sacramento County, approximately west of Interstate (I-) 80. This district includes the incorporated city of Roseville.
- District 2: Northwestern Placer County, bordering Sutter County, Yuba County, and a portion of Nevada County.
- District 3: Southeastern Placer County, bordering El Dorado County. This district includes the incorporated city of Rocklin.
- District 4: Southern Placer County along its boundary with Sacramento County and El Dorado County, approximately east of I-80.

- District 5: Eastern Placer County, extending from approximately the city of Auburn to Lake Tahoe.

PCWA operates programs that reduce water waste and currently has sufficient water resources to meet all projected growth within the county for the next 30 years, including during dry and multiple dry years (Placer County Water Agency 2016a). According to the 2015 UWMP, PCWA currently delivers approximately 116,500 acre-feet of water per year to ratepayers within Placer County and delivers 23,600 acre-feet per year of untreated water to neighboring water agencies for treatment. In total, PCWA water resources serve over 200,000 people in Placer County. The projected 2020 average year water supplies for the service district are 233,800 acre-feet, with 274,800 acre-feet of water supply anticipated by 2045. In a single dry year, these supplies would be reduced to 154,450 acre-feet for 2020 and 166,450 acre-feet for 2045 (Placer County Water Agency 2016b).

The county is also served by 15 different water districts, as listed below in Table 3.15-1.

Table 3.15-1. Water Districts Serving Placer County

Water District	Location in County
South Sutter Water District	Western Placer County bordering Sutter County
San Juan Suburban Water District	Southwestern Placer County bordering Sacramento County and Lake Folsom
San Juan Suburban Water District PCWA	Southwestern Placer County between I-80 and the San Juan Suburban Water District, bordering Sacramento County
Auburn Valley Community Service District	Northern Placer County approximately 1.5 miles west of SR 49
Christian Valley Community Service District	Northern Placer County approximately 0.5 miles east of SR 49
Meadow Vista County Water District	Northern Placer County between I-80 and Nevada County, between Christian Valley Community Service District and Midway Heights County Water District
Midway Heights County Water District	Northern Placer County Between I-80 and Nevada County, northeast of Meadow Vista County Water District
Heather Glen Community Service District	Central Placer County, approximately 0.5 mile south of I-80
Serene Lakes County Water District	Northeastern Placer County along the border with Nevada County, near the communities of Norden and Soda Springs
Squaw Valley Public Service District (Fire Only)	Along SR 89 north of Lake Tahoe
Squaw Valley Public Service District (Water and Fire)	Northeastern Placer County west of SR 89 and north of Alpine Springs County Water District
Alpine Springs County Water District	Northeastern Placer County west of SR 89 and north of Squaw Valley Public Service District (Water and Fire)
Northstar Community Service District	Northeastern Placer County north of Lake Tahoe, east of SR 267, and along the border of Nevada County.
McKinney Water District	Southeastern Placer County along the border with El Dorado County, approximately 1 mile west of Lake Tahoe
Suburban Pines Community Service District	Northern Placer County immediately south of I-80 near the community of Colfax

Source: Placer County n.d.(a)
I- = Interstate
PCWA = Placer County Water Agency
SR = State Route

Water Infrastructure

PCWA owns and operates eight water treatment plants, more than 30 water storage tanks, and potable water delivery systems. PCWA also owns and operates two backup and emergency water wells, which have capacity to pump 1,000 acre-feet of non-potable water annually. This water is conveyed to other water agencies for purchase and treatment. PCWA does not own or operate any recycled water systems but anticipates development of up to 8,000 acre-feet per year of recycled water supplies by 2040 based on agreements with the City of Lincoln and the City of Roseville (Placer County Water Agency 2016b).

Wastewater Treatment

Placer County Department of Public Works operates and manages the eight sewer systems serving unincorporated county areas. These eight sewer systems include three sewer maintenance districts and four county service areas, all of which are funded by customer fees. These eight facilities form a collective network of nearly 300 miles of sewer pipe and are listed in Table 3.15-2. The county's sewer system and wastewater treatment network also includes one wastewater treatment facility, 44 sewer pump stations, and more than 500 septic tank effluent pump systems (Placer County n.d.[b]).

Table 3.15-2: Sewer Districts Serving Placer County

Sewer Facility District	Facility Type	Facility Location
Sewer Maintenance District 1	SMD	North Auburn
Sewer Maintenance District 2	SMD	Granite Bay
Sewer Maintenance District 3	SMD	Horseshoe Bar/Folsom Lake
County Service Area 28, Zone 2A3	CSA	Rocklin
County Service Area 28, Zone 6	CSA	Sheridan
County Service Area 28, Zone 55	CSA	Citrus Heights
County Service Area 28, Zone 173	CSA	Roseville
County Service Area 28, Zone 232	CSA	Roseville

Source: Placer County 2009
CSA = county service area
SMD = sewer maintenance district

The County's one WWTP is located in Sheridan. Other wastewater treatment facilities that treat County sewage include Roseville Pleasant Grove Regional WWTP, Sacramento Regional WWTP, Roseville Dry Creek Regional WWTP, and Tahoe City PUD & Truckee Tahoe Sanitary Authority (Placer County 2009; Placer County n.d.[a]).

Stormwater

In more urbanized areas such as Roseville or Auburn, there are more impervious surfaces that increase direct runoff during storm events. Stormwater is directed to drainpipes and channels. Some

portions of the county are in less developed areas, some of which have a limited impervious stormwater system, comprised mainly of culverts, ditches, and gutters along roads. Stormwater in these areas can flow into a stormwater drain system or directly to a surface water feature (lake, stream, river, or wetland). Section 3.10, *Hydrology and Water Quality*, provides additional detail about the watersheds in Placer County.

Solid Waste Treatment

Placer County is divided into four solid waste service franchise areas. Franchise Area 4 also includes the Franchise Area 4 Foresthill Fee Subarea. The County owns multiple solid waste disposal facilities within these franchise areas, including the Eastern Regional Materials Recovery Facility, two transfer stations in Meadow Vista and Foresthill, and four currently closed landfills.

Solid waste in the unincorporated areas of western Placer County, the cities of Rocklin, Auburn, and Colfax, and the town of Loomis is collected by Recology Auburn Placer. The cities of Roseville and Lincoln provide their own collection services. Recycling services vary by jurisdiction. Recology Auburn Placer provides collection of various recyclables at curbside, as well as on-call residential collection of some universal and hazardous wastes. (Placer County 2017).

Residents and businesses in Franchise areas 2 and 3 are served by Tahoe Truckee Sanitary Disposal and Waste is delivered to the Eastern Regional Materials Recovery Facility (ERMRF) for processing, recovery of recyclable materials, and ultimate disposal at Lockwood Landfill in Nevada (Placer County 2017). The ERMRF has a maximum permitted throughput of 105 tons of solid waste per day (CalRecycle DATE). The Lockwood Landfill covers approximately 350 acres with a waste volume of 64.8 million cubic yards (Nevada Division of Environmental Protection 2012) with a daily volume of waste received at approximately 5,000 tons (Nevada Division of Environmental Protection n.d.).

Most solid waste collected in unincorporated Placer County is delivered to the Western Placer Waste Management Authority (WPWMA). WPWMA operates the Western Regional Sanitary Landfill and MRF, which sorts recyclables, processes compostable materials, and serves as a hazardous materials disposal site. The landfill has a maximum permitted material throughput of 1,900 tons per day and a remaining capacity of 29,093,819 cubic yards. The facility is currently permitted through January 2058 (California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery 2019a; Western Placer Waste Management Authority 2015).

Recyclable solid waste generated within the county is brought to five recycling facilities. These facilities include the Auburn Transfer Station, Foresthill Transfer Station, and Meadow Vista Transfer Station in the central county area; Eastern Regional Materials Recovery Facility in the Tahoe area, and the MRF in the western county area.

In unincorporated Placer County, the per-resident solid waste disposal rate target is 6.3 pounds per day, and the per-employee solid waste disposal rate target is 20.2 pounds per day. In 2018, the year for which data is most recently available, the county met both of these targets, achieving a per-resident solid waste disposal rate of 5.0 pounds per day and a per-employee solid waste disposal rate of 14.2 pounds per day (California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery 2019b).

Electricity, Natural Gas, and Telecommunications

Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) provides electrical and natural gas services throughout the majority of Placer County (Pacific Gas and Electric Company 2020). The California Pacific Electric

Company, an element of Liberty Utilities, provides electrical service to Squaw Valley and Alpine Meadows. Less developed areas rely on propane provided by AmeriGas. Telecommunication (including internet) service is provided to the businesses and residential customers within the county primarily by AT&T. Cable and television service is provided to customers primarily by Comcast and Consolidated Communications.

Police Services

The Placer County Sheriff's Office (PCSO) provides police service throughout unincorporated Placer County. In Fiscal Year 2015/2016, the most recent year for which information is available based on the PCSO Strategic Plan 2016–2020, PSCO field operations consisted of 137 sworn staff and 11 professional staff. The Tahoe area, which consists of its own focused PCSO unit, consists of 39 sworn staff and 7 professional staff. Additional PCSO staff include 237 staff in the corrections/courts branch, 88 staff in the support services/administration branch, and 65 staff that provide "extra help" (51 sworn staff, 1 correctional officer, and 13 professional staff) (Placer County Sheriff's Office 2016).

PCSO field operations consist of the following special teams (Placer County Sheriff's Office 2018):

- Homeless Liaisons & Problem Orienting Policing
- Dive Team
- Marine Rescue
- Search & Rescue
- Hostage Negotiation Team
- Special Enforcement Team
- Honor Guard
- K9 Unit

PCSO conducts operations out of the following five facilities:

Auburn Justice Center
2929 Richardson Drive
Auburn, CA 95603

Colfax Substation
10 Culver Street
Colfax, CA 95713

Foresthill Office
24580 Main Street
Foresthill, CA 95631

Loomis Office
3140 Horseshoe Bar Road, Suite D
Loomis, CA 95650

Tahoe Substation
2501 N Lake Boulevard
Tahoe City, CA 96145

Fire Protection Services

Placer County Fire operates out of 14 total stations (eight full-time stations and six volunteer stations). All stations are listed below in Table 3.15-3.

Table 3.15-3. Fire Stations Serving Placer County

Full-Time Placer County Fire Stations	Volunteer Stations
Station 70—Lincoln Station 1112 Wise Road Lincoln, CA 95648	Station 32—Dutch Flat Station 980 Sacramento Street Dutch Flat, CA 95714
Station 77—Sunset Station 1300 Athens Avenue Lincoln, CA 95648	Station 73—Fowler Station 4710 Fruitvale Road Lincoln, CA 95648
Station 100—Dry Creek Station 8350 Cook Riolo Road Roseville, CA 95747	Station 74—Termalands Station 8500 Lakefew Lane Lincoln, CA 95648
Station 180—Atwood Station 11645 Atwood Road Auburn, CA 94603	Station 75—Paige Station 5390 Nicolaus Road Lincoln, CA 95648
Station 182—Ophir Station 9305 Wise Road Auburn, CA 95603	Station 78—Sheridan Station 4952 Riosa Road Sheridan, CA 95681
Station 10—Bowman Station (also serves that the CAL FIRE Unit Headquarters) 13760 Lincoln Way Auburn, CA 95603	Station 100—Dry Creek Station 8350 Cook Riolo Road Roseville, CA 95747
Station 30—Colfax Station 24020 Fowler Road Colfax, CA 95713	
Station 33—Alta Station 33752 Alta Forestry Road Alta, CA 95701	

Source: Placer County n.d.(c)

Placer County Fire provides fire protection services in Local Responsibility Areas throughout the county. However, as described in greater detail in Section 3.18, much of Placer County is located within the Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone. These zones fall within the State Responsibility Area for wildfire prevention, control, and suppression, and are therefore managed by California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection service operators (California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection 2007).

Schools

Placer County is currently served by the following 16 school districts countywide. Each district consists of one or more schools, including elementary schools, middle schools, high schools, and charter schools (Placer County Office of Education 2020).

- Ackerman Charter School District
- Alta-Dutch Flat School District
- Auburn Union School District
- Colfax Elementary School District

- Dry Creek Joint Elementary School District
- Eureka Union School District
- Foresthill Union School District
- Loomis Union School District
- Newcastle Elementary School District
- Placer Hills Union School District
- Placer Union High School District
- Rocklin Unified School District
- Roseville City School District
- Roseville Joint Union High School District
- Tahoe-Truckee Unified School District
- Western Placer Unified School District

In addition to the 16 school districts and all associated schools that comprise those districts, an additional school—the United Auburn Indian Community School—is currently proposed (Placer County 2019b).

Recreational Facilities

The Placer County Parks Division (PCPD) manages 21 active parks, 15 passive parks/open space areas, seven beaches and 44 miles of off-street trails parks countywide. These parks, open space areas and beaches are identified in Table 3.15-4. According to the Draft Placer County Parks and Trails Plan, the County manages a total of 2,035 acres of parks, beaches, trailheads, campgrounds, and open space areas. The plan classifies county parks as follows:

- Active Parks (Local and Specialty)
    - Mini-Park (less than 2 acres)
    - Neighborhood Park (2–15 acres)
    - Community Park (more than 15 acres)
- Beaches
- Passive Parks/Open Space (Local and Regional)
    - Linear Park/Greenways/Trail
    - Special Use
    - Conservancy Areas

Table 3.15-4. Placer County Parks Division–Managed Recreational Facilities

Recreational Facility	Managing Agency	Size (acres)	Park Classification
Applegate Park	PCPD	2.5	Active Park, Local
Applegate Park and Tot Lot	PCPD	0.2	Active Park, Local
Bear River Campground	PCPD	192	Passive Park/Open Space, Campground
Cisco Grove Gould Park	PCPD	16	Passive Park/Open Space, Local
Commons Beach	PCPD	6.9	Beach
Douglas Ranch Park	PCPD	4.5	Active Park, Local
Doyle Ranch Park	PCPD	4.6	Active Park, Local
Dry Creek Community Park	PCPD	34	Active Park, Local
Dry Creek Open Space	PCPD	200.25	Passive Park/Open Space, Local
Dutch Flat Community Center Park	PCPD	0.25	Active Park, Local
Dutch Flat Community Pool	PCPD	4.8	Active Park, Specialty
Franklin Community School Park	PCPD	4.5	Active Park, Local
Foresthill Leroy E. Botts Memorial Park	PCPD	18.2	Active Park, Local
Foresthill Trail Staging Area	PCPD	2	Trail
Granite Bay Community Park	PCPD	16.3	Active Park, Local
Green Valley Trailhead	PCPD	10	Passive Park/Open Space, Local
Griff Creek Recreation Area	PCPD	0.5	Beach
Griffith Quarry Park	PCPD	24.4	Passive Park/Open Space, Local
Heritage Plaza Park	PCPD	0.75	Active Park, Specialty
Hidden Falls Regional Park	PCPD	1,200	Passive Park/Open Space, Regional
Lake Forest Beach	PCPD	3	Beach
Lakeside Park	PCPD	2.8	Beach/Open Space, Local
Loomis Basin Community Park (North and South)	PCPD	33	Active Park, Local
Meadow Vista Arena/Staging Area	PCPD	8	Passive Park/Open Space, Local
Miner's Ravine Nature Reserve	PCPD	24.2	Passive Park/Open Space, Local
Moondunes Beach	PCPD	1.5	Beach
North Park	PCPD	2.7	Active Park, Local
Plaza Park	PCPD	0.5	Passive Park/Open Space, Local
Ronald L. Feist Open Space	PCPD	6.4	Passive Park/Open Space, Local

Recreational Facility	Managing Agency	Size (acres)	Park Classification
Ronald L. Feist Park	PCPD	12.1	Active Park, Local
Sabre City Park	PCPD	5	Active Park, Local
Secline Beach	PCPD	4.1	Beach
Sheridan Park	PCPD	4	Active Park, Local
Speedboat Beach	PCPD	1	Beach
Spring Meadows Park	PCPD	0.5	Active Park, Local
Squaw Valley Park	PCPD	8	Passive Park/Open Space, Local
Sterling Pointe Equestrian Staging Area/Trail	PCPD	5.92	Trail
Sterling Pointe Park	PCPD	8	Active Park, Local
Traylor Ranch Nature Reserve and Bird Sanctuary	PCPD	88	Passive Park/Open Space, Local
Treelake Terrace Park	PCPD	2.3	Active Park, Local
Treelake Village Park	PCPD	8	Active Park, Local
Todd Valley Pond Park	PCPD	41.1	Passive Park/Open Space, Local

Source: Placer County Table 7:2019a

In addition to the PCPD-managed parks identified in Table 3.15-4, Placer County is home to numerous other recreational facilities, including the Tahoe National Forest, Folsom State Recreation Area, Auburn State Recreation Area, Kings Beach State Recreation Area, Tahoe State Recreation Area, Burton Creek State Park, Donner Memorial State Park, Sugar Pine Point State Park, and Ward Creek Park Property. The Western States Trail spans a large portion of the county (Placer County Parks Division 2019a).

As quoted under *Regulatory Setting*, Placer County aims for a total of 5 acres of active parks per 1,000 residents and 5 acres of passive parks/open space areas, as well as a mile of trail per 1,000 residents. The County evaluates these standards based on county geography. Current park standards based on these six geographic regions are described in Table 3.15-5; the level of service ratios exclude parks managed by agencies in incorporated cities, including Roseville, Rocklin, and Loomis. Instances in which the County's desired park facility level of service is not currently met are identified with an asterisk. In addition to the existing parkland facilities listed in Table 3.15-4, the County has identified future planned parkland development within each region. Planned future parkland development is also identified in Table 3.15-5.

Table 3.15-5: Planned Future Parkland

Geographic Area	Park Type	Current Level of Service (acres)	2028 level of service (acres)
West Placer	Active Parks	64	57.6
	Passive Parks/Open Space	1,513	2,235.7
North Auburn/Meadow Vista	Active Parks	124	148.5
	Passive Parks/Open Space	882	882
Granite Bay/Loomis Basin	Active Parks	164	173
	Passive Parks/Open Space	66,867	66,867

Geographic Area	Park Type	Current Level of Service (acres)	2028 level of service (acres)
West Slope	Active Parks	13	13.5
	Passive Parks/Open Space	5,137	5,137
Foresthill Divide	Active Parks	33	33
	Passive Parks/Open Space	1,5619	1,5619
Tahoe	Active Parks	247	247
	Passive Parks/Open Space	5,983	5,983

Source: Placer County 2019a

Other Public Service Facilities

The Placer County library is served by nine different library branches and a bookmobile. Three Placer County Library branches, Colfax Library, Penryn Library, and Rocklin Library, have undergone expansions in the last 10 years (Placer County n.d.[d]).

3.15.2 Environmental Impacts

The environmental analysis in this section focuses on the two main components of the project: (1) amendments to the Land Use Element in the County's General Plan, Zoning Ordinance, and Community Design Manual, and (2) the potential locations for the new dwelling units that could be constructed as a result of changes to the Zoning Ordinance (a total of 194 units distributed throughout the county).

The general land use pattern allowed by the housing-related code amendments is evaluated in the following discussions for its potential to adversely affect public services, recreational facilities, and utilities/service systems.

The analysis in this section also considers the impacts from the potential development of dwelling units in targeted areas throughout the county. As a result of project implementation, a total of 194 units could be constructed. While these units could be developed as a result of project implementation, the project itself does not propose any site-specific development.

- 50 units in the Roseville area (South Placer County)
- 13 units in the Loomis/Newcastle area (foothill region)
- 49 units in the Auburn/Bowman area (foothill region)
- 82 units in the eastern county (High Sierra region), including:
    - 31 units near Sugar Bowl
    - 4 units near Squaw Valley
    - 42 units near State Route 89
    - 5 units near Northstar

Methods for Analysis

Criteria from Appendix G of the State CEQA Guidelines were used to evaluate potential project-related impacts on public services, recreation, and utilities and service systems. Impacts were assessed though review of applicable documents including the Placer County General Plan and EIR, and other local planning documents.

The project would not provide individual project approvals or entitlements for any private or public development project. Accordingly, this project does not provide CEQA coverage for individual development projects but does provide program-level CEQA review of the housing-related code amendments. It is presumed that future projects would tier from the analysis herein in accordance with Section 15168 of the CEQA Guidelines.

Components of the proposed project would include: targeted amendments to the General Plan, Placer County Zoning Ordinance, Zoning Maps, and Community Design Guidelines Manual, which would provide a framework for future housing development within the county, while taking into consideration population growth, economic factors, demographics, and community needs and wants. Specifically, Table 2-3 in Chapter 2, *Project Description*, includes a summary of the proposed changes under the project that would be made to the General Plan, Zoning Ordinance, Zoning Maps, and Community Design Guidelines Manual.

Future land uses changes would primarily occur in accordance with the General Plan. The analysis in the Draft EIR addresses the project's short- and long-term adverse impacts on the natural and built environment, under the assumption that the project would be fully implemented and built out (i.e., that the 194 housing units would be constructed). Existing conditions are the baseline against which the significance of the project's potential impacts is evaluated. Therefore, the reasonably foreseeable impacts of the targeted amendments, or changes, to the General Plan, Zoning Ordinance, Zoning Maps, and Community Design Guidelines Manual, are compared to the existing environment and not to the provisions of the existing General Plan, Zoning Ordinance, Zoning Maps, and Design Guidelines Manual.

Thresholds of Significance

In accordance with Appendix G of the State CEQA Guidelines, the proposed project would be considered to have a significant effect if it would result in any of the conditions listed below.

- Substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities or creation of a need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives for any of the following public services:
    - Fire protection?
    - Police protection?
    - Schools?
    - Other public facilities?
- Increased use of existing recreational facilities, resulting in substantial physical deterioration.

- Construction or expansion of recreational facilities that might have an adverse physical effect on the environment.
- Relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment, stormwater drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, with the potential to cause significant environmental effects.
- Creation of a need for new or expanded entitlements or resources for sufficient water supply to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry, and multiple dry years.
- A determination by the wastewater treatment provider that serves or may serve the project that it does not have adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments.
- Generation of solid waste in exceedance of state or local standards or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or other impediment to the attainment of solid waste reduction goals, or failure to comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste.

Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Impact PS-1: Creation of a need for new or physically altered governmental facilities to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives for fire protection, police protection, schools, or other public facilities (less than significant)

Development associated with project implementation could result in an increase in individuals throughout the county. Additional population in the county would increase the service demands on fire protection, policy protection, schools, and other public facilities. If demands on such facilities and services were to substantially increase, service ratios may no longer be met, and existing public service facilities may need to be expended, or new such facilities would need to be constructed.

It is anticipated that new development associated with project implementation would be dispersed widely throughout the county; it is not expected that all new individuals associated with project implementation would contribute to substantial service demand increases at any single individual public service facility. Additionally, the General Plan contains policies and strategies that prevent development within the county from exceeding acceptable service levels. In accordance with the Policy 4.A.2 of the General Plan, the County would ensure through the development review process that adequate public facilities and services are available to serve new development, and the County would not approve new development where existing facilities are inadequate unless the following conditions are met. The County achieves this by requiring all applicants to demonstrate that all necessary public facilities would be installed or adequately financed through developer fees or other means. Therefore, while it is not anticipated that isolated population growth throughout the county would contribute to service ratio declines at public facilities such that facility expansion or construction would need to be built or expanded, adherence to existing General Plan policies would ensure that future development contributes to funds that would offset such project costs. Additionally, if any such facilities do need to be constructed at a later date, they would be subject to their own individual environmental review and analysis of potential impacts. Therefore, impacts would be ***less than significant***.

Impact PS-2: Increased use of existing recreational facilities resulting in substantial physical deterioration; construction or expansion of recreational facilities, resulting in adverse effect on the environment (less than significant)

As described in Chapter 2, project implementation could result in the addition of up to 194 dwelling units throughout the county and additional growth is possible to due proposed changes to the General Plan and zoning code.

Based on planned population growth through 2028, Placer County would not fulfill its goal level of service of 5 acres of active recreational facilities per 1,000 residents in the North Auburn/Meadow Vista region, the Foresthill Divide region, the Tahoe region, or the West Slope region. Increased use of existing recreational facilities within these three regions could potentially cause facility deterioration or degradation because the facilities currently serve a population that is larger than the County's intended goal.

While new residents associated with project implementation and future development could use some existing recreational features, the scale of population increase in relation to the geographic scale of the county is such that the project would not directly contribute to parkland level of service deficiencies. This is also, in part, due to compliance with General Plan Policy 5.A.3. This policy, which is applicable to large projects, requires new development within the county to provide a minimum of 5 acres of improved parkland and 5 acres of passive recreation area or open space and one mile of recreational trail for every 1,000 new residents of the area covered by the development, thereby offsetting any additional parkland needs within geographic regions of the county that do not currently meet desired standards to at least a neutral level. Impacts would therefore be ***less than significant***.

The project does not include, and would not directly induce, the construction or expansion of recreational facilities in the project area. There would be ***no impact***.

Impact PS-3: Relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment, stormwater drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, with the potential to cause significant environmental effects (less than significant)

Development associated with the project is expected to occur in areas already sufficiently served by utilities and service systems as the project serves to allow for infill development, including allowing for a fourth unit on parcels already containing three units. As described in Chapter 2, through its updates to the General Plan, Zoning Ordinance, and Community Design Guidelines Manual, the project proposes to facilitate housing development by allowing for more variation of development in areas where infrastructure and development already exists. Zoning Map Amendment ZM-2 would Revise Building Site (-B), Use Permit Required (-UP) and Density Limitation (-DL) combining zone district on all Commercial and Multifamily zones where adequate infrastructure and public services are available and replace these with zones Design Scenic Corridor (-Dc), Design Sierra (-Ds) and Design Historical (-Dh). Development Standard DS-3 under the project would reduce or remove lot coverage standards in Commercial and Higher-Density Residential zones including when part of a mixed-use project or areas where adequate infrastructure and public services are available, and Development Standard DS-4 would establish a density bonus code in areas with adequate infrastructure and public services.

Implementation of many aspects of the project inherently requires that adequate infrastructure and public utilities be in place. Future development associated with project implementation would be

required to comply with all other existing General Plan conditions requiring development only in areas with adequate infrastructure capacity. There are potential deficiencies in wastewater system, particularly in North Auburn, where demand could outpace capacity. As future projects are proposed, they will be required to undergo an analysis to determine whether adequate wastewater capacity exists. However, the wastewater system overall in Placer County has adequate capacity to accommodate future development without the substantial expansion of infrastructure. Water, stormwater drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities would not need to be substantially expanded or built as part of the proposed project in a manner that would cause significant environmental effects, and impacts would be ***less than significant***.

Impact PS-4: Creation of a need for new or expanded entitlements or resources for sufficient water supply to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry, and multiple dry years (less than significant)

As described in *Environmental Setting*, PCWA has sufficient water resources to meet all projected growth within the county for the next 30 years, including during dry and multiple dry years (Placer County Water Agency 2016a). Additionally, future development within the county would be required to comply with General Plan Policy 4.C.1, which requires that developers demonstrate the availability of a long-term, reliable water supply to serve their planned developments. In accordance with Policy 4.C.1, the County would require written certification from the service provider that either existing services are available or needed improvements would be made prior to occupancy. Where the County would approve groundwater as the domestic water source, test wells, appropriate testing, and/or report(s) from qualified professionals would be required substantiating the long-term availability of suitable groundwater. For this reason, future development associated with project implementation would not be expected to require new or expanded entitlements or resources for sufficient water supply and impacts would be ***less than significant***.

Impact PS-5: Project-related exceedance of state or local solid waste standards or of the capacity of local infrastructure, or other impediments to attaining solid waste reduction goals, or failure to comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste (less than significant)

Population increase associated with project implementation is not expected to be substantial. For example, if the 194 units were to be built out as a result of project implementation, an increase in population of up to 555 new individuals in the county could result. This increased population would result in a subsequent increase in solid waste generated. At the county's current solid waste disposal rate of 5.0 pounds per day per resident, the 537 new residents would generate 2,685 pounds per day of solid waste, or approximately 1.34 tons per day of solid waste. This accounts for only 0.07 percent of the Western Regional Sanitary Landfill's maximum daily throughput capacity. Although a small portion of the 1.34 tons of solid waste per day would be processed through the ERMRF, it is not expected to contribute a significant amount to the current throughput of 105 tons per day.

Multifamily units that may be constructed as part of the project would be subject to AB 1826, which requires that state agencies, businesses, and multifamily complexes that generate 2 or more cubic yards of solid waste per week enroll in organic recycling programs (California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery 2019a), which would reduce anticipated solid waste generation. It is not anticipated that future development under the project would result in substantially different solid waste generation rates than the county's 2018 CalRecycle solid waste disposal rates, in which the county meets all established disposal goals (California Department of Resources

Recycling and Recovery 2019b). Therefore, the project would not exceed state or local solid waste standards or infrastructure capacity, nor would it fail to comply with solid waste reduction goals. Impacts would be ***less than significant.***

3.15.3 References Cited

California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection. 2007. Fire Hazard Severity Zones in SRA: Placer County. Available https://osfm.fire.ca.gov/media/6742/fhszs_map31.pdf. Accessed May 28, 2020.

California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery. 2019a. SWIS Facility Detail: Western Regional Landfill (31-AA-02-10). Available https://www2.calrecycle.ca.gov/SWFacilities/Directory/31-AA-0210/Detail/. Accessed May 28, 2020.

California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery. 2019b. Jurisdiction Diversion/Disposal Rate Summary (2007–Current). Jurisdiction: Placer-Unincorporated. Available https://www2.calrecycle.ca.gov/LGCentral/DiversionProgram/JurisdictionDiversionPost2006. Accessed May 29, 2020.

California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery. 2019c. SWIS Facility Detail: Eastern Regional Landfill (31-AA-0560). Available: https://www2.calrecycle.ca.gov/SolidWaste/SiteActivity/Details/2550?siteID=2280. Accessed August 31, 2020.

California Department of Water Resources. 2003. *Guidebook for Implementation of Senate Bill 610 and Senate Bill 221 of 2001 to Assist Water Suppliers, Cities, and Counties in Integrating Water and Land Use Planning*. Available: https://water.ca.gov/LegacyFiles/pubs/use/sb_610_sb_221_guidebook/guidebook.pdf. Accessed May 28, 2020.

Nevada Division of Environmental Protection. 2012. Lockwood Regional Landfill. Bureau of Waste Management. Available http://www.trpa.org/documents/rseis/3.13%20Public%20Services%20and%20Utilities/3.13_NDEP%202012.pdf. Accessed August 31, 2020.

Nevada Division of Environmental Protection. n.d. Lockwood Regional Landfill fact Sheet. Bureau of Waste Management. Available https://ndep.nv.gov/uploads/land-waste-solid-fac-docs/lockwood-fact-sheet.pdf. Accessed August 31, 2020.

Pacific Gas & Electric Company. 2020. Economic Development Site Tool. Available https://www.pge.com/en_US/large-business/services/economic-development/opportunities/sitetool.page. Accessed May 28, 2020.

Placer County. n.d.(a). Land Information Search GIS Tool: Water Districts. Available http://maps.placer.ca.gov/Html5viewer/Index.html?configBase=http://arcgis/Geocortex/Essentials/REST/sites/LIS_Public/viewers/LIS_Base-Public/virtualdirectory/Resources/Config/Default. Accessed May 21, 2020.

Placer County. n.d.(b). *Sewer Services*. Available https://www.placer.ca.gov/1790/Sewer-Services. Accessed May 28, 2020.

Placer County. n.d.(c). *Stations*. Available https://www.placer.ca.gov/3333/Stations. Accessed May 28, 2020.

Placer County. n.d.(d). *Placer County Library Locations & Hours*. Available https://www.placer.ca.gov/2182/Locations-Hours. Accessed May 20, 2020.

Placer County. 2009. Placer County "All Districts" Sewer System Master Plan. Available https://www.placer.ca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/2573/Volume-1---All-Districts-PDF. Accessed May 28, 2020.

Placer County. 2012. *Placer County Low Impact Development (LID) Guidebook*. Available https://www.placer.ca.gov/3634/Low-Impact-Development-Guidebook. Accessed May 29, 2020.

Placer County. 2013a. Placer County General Plan. Section 4: Public Facilities and Services. Available https://www.placer.ca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/8576/Public-Facilities-and-Services-PDF. Accessed May 28, 2020.

Placer County. 2013b. Placer County General Plan. Section 8: Health and Safety. Available https://www.placer.ca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/8567/Health-and-Safety-PDF. Accessed May 28, 2020.

Placer County. 2013c. Placer County General Plan. Section 5: Recreation and Cultural Resources. Available https://www.placer.ca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/8564/Recreation-and-Cultural-Resources-PDF. Accessed May 28, 2020.

Placer County. 2017. EIR Guidance Document Placer County Department of Facility Services Environmental Engineering Division (Solid Waste). Updated October 31, 2017.

Placer County. 2019a. Public Draft Placer County Parks & Trails Master Plan. Volume I. March. Available http://placerparksplan.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Placer-PT-MP-Volume-1_190305.pdf. Accessed May 29, 2020.

Placer County. 2019b. *United Auburn Indian Community School Project Final Environmental Impact Report*. SCH # 2017102081. Prepared by Raney Planning & Management, Inc. https://www.placer.ca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/34291/UAIC-School-Final-EIR_January2019pdf.

Placer County Office of Education. 2020. District Locator. Available https://www.placercoe.org/Pages/PCOE/Whats-My-District.aspx.

Placer County Sheriff's Office. 2016. Placer County Sheriff's Office Strategic Plan 2016–2020. Available https://www.placer.ca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/8212/Strategic-Plan-PDF. Accessed May 22, 2020.

Placer County Sheriff's Office. 2018. *Placer County Sheriff's Office 2018 Annual Report*. Available https://www.placer.ca.gov/ArchiveCenter/ViewFile/Item/652. Accessed May 22, 2020.

Placer County Water Agency. 2016a. *2015 Urban Water Management Plan*. Available: https://cdn.cosmicjs.com/8f300fc0-70c5-11e8-a5be-c3d0d175fd82-PCWA%202015%20UWMP%20-%20Final%207.14.16.pdf. Adopted June 2, 2016. Accessed May 21, 2020.

Placer County Water Agency. 2016b. *About PCWA*. Available https://www.pcwa.net/about-pcwa/board-of-directors. Accessed May 21, 2020.

Western Placer Waste Management Authority. 2015. *About WPWMA*. Available https://www.wpwma.ca.gov/about-wpwma/. Accessed May 28, 2020.

3.16 Transportation

This section addresses the potential impacts of Placer County's (County) proposed General Plan amendments, Zoning Ordinance update, and the development of design standards and guidelines for mixed-use development (project) related to transportation. It describes existing conditions for the project area and identifies the applicable federal and state plans, policies, and laws and local plans, policies, and regulations.

Comments received on the Notice of Preparation included concerns regarding potential traffic and circulation impacts occurring as a result of increased residential densities. This analysis also considers potential project impacts on airports and emergency vehicle access.

3.16.1 Existing Conditions

Regulatory Setting

The following sections summarize key state, regional, and local regulations, laws, and policies relevant to transportation in the project area.

State

California Department of Transportation

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) has authority over the state highway system, including freeways, interchanges, and arterial routes. Caltrans operates and maintains state highways in Placer County.

State Improvement Program

The California Transportation Commission (CTC) administers transportation programming, which is the public decision-making process that sets priorities and funds projects that have been envisioned in long-range transportation plans (California Transportation Commission 2019). The CTC commits expected revenues for transportation projects over a multi-year period. The State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) is a multi-year capital improvement program for transportation projects both on and off the state highway system. The STIP is prepared by Caltrans in cooperation with the metropolitan planning organizations (MPO) and regional transportation planning agencies, and contains all capital and noncapital transportation projects or identified phases of transportation projects for funding under the Federal Transit Act and Title 23 of the United States Code. STIP is funded with revenues from the state highway account and other funding sources. STIP programming typically occurs every 2 years.

California Transportation Plan 2040

The *California Transportation Plan 2040* (CTP) was adopted in 2016. The CTP, which is overseen by Caltrans, serves as a blueprint for California's transportation system, as defined by goals, policies, and strategies to meet the state's future mobility needs (California Department of Transportation 2016). The goals defined in the CTP fall into three categories: social equity, prosperous economy, and quality environment. Each goal is tied to performance measures. In turn, members from

regional and MPOs report these performance measures to Caltrans. Caltrans is presently working on an update to the CTP that would extend to 2050. The update is expected to be approved in 2020.

Senate Bill 375

Senate Bill (SB) 375 provides guidance regarding curbing emissions from cars and light trucks to help the State comply with Assembly Bill (AB) 32. There are four major components to SB 375. First, SB 375 requires regional greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions targets. The California Air Resources Board's (CARB) Regional Targets Advisory Committee guides the adoption of targets to be met by 2020 and 2035 for each MPO in the state. These targets, which MPOs may propose themselves, must be updated every 8 years in conjunction with the revision schedule of the housing and transportation elements of local general plans. Second, MPOs are required to create a sustainable communities strategy (SCS) that provides a plan for meeting regional targets. The SCS and the regional transportation plan (RTP) must be consistent, including action items and financing decisions. If the SCS does not meet the regional target, the MPO must produce an alternative planning strategy that details an alternative plan for meeting the target. Third, SB 375 requires regional housing elements and transportation plans to be synchronized on 8-year schedules. In addition, regional housing needs allocation numbers must conform to the SCS. If local jurisdictions are required to rezone land as a result of changes in the housing element, rezoning must take place within 3 years of adoption of the housing element. Finally, MPOs must use transportation and air emissions modeling techniques that are consistent with the guidelines prepared by the CTC. Regional transportation planning agencies, cities, and counties are encouraged, but not required, to use travel demand models that are consistent with CTC guidelines.

Public Resources Code Section 21099(b)(1) (Senate Bill 743)

Public Resources Code (PRC) Section 21099(b)(1) requires the Office of Planning and Research (OPR) to develop revisions to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, thereby establishing criteria for determining the significance of transportation impacts from projects that "promote the reduction of GHG emissions, the development of multimodal transportation networks, and a diversity of land uses." PRC Section 21099(b)(2) states that, upon certification of the revised guidelines for determining transportation impacts, pursuant to Section 21099(b)(1), automobile delay, as described solely by level of service (LOS) or similar measures of vehicular capacity, or vehicular traffic congestion shall not be considered a significant impact on the environment under CEQA. In response to PRC Section 21099(b)(2), CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3 notes that "Generally, vehicle miles traveled is the most appropriate measure of transportation impacts." The Guidelines section further states that although a lead agency may elect to be governed by this section immediately, lead agencies are not required to utilize vehicle miles traveled (VMT) as the metric to determine transportation impact until July 1, 2020. These recent changes to the CEQA statutes and guidelines are now in effect. This shift in transportation impact criteria is expected to better align transportation impact analysis and mitigation outcomes with the State's goals to reduce GHG emissions, encourage infill development, and improve public health through more active transportation.

Previously, LOS measured the average amount of delay experienced by motorists at an intersection during the most congested time of day, while the new metric—VMT—measures the total number of daily miles traveled by vehicles on the roadway network. SB 743 changes the focus of transportation impact analysis in CEQA from measuring impacts *on* drivers, to measuring the impact *of* driving.

In December 2018, OPR published the *Technical Advisory on Evaluating Transportation Impacts in CEQA* (Technical Advisory), which contains OPR's technical recommendations regarding assessment of VMT, thresholds of significance, and mitigation measures. This Technical Advisory provides screening criteria for certain project types, including a daily trip threshold to define "small projects" with respect to their potential to result in significant transportation effects (Office of Planning and Research 2018).

The Technical Advisory recommends VMT significance thresholds for different project types not meeting the screening criteria. The VMT level is commonly assessed using an efficiency metric, such as VMT per capita or VMT per service population.[1] Lead agencies have the discretion to set thresholds of significance or apply thresholds on a case-by-case basis.

Regional

Sacramento Area Council of Governments

The Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG) is the MPO for the Counties of El Dorado, Placer, Sacramento, Sutter, Yolo, and Yuba, as well as 22 cities (including the Cities of Davis, West Sacramento, Winters, and Woodland). As an MPO, SACOG is required to prepare a long-range transportation plan for all modes of transportation (including public transit, automobile, bicycles, and pedestrians) every 4 years.

Metropolitan Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy

SACOG is responsible for the preparation of, and updates to, the metropolitan transportation plan (MTP)/SCS and the corresponding metropolitan transportation improvement program (MTIP) for the six-county Sacramento region. The MTP/SCS for the Sacramento region proactively links land use, air quality, and transportation needs. The MTP/SCS is federally required to be updated every 4 years. The SACOG board adopted the 2020 MTP/SCS and accompanying documents at a special board meeting on November 18, 2019 (Sacramento Area Council of Governments 2019).

The congestion management program (CMP) and MTP/SCS are developed as a single integrated document. As part of the MTP/SCS, SACOG's CMP addresses the six-county Sacramento region and the transportation network therein. The CMP focuses on travel corridors with significant congestion and critical access and mobility needs to identify projects and strategies that meet CMP objectives.

Transportation projects are nominated by local agencies and analyzed against community priorities identified through public outreach as well as technical performance and financial constraints. The output of the MTP and CMP is a list of projects with identified lead agencies and completion years, contained in Appendix A-1 of the MTP/SCS. The adopted list and schedule of projects for the MTP/SCS then informs the development of the MTIP.

Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program

Approximately every 2 years, SACOG prepares and adopts the MTIP. The MTIP is a short-term listing of surface transportation projects that receive federal funds, are subject to a federally required action, or are regionally significant. SACOG adopted the 2019/20 MTIP in September 2018

[1] VMT per capita is calculated by dividing VMT by the number of residents. VMT per service population is calculated by dividing VMT by the number of residents plus employees.

(Sacramento Area Council of Governments 2018a). The 2019/20 MTIP covers 4 years of programming: federal fiscal years 2019 through 2022.

Local

Placer County General Plan and Community/Area Plans

The Placer County General Plan, adopted in 1994 and last updated in May 2013, includes goals, policies, and implementation programs associated with transportation and circulation including: Streets and Highways; Transit/Alternative Modes of Transportation; Transportation Systems Management; and Non-Motorized Transportation. These goals, policies, and implementation programs include providing for long-range transportation planning, continuing to ensure safe, smart street design, implementing a safe and efficient transportation network, meeting the County LOS standards, and improving use and access to alternative modes of transportation. Due to the large number of relevant policies, they are not duplicated here.

Community and area plans provide a more detailed focus on specific geographic areas within the unincorporated county. The goals and policies contained in the community and area plans supplement and elaborate upon, but do not supersede, the goals and policies of the Countywide General Plan. Unincorporated territory covered by a community plan is subject to the specifications of the land use and circulation plan diagram contained in the applicable community plan. Some of the parcels affected by the proposed project are located in community plan areas, including the Auburn/Bowman Community Plan and the Squaw Valley General Plan.

Placer County Regional Bikeway Plan

The Placer County Regional Bikeway Plan (Kittleson & Associates, Inc. 2018) was updated in 2018 to guide county and regional staff in developing a bikeway network in unincorporated Placer County. The plan updates the prior Regional Bikeway Plan adopted in 2002 and establishes a publicly supported vision for improving bikeways throughout the county. The plan develops a regional system of bikeways that connects the six incorporated cities and numerous unincorporated community areas. The plan only proposes bikeways in the unincorporated county or bikeways requiring multijurisdictional coordination. As shared use paths are expanded across the county, they will continue to provide scenic recreational routes as well as key longer-distance regional connections. The plan is supported by local jurisdiction bikeway plans as well as the ongoing Placer County Parks and Trails Master Plan, which will identify recommended off-road shared-use paths and unpaved trails. As such, the plan focuses on on-road bikeway facilities and key regional shared-use paths.

Environmental Setting

Roadways

Public access to the potential 194 dwelling units is spread out across the county with primary local and regional access provided by the following roadway facilities. The parcels would be served by a combination of local arterials and collector roadways.

The East County targeted growth area would be served by State Route (SR) 89, SR 267, and Donner Pass Road, which are regional and local arterials that serve the High Sierra region.

The Auburn/Bowman targeted growth area would be served by SR 49, Bell Road, New Airport Road, and Luther Road, which are regional and local arterials that serve this area.

The Loomis/Newcastle targeted growth area would be served by SR 193, Taylor Road, and Penryn Road, which are regional and local arterials that serve this area.

The Roseville targeted growth area would be served by Auburn Boulevard/Riverside Avenue, Sunrise Ave, and Cirby Way, which are major arterials that serve Placer County, City of Roseville, and City of Citrus Heights.

Pedestrian/Bicycle Facilities

Dedicated pedestrian and bicycle facilities vary by location. The Placer County Regional Bikeway Plan (Kittleson & Associates, Inc 2018) notes the location of existing and planned bicycle facilities in the incorporated and unincorporated areas of the county. According to the Plan, the East County targeted growth area will be served by three planned bike facilities in this area, a planned shared use path adjacent to SR 89, a bike lane along SR 267, and a shared use path adjacent to SR 267.

In the Auburn/Bowman targeted growth area, there is an existing bike lane along SR 49 with a planned extension of a separated bike lane to the north. Additionally, there is an existing bike lane on Bell Road between SR 49 and Bowman Road with an extension planned west of SR 49. There are planned shared use path and bike lanes for New Airport Road and a planned bike lane on Luther Road.

In the Loomis/Newcastle targeted growth area, there is a planned bike lane along SR 193 and a planned separated bike lane on Taylor Road from Ridge Road south to Loomis.

In the Roseville targeted growth area, there are existing bike lanes along sections of Cirby Way, bike lanes and multi-use paths along sections of Sunrise Avenue, and bike lanes along Auburn Boulevard/Riverside Avenue.

Transit

Placer County Transit Route 10 provides regional service between the Auburn Nevada Street Station and the Light Rail-Watt I-80 Station. Placer County Transit Route 30 provides local and regional services between the Auburn Nevada Street Station and the Auburn/Bowman area along SR 49. The City of Auburn operates Auburn Transit, providing daily and off-peak weekend service along Luther Road. Placer County Transit and the City of Roseville provide local transit routes that connect with Sacramento Regional Transit. Tahoe Truckee Area Regional Transit (TART) is currently providing fare-free transit service in the greater resort area triangle with a number of daily routes providing service along SR 89, SR 267, and Donner Pass Road.

Sacramento Regional Transit (SacRT) has a transit center near the intersection of Orlando Avenue and Louis Lane. This transit center is within 0.5 mile of the Roseville parcels and serves as a transfer center for a number of RT routes, including Routes 21, 25, 93, and 193. Of these routes, Routes 21, 25, and 93 are all local routes and Route 193 is a peak-only route. The transit center also serves several Roseville Transit routes, including Routes A, B, and R.

SacRT Route 21 currently travels round trip between the Orlando/Louis station and Mather Field/ Mills Station with weekday headway of 30 minutes. Route 25 currently travels round trip between the Orlando/Louis station and Marconi Avenue/Garfield Avenue with weekday headway of 30

minutes. Route 93 currently travels round trip between the Orlando/Louis station and Watt Avenue/I-80 with weekday headway of 30 minutes. Route 93 (the Auburn Commuter) currently travels round trip between the Orlando/Louis station and Watt Avenue/I-80 with two runs each during the AM and PM peaks.

Roseville Transit Routes A and B currently travel round trip between the Orlando/Louis station and other key destinations such as the Roseville Galleria, Sutter Roseville Hospital, and Vernon Street, with peak headways of 30 minutes. Roseville Transit Route R is a peak only (AM, midday, and PM) service that currently travels from the Orlando/Louis station along Cirby Way and Foothills Boulevard in the western portion of Roseville.

3.16.2 Environmental Impacts

The environmental analysis in this section focuses on the two main components of the project: (1) amendments to the Land Use Element in the County's General Plan, Zoning Ordinance, and Community Design Manual, and (2) the potential locations for the new dwelling units that could be constructed as a result of changes to the Zoning Ordinance (a total of 194 units distributed throughout the county).

The general land use pattern allowed by the housing-related code amendments is evaluated in the following discussions for its potential to result in adverse effects related to transportation.

The analysis in this section also considers the impacts from the potential development of dwelling units in targeted areas throughout the county. As a result of project implementation, a total of 194 units could be constructed, as noted below and displayed in Figure 2-3. These parcels were selected as the result of an exhaustive mapping exercise to identify parcels that met existing infrastructure requirements such as access to transit and public facilities such as water and sewer. While these units could be developed as a result of project implementation, the project itself does not propose any site-specific development.

- 50 units in the Roseville area (South Placer County)
- 13 units in the Loomis/Newcastle area (foothill region)
- 49 units in the Auburn/Bowman area (foothill region)
- 82 units in the eastern county (High Sierra region), including:
    - 31 units near Sugar Bowl
    - 4 units near Squaw Valley
    - 42 units near SR 89
    - 5 units near Northstar

Thresholds of Significance

Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines includes sample questions that are intended to encourage thoughtful assessment of impacts for a variety of topic areas, including transportation. The Placer County CEQA checklist largely follows the Appendix G questions with some Placer County–specific modifications. Per the modified Appendix G checklist, the proposed project would be considered to have a significant effect if it would result in any of the conditions listed below.

- Conflict with a program, plan, ordinance, or policy, except LOS, addressing the circulation system including transit, roadway, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities.
- Result in VMT that exceeds an applicable threshold of significance, except as provided in CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3 subdivision (b).
- Substantial increase in hazards because of a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment).
- Result in inadequate emergency access or access to nearby uses.
- Result in insufficient parking capacity on-site or off-site

Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Impact TRA-1: Conflict with a program, plan, ordinance, or policy, except LOS, addressing the circulation system including transit, roadway, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities (less than significant)

The County's General Plan includes a number of policies and goals related to transportation and circulation systems. Many of these policies relate to the goal of preserving and improving the efficiency of existing transportation facilities, and of making public transit and alternative mode transit choices (besides the automobile) more viable and attractive.

Transit

Dwelling units in the targeted growth areas must be located on existing developed lots and within 0.5 mile of an existing transit stop, which reduces reliance on passenger cars for travel. Increased transit ridership typically leads to improved fare box recovery, in turn making transit routes more financially feasible in the long term. Additionally, many of the dwelling units will serve lower-income individuals and families, who tend to own fewer vehicles and rely more on transit for transportation.

In eastern Placer County, TART currently offers fare-free service, which has increased ridership by 19 percent compared to paid transit service (before the start of the COVID-19 pandemic). Free TART service is currently provided near the 82 parcels in the resort triangle area that could accommodate a fourth dwelling unit. Under a development scenario, the proposed project would not encroach on any existing or planned transit service or infrastructure and would enhance opportunities for transit use. Therefore, the transit impacts of the proposed project are considered ***less than significant***.

Roadway Network

Dwelling units in the targeted growth areas would typically be located where existing roadway facilities already serve the parent parcel. The Circulation Element of Placer County's General Plan includes a goal of providing for the long-range planning and development of the county's roadway system to ensure the safe and efficient movement of people and goods. Various policies are identified to support this goal including providing adequate roadway design and regulation, improvements to roadways necessary for new development, right-of-way acquisition, intersection spacing, provision of safe through-traffic access, and maintaining acceptable LOS on County facilities. Policies pursuant to this goal also include working with neighboring jurisdictions to provide joint funding for the roadways that occur in the cities, on state highways, and in the unincorporated area. The County has multiple funding mechanisms in place to support roadway

improvements and maintenance on County roadways, including the County's Capital Improvement Program as well as Countywide Traffic Impact Fees program and the South Placer Regional Transportation Authority fee program in cooperation with the Cities of Roseville, Rocklin, and Lincoln. All parcels in the targeted growth areas fall within the Countywide Traffic Impact Fee program boundaries, while only those targeted growth areas within the Roseville and Newcastle areas fall within South Placer Regional Transportation Authority boundaries. Therefore, this impact would be ***less than significant.***

Pedestrian/Bicycle

In addition to transit, bicycle and pedestrian networks provide alternate modes for residents, especially those households that have limited access to vehicles. Although existing bicycle facilities are limited, the County is actively working towards building the bicycle network. Most of the parcels that could accommodate a fourth dwelling unit under the proposed project are served by bicycle facilities nearby. The proposed project would not interfere with the County's ability to implement planned bicycle or pedestrian infrastructure.

As a result, the proposed project would not conflict with policies from the County General Plan or other policies, such as those related to the development and maintenance of an efficient transportation network for all modes of transit. Therefore, the proposed project would not conflict with a program, plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the circulation system (including transit, roadway, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities), and this impact would be ***less than significant***.

Impact TRA-2: Result in VMT which exceeds an applicable threshold of significance, except as provided in CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3 subdivision (b) (less than significant)

VMT is a measure of transportation network use. It is directly related to fuel consumption and is routinely used as an input for estimating air pollution emissions, GHGs, and energy consumption for environmental impact purposes. OPR has issued the Technical Advisory as guidance to lead agencies on evaluating VMT impacts of proposed projects. The Technical Advisory suggests multiple approaches to evaluating VMT. In its simplest form, VMT can be calculated by multiplying the number of vehicle trips by their associated trip lengths. However, a qualitative assessment of VMT is more appropriate for some projects. Additionally, the Technical Advisory suggests that lead agencies use screening criteria to evaluate proposed projects for VMT impacts using the project size, and project type. OPR's screening criteria for affordable housing applies to future development that could occur with implementation of the proposed project.

Reducing VMT is consistent with the County's desire to promote biking, walking, and transit usage as viable transportation alternatives to driving. One of the objectives of the project is to reduce VMT by reducing trip distances for work and other trips. To that end, the proposed project would allow for the construction of a fourth dwelling unit in targeted areas of the county where certain infrastructure and services are already present, such as water, sewer, and transit services. Additionally, these dwelling units would only be allowed on parcels zoned as Residential Single Family (RS) and required to be deed-restricted to affordable levels.

OPR's Technical Advisory concludes that deed-restricted affordable housing in infill locations can generally reduce VMT by shortening commutes and providing a better jobs/housing match for low-income households. Evidence cited by OPR concludes that low-income workers are more likely to live close to their work location, if the housing is available, and that low-income housing generates less VMT than regular housing.

Data collected by SACOG in the 2018 Regional Household Travel Survey supports OPR's conclusions regarding affordable housing (Sacramento Area Council of Governments 2018b). The study surveyed trip making characteristics of households in the SACOG region, including Placer County. The data indicates that lower-income households generate fewer person trips than high-income households. Low-income households take the fewest number trips by passenger car and are most likely to use alternative modes, like walking, bicycling, and transit. The data also indicates that lower-income households take fewer work-related trips, which tend to have the longest trip lengths of all trip types.

The proposed project meets the screening criteria recommended by OPR by allowing for deed-restricted affordable housing in areas with low-wage jobs, near goods and services, and in close proximity to bicycle and pedestrian networks and transit stops. Placer County estimates a demand for 6,944 new affordable housing units to be constructed over the next 20 years. Approximately one-third of the affordable units needed are anticipated as a result of the County's inclusionary and workforce housing policies applied to large projects. That leaves a shortfall of approximately 5,000 additional affordable units needed county-wide through 2040. The proposed project seeks to bridge that gap by providing opportunities for targeted and identified single-family parcels that are both served by municipal services and transit to construct a fourth unit pursuant to the County's affordable density bonus provisions. Locating affordable housing in areas with convenient and safe access to services and employment ensures successful implementation of the County's VMT reduction strategies.

Although some of the parcels may not meet the definition of the term "infill," the project description is unequivocal in its limitation of the 194 dwelling units only to certain areas of the county. These dwelling units would only be built in areas that have existing water, sewer, and transit infrastructure, which generally occur in areas closer to established town centers with surrounding urbanized development and accompanying infrastructure. Projects located near transit and/or within infill areas generally have lower VMT than projects in rural or undeveloped areas. All income groups experience significant differences in average daily VMT depending on where they live but it is critical that lower-income households live in these areas as they are more likely to utilize public transit than high-income households.

The targeted growth areas are near employment centers, which leads to shorter work trips for residents. The Roseville targeted growth areas are near major retail shopping centers, restaurants, childcare/education, healthcare facilities, office buildings, and other locations that offer entry-level or low-wage employment opportunities. Similarly, employers in the Auburn targeted growth area offers a variety of jobs at different income levels, including low-wage or entry-level positions. Loomis is an example of one of Placer County's agricultural town centers, where low-wage farming/agricultural jobs are abundant, but affordable housing is limited. The proposed project could provide affordable housing to workers of the mandarin orchards, apple farms, and vineyards that are common in the area. The greater resort triangle area, including the Tahoe Basin, is primarily a tourist-driven economy, with high demand for low-wage workers across the area.

Proximity to low-wage job opportunities coincide with proximity to goods and services that residents need. Living close to grocery stores, schools, shopping, and recreation reduces the distance of trips, which leads to reductions in VMT. Additionally, providing alternatives to automobile travel can significantly reduce trips made by passenger cars.

By definition, these fourth units must be located within 0.5 mile of an existing transit stop, which reduces reliance on passenger cars for travel. In Eastern Placer County, TART currently offers fare-free service, which has increased ridership by 19 percent compared to paid transit service (before the start of the COVID-19 pandemic). Free TART service is currently provided near the 82 parcels in the resort triangle area that could accommodate a fourth unit.

In addition to transit, bicycle and pedestrian networks can provide alternate modes for residents, especially those households that have limited access to vehicles. The Placer County Regional Bikeway Plan contains the County's vision for bike facilities. Although existing bike facilities are limited, the County is actively working towards building the bicycle network. Most of the parcels that could accommodate a fourth unit under the proposed project are served by bicycle and/or shared-use facilities nearby. Additionally, most units are located in or near a census block group with a higher bicycle commute mode share than the rest of the county, indicating that residents of these units would be more likely to commute to work by bicycle.

Because the units would be deed-restricted to affordable levels, the amount of VMT generated by the proposed project would be substantially lower than VMT generated by typical market-rate housing in the county. For this reason, the OPR Technical Advisory concludes, "a project consisting of a high percentage of affordable housing may be a basis for the lead agency to find a less-than-significant impact on VMT." Therefore, potential VMT impacts of the proposed project are considered ***less than significant***.

Impact TRA-3: Substantial increase in hazards because of a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves, dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment) (no impact)

Placer County has a robust traffic accident analysis system (TAAS) in which traffic collision data is collected and reviewed on an annual basis. It is recognized that many roadways throughout the county do not conform to current design standards and guidelines; however, the fact that a roadway does not meet current design standards does not necessarily make safety improvements essential. Traffic and roadway engineering design standards and guidelines have evolved over many years; therefore, many roadways that do not display any safety deficiencies no longer meet the current standards simply due to the passage of time since their construction. Conversely, some roadways that meet current standards may display safety deficiencies. The TAAS recognizes that reconstructing all roadways that do not meet current design standards would be financially infeasible, and that doing so would expend funds to upgrade many roadways that operate safely. Through the TAAS program, locations for detailed engineering investigations are identified and improvements to facilitate safe travel for all modes, if necessary, are implemented on a regular basis.

Placer County regularly monitors the status of its roads and takes corrective actions where needed. For example, in the spring of 2016 the Department of Public Works completed a Roadway Safety Sign Audit which recommends the replacement, relocation and installation of yellow warning signage at various locations on 62 roadways in Placer County. The need to complete this project is based upon safety analyses undertaken by the Department of Public Works to identify high collision concentration locations that resulted in a safety evaluation of selected roadway corridors. This project undertakes to provide a systemic solution for these collision locations in the form of updating curve warning signage for the whole length of roadway. Current Caltrans standards identified in the 2014 Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices specify placement of new warning signs for roadway curves based upon the advisory speed of the curve, as well as replacement of

signs due to the poor physical condition or lack of reflectivity of the sign. The scope of this project includes installation of approximately 1,800 new curve warning signs, relocation of 350 existing signs, replacement of 1,000 signs and removal of 1,300 signs along 62 county roadways. This project was completed during the 2019 construction season.

Additionally, Caltrans is implementing a safety project in SR 49 in North Auburn as a result of safety concerns and collision patters. CTC approved inclusion of the SR 49 Safety Improvements project in the 2018 State Highway Operation and Protection Program with $26.3 million of funding. The project includes construction of a center median and two roundabouts. Roundabouts would slow traffic and provide a safe location for accessing the state highway.

The proposed project does not involve roadway modifications that would introduce any new roadway hazards, such as a sharp curve or dangerous intersections. Placer County routinely monitors and implements improvements to address safety on local roadways, and Caltrans is implementing a safety project on the SR 49 corridor. The proposed project adds dwelling units on land already zoned for residential development, so the use is compatible with the existing traffic mix. Implementation of the proposed project would not substantially alter the transportation network or encourage incompatible uses. There would be ***no impact***, and no mitigation is required.

Impact TRA-4: Potential to cause inadequate emergency access (less than significant)

Construction projects implemented under the proposed project would likely not cause temporary changes in emergency access as the units would likely be constructed one at a time by individual property owners which would minimize construction traffic and access to the site. Existing County requirements for construction projects require signage and an access plan to ensure continued emergency access during construction. The County building review process would provide guidance to contractors. In addition, the project does not propose any changes in land uses or development patterns that would result in inadequate emergency access since all potential development would occur as infill. Consequently, the impact is considered ***less than significant***, and no mitigation is required.

Impact TRA-5: Result in insufficient parking capacity on-site or off-site (less than significant)

The Placer County Zoning code defines specific use requirements, including parking, in Article 17.56.200. The parking requirements for secondary dwellings include an additional one parking space per additional dwelling unit with exceptions including transit stops within 0.5 mile. As the potential new dwelling units in the targeted growth areas must be located on existing developed lots and within 0.5 mile of an existing transit stop, they are exempt from the additional parking requirement. Therefore, the impact is considered ***less than significant***, and no mitigation is required.

3.16.3 References Cited

Printed References

California Department of Transportation. 2016. *California Transportation Plan 2040.* June. Available: https://dot.ca.gov/-/media/dot-media/programs/transportation-planning/documents/f0004899_ctp2040_a11y.pdf. Accessed: June 26, 2020.

California Transportation Commission. 2019. *State Transportation Improvement Program Guidelines*. Available: https://catc.ca.gov/-/media/ctc-media/documents/ctc-meetings/2019/2019_08/20-4-4-a11y.pdf. August. Accessed: June 26, 2020.

Kittleson & Associates, Inc. 2018. *Placer County Regional Bikeway Plan, 2018 Update*. June. Available: http://pctpa.net/library/BikewayPlanning/PlacerCounty_RegionalBikewayPlan_FINAL_20180629.pdf. Accessed: August 17, 2020.

Office of Planning and Research. 2018. *Technical Advisory on Evaluating Transportation Impacts in CEQA*. December. Available: http://opr.ca.gov/docs/20190122-743_Technical_Advisory.pdf. Accessed: December 18, 2019.

Sacramento Area Council of Governments. 2018a. *Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program 2019-2020*. September. Available: https://www.sacog.org/sites/main/files/file-attachments/final_2019_mtip_10-1-2018.pdf?1538438403. Accessed: June 24, 2020.

Sacramento Area Council of Governments. 2018b. Household Travel Survey. Available: *https://www.sacog.org/post/2018-sacog-regional-household-travel-survey.*

Sacramento Area Council of Governments. 2019. *Metropolitan Transportation Plan and Sustainable Communities Strategy (MTP/SCS)*. November. Available: https://www.sacog.org/sites/main/files/file-attachments/2020_mtp-scs_final_draft_for_web.pdf?1574444708. Accessed: June 24, 2020.

3.17 Tribal Cultural Resources

This section addresses the potential impacts of Placer County's (County) proposed General Plan amendments, Zoning Ordinance update, and the development of design standards and guidelines for mixed-use development (project) on tribal cultural resources. It describes the existing conditions and identifies the applicable plans, policies, laws and regulations.

Comments received on the Notice of Preparation regarding cultural resources included a recommendation for tribal consultation and concerns regarding how the proposed project could affect cultural and tribal resources.

3.17.1 Existing Conditions

Regulatory Setting

State

Assembly Bill 52

Tribal cultural resources (TCR) were originally identified as a distinct California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) environmental category with the adoption of Assembly Bill (AB) 52 in September 2014. For all projects that are subject to CEQA that received a notice of preparation, notice of negative declaration, or mitigated negative declaration on or after July 1, 2015, AB 52 requires the lead agency on a proposed project to consult with the geographically affiliated California Native American tribes. The legislation creates a broad new category of environmental resources, "tribal cultural resources," which must be considered under CEQA. AB 52 requires a lead agency to not only consider the resource's scientific and historical value but also whether it is culturally important to a California Native American tribe.

AB 52 defines TCRs as sites, features, places, cultural landscapes, sacred places, and objects with cultural value to a California Native American tribe that are included or determined to be eligible for inclusion in the California Register of Historical Resources (California Register); included in a local register of historical resources, as defined in California Public Resources Code (PRC) Section 5020.1(k); or determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to the criteria of PRC Section 5024.1(c) (CEQA Guidelines § 21074).

The California Register criteria for the listing of resources, as defined in PRC Section 5024.1(c), are the following:

1. The resource is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of California's history and cultural heritage.
2. The resource is associated with the lives of persons important in our past.
3. The resource embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction; represents the work of an important creative individual; or possesses high artistic values.

4. The resource has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

AB 52 also sets up an expanded consultation process. For projects initiated after July 1, 2015, lead agencies are required to provide notice of the proposed projects to any tribe that is traditionally and culturally affiliated with the geographic area that requested to be informed by the lead agency, following PRC Section 21018.3(b). If, within 30 days, a tribe requests consultation, the consultation process must begin before the lead agency can release a draft environmental document. Consultation with the tribe may include discussion of the type of review necessary, the significance of TCRs, the significance of the project's impacts on the TCRs, and alternatives and mitigation measures recommended by the tribe. The consultation process will be deemed concluded when either (a) the parties agree to mitigation measures or (b) any party concludes, after a good-faith effort, that an agreement cannot be reached. Any mitigation measures agreed to by the tribe and lead agency must be recommended for inclusion in the environmental document. If a tribe does not request consultation, or otherwise assist in identifying mitigation measures during the consultation process, a lead agency may still consider mitigation measures if the agency determines that a project would cause a substantial adverse change to a TCR.

California Native American Historical, Cultural, and Sacred Sites Act

The California Native American Historical, Cultural and Sacred Sites Act applies to both state and private lands. The Act requires that upon discovery of human remains, that construction or excavation activity cease and that the county coroner be notified. If the remains are of a Native American, the coroner must notify the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC). The NAHC then notifies those persons most likely to be descended from the Native American's remains. The Act stipulates the procedures the descendants may follow for treating or disposing of the remains and associated grave goods. The descendants may, with the permission of private landowners, inspect the site and recommend to the owner or the person responsible for the excavation means for treating or disposing of the remains and associated grave goods. The descendants must complete their inspection and make recommendations within 48 hours of their notification by the NAHC. The recommendation may include scientific removal and non-destructive analysis.

Environmental Setting

Ethnography

Nisenan

The Nisenan, along with the Maidu and Konkow, form the Maiduan language family of the Penutian linguistic stock (Shipley 1978:83). The Nisenan territory extended from the west bank of the Sacramento River east to the Sierra Nevada crest, north to the Middle Fork of the Feather River, and south to the Cosumnes River (Wilson and Towne 1978:387–388), portions of the project area located on the valley floor and in the Sierran foothills. Kroeber (1925:347–351) noted three Nisenan dialects spoken in different geographic regions: Northern Hill Nisenan, Southern Hill Nisenan, and Valley Nisenan.

The smallest social-political unit was the extended family. Each extended family was represented by a leader, who was called to council by the headman of the dominant village in a cluster of villages (tribelet). The duties of the headman included arbitrating disputes; calling, hosting, and directing special festivities; and calling family leaders to council. Typically, the position of headman was

hereditary through the male line, although a woman could serve in this position if a suitable male relative was not available (Wilson and Towne 1978:393).

The Nisenan occupied permanent settlements from which specific task groups would set out to harvest seasonally available resources. The Valley Nisenan economy revolved around riverine resources, while the Hill Nisenan resource base was focused on acorn and game procurement. The only identified domestic plant was native tobacco, although many wild species were closely tended. The acorn crop from the blue oak and black oak was so carefully managed that it served as the equivalent of agriculture and could be stored against winter shortfalls in resource abundance. Deer, rabbit, and salmon were the chief sources of animal protein in the Nisenan diet; however, many other animal, bird, and insect species were harvested when available. During the warmer months, people moved upslope to hunt and collect resources that occur in higher elevations, such as pine nuts.

Hill Nisenan villages were primarily situated along major waterways or on the ridges above them and typically contained bedrock mortar outcrops. Houses were conical-shaped and covered with bark, brush, or animal skins. The larger villages often had semisubterranean dance houses, which were covered in soil, bark, or brush, with a central smokehole on top and an east-facing entrance. Another common village structure was the acorn granary (Wilson and Towne 1978:388–389).

Religion played an important role in Nisenan life. There was a strong belief that natural objects, such as trees and rocks, had potential supernatural powers, including the ability to kill if the object so chose. Two kinds of shamans existed, curing shamans and religious shamans. Curing shamans had limited contact with the spirit world and diagnosed illness by feeling. Then they would suck at the location of pain and "remove" the offending object. Religious shamans gained control over the spirits through dreams and esoteric experiences (Wilson and Towne 1978:393–396).

The Nisenan had no extensive contact with Europeans and Americans until between 1828 and 1836, when intensive fur trapping by Americans and the Hudson's Bay Company occurred in the region. In 1833, an epidemic, possibly malaria, killed up to 75 percent of the Nisenan. The establishment of Sutter's Fort in Nisenan territory in 1839 became the focal point of settler and miner incursions into their entire territory. The population reduction from the 1833 epidemic left the Nisenan unable to resist the overwhelming flood of Europeans and Americans. The Nisenan were attacked and persecuted by the new immigrants, resulting in further degradation of their cultural practices. Those Nisenan that survived became wage laborers in mines and on local ranches (Wilson and Towne 1978:396-397).

Washoe

The Washoe inhabited the eastern slopes of the Sierra Nevada north to Honey Lake and south to Antelope Valley, portions of the project area closest to Lake Tahoe (d'Azevedo 1978:467–469). Hunting, gathering, and trade journeys took them over the crest, and sometimes into the western foothills, of the Sierra Nevada. Permanent settlements were located on valley floors averaging 4,500 feet in elevation. Summer camps were located on the margins of mountain meadows at higher elevations.

The Washoe are technically a Great Basin tribe, although they do not fit neatly into that category. The Washoe language is the only Great Basin tongue that is not of the Numic family (Jacobsen 1986:107–112). Their language is not genetically related to the Maiduan or Miwok stocks, but rather belongs to the Hokan stock, a language group centered in California and the American Southwest.

Additionally, the Washoe share many characteristics with California groups (d'Azevedo 1978:472–478). They used many hunting techniques common to California and placed more emphasis on fishing and acorn gathering than did other Great Basin groups. Also, similar to other California groups, they used bedrock mortars and acorn mush paddles.

Many Washoe traits, however, show affinities with other Great Basin groups. Some hunting and fishing methods and tools are typical of those used in the Great Basin. Although they processed acorns and piñon nuts, they did not make use of cylindrical granaries used by California groups. Washoe villages had a Great Basin appearance, with dwellings made in the Great Basin style and villages lacking the multifamily houses and ceremonial structures typical of those found in California (d'Azevedo 1978:472–481).

Permanent villages consisted of 2 to 10 family groups or households, with 2 to 4 households being the norm. Family groups and individuals ranged widely in highly divergent and independent subsistence strategies during the summer months but tended to congregate at the home village during the winter. Although most of the inhabitants vacated the village during summer, many of the elderly and young children often stayed in the village year-round. A set pattern of seasonal movement is not evident; movements were highly variable from year to year. Winter dwellings were semisubterranean, conical structures fashioned from wood poles and bark slabs. Summer shelters were dome-shaped and constructed of tule and brush woven together with willow (d'Azevedo 1978:472, 479–481).

The Washoe subsistence strategy was quite varied. Fishing in lakes and streams constituted an important part of their economy with fish both eaten fresh and dried for storing. Game was taken year-round and consisted primarily of deer, pronghorn antelope, bighorn sheep, rodents, rabbits, and birds. Vegetal foods played an important role in the diet with a heavy reliance on piñon nuts and acorns, along with berries, bulbs, and roots (d'Azevedo 1978:472–479).

The Washoe were involved in significant trade networks with their neighbors and often traveled great distances to obtain goods from outlying areas (d'Azevedo 1978:470–472). They served as middlemen in the trade between California peoples and the populations of the interior Great Basin. Imported items from the Nisenan and Wintu included papam bulbs, acorns, skins, and marine shells. Exports to the Nisenan included salt, obsidian, piñon nuts, and rabbit skins (d'Azevedo 1978:470–472).

3.17.2 Environmental Impacts

Methods for Analysis

TCRs are identified through consultation between interested Native American tribes and the lead agency, in this case, the County of Placer. In a letter dated September 10, 2019, the NAHC indicated the need for consultation on this project under CEQA generally and AB 52 specifically. Consultation with the United Auburn Indian Community has not yet identified any TCRs. Given that this is a program-level analysis, the United Auburn Indian Community has declined to consult further at this time, but has requested that they be consulted on subsequent projects involving ground disturbance so that they can assess those specific project areas for the presence of TCRs.

While in no way exclusively located along natural waterways, natural waterways are likely to be at a heightened sensitivity for the presence of TCRs. Population densities of Native Americans living along rivers and lakes was high precontact and into the contact period, and there are a number of

ethnographically documented village sites that occur alongside them. Rivers and lakes and the biomes that exist adjacent to them also sustain subsistence species and gathering areas that could be considered TCRs. See Figure 3.5-1 in Section 3.5, *Cultural Resources*, for a depiction of major waterways within Placer County.

Thresholds of Significance

In accordance with Appendix G of the State CEQA Guidelines, the proposed project would be considered to have a significant effect if it would result in any of the conditions listed below.

- Potential to cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in PRC Section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is listed or eligible for listing in the California Register or in a local register of historical resources as defined in PRC Section 5020.1(k).
- Potential to cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a TCR, defined in PRC Section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is a resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of PRC Section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of PRC Section 5024.1, the lead agency would consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.

Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Impact TCR-1: Potential to cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource with cultural value to a California Native American tribe and that is listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code Section 5020.1(k) (less than significant with mitigation)

While no TCRs that are listed or eligible for listing in the California Register or local register have been identified within the project area as a result of this analysis, consultation with interested Native American parties may identify TCRs within or adjacent to future project sites. Given the uncertainty of the exact location of future development and the sensitivity throughout Placer County for TCRs, impacts are considered potentially significant. Implementation of Mitigation Measure CUL-2 would require the construction crew to receive pre-construction archaeological sensitivity training, which would define what archaeological resources are and lay out the protocol for unanticipated archaeological discoveries. This protocol requires construction work to stop if an archaeological material or feature is encountered during ground-disturbing activities, thereby preventing further disruption and possible damage. The resource would be properly evaluated, and a treatment plan would be developed with stakeholders. Implementation of Mitigation Measure CUL-2 would ensure that any previously undiscovered tribal cultural resources would be properly treated if found during construction. Therefore, this impact on tribal cultural resources would be ***less than significant after mitigation***.

Impact TCR-2: Potential to cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource with cultural value to a California Native American tribe and that is a resource determined by the lead agency to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1 (less than significant with mitigation)

While no TCRs have been identified within the project area as a result of this analysis, project-specific consultation with interested Native American parties may identify potentially significant TCRs near future project sites. Impacts on these TCRs through project-related activities would be a potentially significant impact. Implementation of Mitigation Measure CR-2 would reduce this impact to ***less than significant with mitigation***.

3.17.3 References Cited

d'Azevedo, Warren L.
1978. Washoe. Pages 466–498 in Warren L. d'Azevedo (ed.), *Handbook of North American Indians*, *California*. Volume 11. Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution.

Jacobsen, W.H., Jr.
1986. Washoe Language. Pages 107–112 in Warren L. d'Azevedo (ed.), *Handbook of North American Indians*, *California*. Volume 11. Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution.

Kroeber, A.L.
1925 *Handbook of the Indians of California.* (Bureau of American Ethnology, Bulletin No. 78.) Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC.

Shipley, W.F.
1978 Native Languages of California. *Handbook of North American Indians California.* Volume 8:80-90. R. F. Heizer, ed. Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC.

Wilson, Norman L and Arlean H. Towne.
1978. Nisenan. Pages 387-397 in Robert F. Heizer (ed.), *Handbook of North American Indians*, *California*. Volume 8. Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution.

3.18 Wildfire

This section describes the environmental and regulatory setting for wildfire for Placer County's (County) proposed General Plan amendments, Zoning Ordinance update, and the development of design standards and guidelines for mixed-use development (project). As described in more detail in Chapter 2, *Project Description*, the project area encompasses unincorporated portions of the county. Impacts that would result from implementing the project are also evaluated in this section.

Comments received on the Notice of Preparation included concerns regarding wildland fire risks. This analysis considers land uses in relation to the potential for wildland fires throughout the county.

3.18.1 Existing Conditions

Regulatory Setting

Federal

Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000

The Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 provides the legal basis for the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) mitigation planning requirements for state, local, and tribal governments as a precursor to mitigation grant assistance. The Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 requires that local governments prepare a local hazard mitigation plan that must be reviewed by the State Mitigation Officer, approved by FEMA, and renewed every 5 years. The plan must include a planning process, a risk assessment, a mitigation strategy, and plan maintenance and updating procedures to identify the natural hazards, risks, and vulnerabilities of the area under the jurisdiction of the government. Natural hazards include, but are not limited to, earthquakes, tsunamis, tornadoes, hurricanes, flooding, and wildfires.

Senate Bill 1241 (Statutes of 2012, Kehoe)

Senate Bill 1241 revised the safety element requirements for state responsibility areas (SRA) and Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones. The Senate Bill requires that any revisions of general plans' housing element after January 2014 must also include the revision and updating of the safety element, as necessary, to address the risk of fire in SRAs and Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones.

State

California Building Standards Code

The State of California's minimum standards for structural design and construction are provided in the California Building Standards Code (CBSC) (24 California Code of Regulations). The standards set forth in the CBSC are based on the International Building Code, which is used widely throughout United States (generally adopted on a state-by-state or district-by-district basis) and has been modified for California conditions with numerous more detailed or more stringent regulations. The CBSC provides standards for various aspects of construction, including but not limited to excavation, grading, and earthwork construction. In accordance with California law, certain aspects of the

project would be required to comply with all provisions of the CBSC. The CBSC requires certain building requirements to adhere to the Fire Code (Part 9).

Local agencies must ensure that development in their jurisdictions comply with guidelines contained in the CBSC. Cities and counties can, however, adopt building standards beyond those provided in the CBSC.

Public Resources Code Section 4291

Section 4291 of the California Public Resources Code defines and describes fire protection measures and responsibilities for mountainous, forest, brush, and grass-covered lands. These measures include, but are not limited to, the following.

- Maintenance of defensible space of 100 feet from each side and from the front or rear of a structure, but not beyond the property line.
- Removal of a portion of a tree that extends within 10 feet of the outlet of a chimney or stovepipe.
- Maintenance of a tree, shrub, or other plant adjacent to or overhanging a building free of dead or dying wood.
- Construction or rebuilding of a structure must comply with all applicable state and local building standards.

State Responsibility Areas (Public Resources Code § 4102)

SRAs are defined by California Public Resources Code Section 4102 as areas of the state in which the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) has determined that the financial responsibility for preventing and suppressing fires lies with the State of California. SRAs are lands in California where CAL FIRE has legal and financial responsibility for wildfire protection. SRA lands typically are unincorporated areas of a county, are not federally owned, have wildland vegetation cover, have housing densities lower than three units per acre, and have watershed or range/forage value. Where SRAs contain built environment or development, the local government agency assumes responsibility for fire protection.

Local responsibility areas (LRA) include lands that do not meet criteria for SRAs or federal responsibility areas, or are lands in cities, cultivated agricultural lands, and nonflammable areas in the unincorporated parts of a county. LRAs can include flammable vegetation and wildland-urban interface areas. LRA fire protection is provided by the local fire departments, fire protection districts, county fire departments, or by contract with CAL FIRE.

Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones (Government Code § 51177)

Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones are defined by Government Code Section 51177 as areas designated by the Director of Forestry and Fire Protection as having the highest possibility of having wildfires. These zones are based on consistent statewide criteria and the severity of fire hazard that is expected to prevail in those areas. The zones are also based on fuel loading, slope, fire weather, and other factors, such as wind, that have been identified by CAL FIRE as a major cause of the spreading of wildfires. Fire Hazard Severity Zone maps are produced and maintained for each county.

2018 California Strategic Fire Plan

CAL FIRE's Strategic Fire Plan provides an overall vision for a built and natural environment that is more fire resilient through the coordination and partnerships of local, state, federal, tribal, and private entities. First developed in the 1930s, the Strategic Fire Plan is periodically updated; the current plan was prepared in 2018. The Plan analyzes and addresses the effects of climate change, overly dense forests, prolonged drought, tree mortality, and increased severity of wildland fires through goals and strategies. The primary goals of the 2018 Strategic Fire Plan are to do the following.

- Improve the availability and use of consistent, shared information on hazard and risk assessment.
- Promote the role of local planning processes, including general plans, new development, and existing developments, and recognize individual landowner/homeowner responsibilities.
- Foster a shared vision among communities and the multiple fire protection jurisdictions, including county-based plans and community-based plans such as Community Wildfire Protection Plans.
- Increase awareness and actions to improve fire resistance of human-made assets at risk and fire resilience of wildland environments through natural resource management.
- Integrate implementation of fire and vegetative fuels management practices consistent with the priorities of landowners or managers.
- Determine and seek the needed level of resources for fire prevention, natural resource management, fire suppression, and related services.
- Implement needed assessments and actions for post-fire protection and recovery.

Local

Placer County General Plan

The Placer County General Plan (Placer County 2013) includes the Health and Safety Element, which addresses, among other issues, wildfire and fire protection.

> **Goal 8.C**. To minimize the risk of loss of life, injury, and damage to property and watershed resources resulting from unwanted fires.
>
> Policy 8.C.1. The County shall ensure that development in high-fire-hazard areas is designed and constructed in a manner that minimizes the risk from fire hazards and meets all applicable state and County fire standards.
>
> **Policy 8.C.2**. The County shall require that discretionary permits for new development in fire hazard areas be conditioned to include requirements for fire-resistant vegetation, cleared fire breaks, or a long-term comprehensive fuel management program. Fire hazard reduction measures shall be incorporated into the design of development projects in fire hazard areas.
>
> **Policy 8.C.3**. The County shall require that new development meets state, County, and local fire district standards for fire protection.
>
> **Policy 8.C.4**. The County shall refer development proposals in the unincorporated County to the appropriate local fire agencies for review for compliance with fire safety standards. If dual responsibility exists, then both agencies shall review and comment relative to their area of responsibility. If standards are different or conflicting, the more stringent standards shall be applied.

Policy 8.C.7. The County shall work with local fire protection agencies, the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, and the U.S. Forest Service to promote the maintenance of existing fuel breaks and emergency access routes for effective fire suppression.

Policy 8.C.10. The County shall continue to implement state fire safety standards through enforcement of the applicable standards contained in the Placer County Land Development Manual.

Policy 8.C.11. The County shall continue to work cooperatively with the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection and local fire protection agencies in managing wildland fire hazards.

Goal 8.E. To ensure the maintenance of an Emergency Management Program to effectively prepare for, respond to, recover from, and mitigate the effects of natural or technological disasters.

Policy 8.E.1. The County shall continue to maintain, periodically update, and the test the effectiveness of its *Emergency Operations Plan*.

Policy 8.E.4. The County shall, through its Office of Emergency Services, maintain the capability to effectively respond to emergency incidents.

Policy 8.E.6. The County shall ensure that the siting of critical emergency response facilities such as hospitals, fire stations, sheriff's offices and substations, dispatch centers, emergency operations centers, and other emergency service facilities and utilities have minimal exposure to flooding, seismic and geological effects, fire, avalanche, and explosions.

Placer County Municipal Code

Placer County Municipal Code Chapter 9, *Public Peace, Safety, and Welfare*, Article 32, *Fire Prevention*, provides fire hazard regulations in Placer County. The article includes specifications on required fire breaks, such as maintaining defensible space within developed and undeveloped areas, as well as requirements for burn permits.

Placer County Community Wildfire Protection Plan

The purpose of the Placer County Community Wildfire Protection Plan (Anchorpoint Wildland Fire Solutions 2012) is to protect people, property, ecological elements, and other human and intrinsic values due to wildfire. The Plan helps agencies, communities, and local homeowners throughout the county assess, plan, and prioritize types of actions that will limit the damage of a wildland fire event. The Plan includes the following goals to reduce the risk of an extensive fire event.

1. Enhance life safety for residents and responders.
2. Mitigate undesirable fire outcomes for property and infrastructure.
3. Identify communities at risk and values at risk.
    a. Reduce fuel hazards and prevent fires in these communities.
        1) Consider fuels treatment prescriptions and locations.
        2) Continue fuels treatment projects already initiated.
4. Mitigate undesirable fire outcomes for the environment, watersheds, and quality of life.
5. Improve the county and individual fire district's position as they compete for grants.

Placer County Local Hazard Mitigation Plan Update

The Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (Placer County 2016) serves as a guide to hazard mitigation planning to better protect property and residents of the County from the effects of hazard events,

including wildfires. Hazard mitigation is the use of long- and short-term strategies to reduce the loss of life, personal injury, and property damage that can result from a disaster. It involves planning efforts, programs, and other activities that can mitigate the impacts of hazards. Chapter 5, *Mitigation Strategy*, of the current plan outlines mitigation measures for hazards, including but not limited to floods, wildfire, landslides, and earthquakes. The following goals are from the 2016 Plan Update.

> Goal 1: Minimize risk and vulnerability of Placer County to the impacts of natural hazards and protect lives and reduce damages and losses to property, economy, public health and safety, and the environment.
>
> Goal 2: Provide protection for critical facilities, infrastructure, utilities and services from hazard impacts.
>
> Goal 4: Increase communities' capabilities to mitigate losses and be prepared for, respond to, and recover from a disaster event.

Environmental Setting

As described in Chapter 2, the western part of Placer County contains the cities of Roseville, Rocklin, Lincoln, and Loomis, as well as the unincorporated communities of Sheridan and Granite Bay. The central part of Placer County consists of the foothill region, which includes the cities of Auburn and Colfax, and the unincorporated communities of Foresthill, Penryn, Newcastle, Applegate, Weimar, Gold Run, Meadow Vista, Dutch Flat, Alta, and Baxter. The eastern part of Placer County is the High Sierra region, which includes the resort communities and ski areas around Lake Tahoe. The unincorporated communities in this area include Tahoe City, Tahoe Vista, Carnelian Bay, Homewood, Kings Beach, Tahoma, Emigrant Gap, Soda Springs, and Squaw Valley.

The proposed project is limited to just the unincorporated portions of the county. This means that lands under jurisdiction of the Bureau of Land Management, National Forest, state lands at the Folsom Lake State Recreation Area, Auburn State Recreation Area, and Donner Memorial State Park, state parks along the Lake Tahoe shore, and tribal lands such as the Auburn Rancheria, as well as land within the incorporated cities of Roseville, Rocklin, Lincoln, Loomis, Auburn, and Colfax are not subject to regulation by the County through the General Plan and Zoning Ordinance, and therefore are not included as part of the project area for this analysis.

Described in more detail in Chapter 2, the western part of Placer County, or South Placer County, contains residential, commercial, and industrial land uses, as well as agricultural land.[1] The central portion of Placer County consists of the foothill region and is comprised of agricultural/timberland, residential, and recreational land uses. The eastern portion of Placer County is the High Sierra region and contains mainly agricultural/timberland uses, as well as conservation, and recreational land uses, and smaller areas of residential land uses.

Wildfire

The environmental setting for wildfire describes the existing conditions within the unincorporated areas as they relate to wildfire. The term wildfire refers to an unplanned, unwanted, wildland fire, including unauthorized human-caused fires, escaped wildland fire use events, escaped prescribed fire projects, and all other wildland fires where the objective is to extinguish the fire (California Government Code § 51177). Wildfire characteristics depend on the circumstances where the fire is burning. Brush fires, which burn both natural vegetation and dry-farmed grain, typically burn fast

[1] South Placer County has over 86,000 acres of land enrolled in Williamson Act contracts.

and very hot, and often threaten homes in the area and lead to serious destruction of vegetation. Woodland fires are relatively cool under natural conditions; however, if a brush fire spreads to a woodland, it could generate a destructive hot crown fire. Currently, no suitable management technique of reasonable cost has been devised to reduce the risk of these fires. However, these fires can typically be controlled relatively quickly and easily if they are reachable by fire equipment.

Short-term effects of wildfires include destruction of timber or agriculture, and loss of wildlife habitat, scenic vistas, and watersheds. Long-term effects of wildfires include smaller timber harvests, reduced access to recreational areas, and destruction of community infrastructure and cultural or economic resources. Wildfires also increase the area's vulnerability to flooding. Wildfire damage to life and property is generally greatest in areas designated as wildland-urban interface, where development is in close proximity to densely vegetated areas.

Fire hazards pose a considerable risk to people, vegetation and wildlife habitats throughout Placer County. Specifically, there are numerous areas throughout the county, including unincorporated areas, that are composed of natural vegetation and timberland are extremely flammable during dry seasons, from May to October, and fires in these areas are frequently followed by erosion and gullying. Placer County experiences fires on an annual basis due to its high fuel load, long and dry summers, and growing wildland-urban interface areas as a result of population and development continue to expand.

Placer County has a long-standing history of small and large fires throughout the county. Recently, the 2014 King Fire burned approximately 97,717 acres across El Dorado County and Placer County and destroyed 12 residences and 68 minor structures (Placer County 2016). Furthermore, several fires have been large enough to cause sufficient damage to trigger state disaster declarations, as well as federal disaster declarations from fires in 2002, 2004, and 2008.

Additionally, climate change is expected to contribute to significant changes in fire regimes. Fire is a natural component of many ecosystems and natural community types, including forestland. For each of these natural communities, fire frequency and intensity, influence community regeneration, composition, and extent. It is highly likely that wildfire frequency, size, and intensity would increase over time throughout the unincorporated areas of the county as a result of climate change (Placer County 2016).

According to CAL FIRE, the eastern and central portions of the project area are located within Moderate, High, and Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones (California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection 2007). Additionally, portions of the project area in the central and western portions of the county are located within Moderate and Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones. The cities of Auburn, Loomis, Lincoln, Rocklin, Roseville, and areas west of the city of Loomis are all under LRAs, and designated as Non-Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones. However, a small southern portion of the city of Auburn is designated as a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone. Additionally, the city of Colfax is under LRA, and designated entirely as a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone. Furthermore, a large portion of the project area is under SRA or Federal Responsibility Area, with land east of the city of Auburn and Interstate (I-) 80 designated as a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone, and land west of the city of Auburn and I-80 as non-Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection 2008).

Emergency Response

The Placer County Office of Emergency Services (OES) provides emergency management services throughout the county in coordination with local cities, special districts, and fire and law enforcement. The OES prepares emergency and contingency plans including, but not limited to, evacuation plans and emergency operations plans, and provides resources necessary for first responders to protect the community in the event of an emergency, such as wildland fires or storm events. The OES also prepares the County's Local Hazard Mitigation Plan, as a guide to evaluating and addressing natural or human-caused risks throughout the county.

In addition, the Placer County Fire Safe Alliance provides community assistance and information, as well as educational opportunities on wildfire in order to reduce the risks of wildfire to life and property throughout the county, and ultimately, to improve public safety, preparedness, security and community vitality. The Alliance is comprised of local fire districts, community fire safe councils, private industry representatives, and public agencies representing federal, state and local resource management.

3.18.2 Environmental Impacts

Methods for Analysis

This section describes the methods for analyzing the impacts of implementing the proposed project. Criteria from Appendix G of the State California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines were used to determine whether the project would have a significant impact related to wildfire. Impacts related to wildfire were assessed based on review of applicable documents such as the Placer County General Plan and environmental impact report (EIR) as well as other local planning documents.

The project would not provide individual project approvals or entitlements for any private or public development project. Accordingly, this project does not provide CEQA coverage for individual development projects but does provide program-level CEQA review of the housing-related code amendments. It is presumed that future projects would tier from the analysis herein in accordance with Section 15168 of the CEQA Guidelines.

Components of the proposed project would include: targeted amendments to the General Plan, Placer County Zoning Ordinance, Zoning Maps, and Community Design Guidelines Manual, which would provide a framework for future housing development within the county, while taking into consideration population growth, economic factors, demographics, and community needs and wants. Specifically, Table 2-3 in Chapter 2 includes a summary of the proposed changes under the project that would be made to the General Plan, Zoning Ordinance, and Community Design Guidelines Manual.

Thresholds of Significance

In accordance with Appendix G of the State CEQA Guidelines, the proposed project would be considered to have a significant effect if it would result in any of the conditions listed below.

- Substantial impairment of an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan.

- As a result of slope, prevailing winds, or other factors, the exacerbation of risks of and exposure of project occupants to pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire.
- Installation or maintenance of project-associated infrastructure (e.g., roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts on the environment.
- Exposure of people or structures to significant risks such as downslope or downstream flooding or landslide as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes.

Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Impact WF-1: Substantial impairment of an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan (less than significant)

As noted in the *Methods for Analysis*, project implementation would not directly result in urban development–related impacts itself, but would facilitate the future development of such projects. Implementation of the project within the identified parcels in the unincorporated portions of the county would not impair an emergency response or evacuation plan primarily because the project would not result in large-scale development that would substantially alter land use patterns and future development would be required to comply with all relevant regulations and plans related to emergency response and evacuation. Construction activities associated with future development as a result of project implementation could result in temporary traffic delays near project sites and consequently potentially interfere with the implementation of an emergency response plan and delay emergency responders. However, development as a result of project implementation would be required to comply with applicable requirements of the Placer County Local Hazard Mitigation Plan, OES, Placer County Community Wildfire Protection Plan, and Placer County General Plan and municipal code. As required by these plans, traffic control measures would be implemented, signage would be installed, and coordination with the appropriate agencies (i.e., fire department, police department) would occur as necessary to reduce impacts related to interference with emergency response or evacuation plans for subsequent development as a result of the project.

For these reasons, the impact of project implementation on emergency response plans or emergency evacuation plans would be ***less than significant***.

Impact WF-2: Exacerbation of wildfire risks associated with pollutant concentrations or uncontrolled spread of wildfire (less than significant)

Implementation of the project would not directly result in the development of the housing units but would facilitate future development through changes to various land use controls. Some of the areas identified as potential growth areas occur near or adjacent to Moderate, High, or Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones. Development of housing in high fire zones could expose people to increased pollutant concentrations from wildfire. However, current activities undertaken by state and Local agencies, such as prescribed burning and construction, are expected to follow fire management goals and policies set forth by the Placer County General Plan, requirements of the OES, Placer County Fire Safe Alliance, and all other applicable fire and safety policies or regulations set forth in the *Regulatory Setting* section, in order to minimize risk of wildfire. Furthermore, Mitigation Measure AQ-2, Installation of Electric Appliances in New Construction, in Section 3.3, Air Quality, would prohibit the installation of wood-burning fireplaces or stoves, further reducing sources of

potential fires. Compliance with these established goals, policies, and requirements would reduce potential impacts related to wildfire risks and the pollutants associated with wildfire. For these reasons, the impact of project implementation with respect to exacerbating wildfire risk and thereby exposing populations to increased pollutant concentrations from wildfire or uncontrolled spread of a wildfire would be ***less than significant***.

Impact WF-3: Project-related installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure that may exacerbate fire risk or result in temporary or ongoing environmental impacts (less than significant)

As discussed in the *Environmental Setting* section, portions of the project area are under both the responsibilities of SRAs and LRAs and have Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone designations that range from Non-Fire Hazard to Very High Fire Hazard Severity. The proposed project would not result in the direct construction of the housing units, but upon implementation, would facilitate the development of housing in areas where infrastructure and development already exists. It is possible that construction of new utilities would be required as part of future development projects in the project area; however, existing utilities would be used to the greatest extent possible, and other utility impacts would be evaluated on a project-by-project basis in order to avoid or minimize impacts as much as possible. No substantial infrastructure construction is expected.

In addition, installation or routine maintenance of infrastructure as a result of future development in the project area would be subject to applicable requirements of the Placer County Local Hazard Mitigation Plan, Placer County Community Wildfire Prevention Plan, Placer County General Plan, and all other applicable fire and safety policies or regulations described in the *Regulatory Setting,* which would minimize wildfire risk. Furthermore, current fire management activities carried out in the county that include prescribed burning activities, adhering to the CBSC, and maintaining defensible space, would ultimately decrease the potential for wildfire.

Impacts of project implementation related to installation or maintenance of facilities and associated wildfire risk and environmental impacts would be ***less than significant***.

Impact WF-4: Exposure of people or structures to significant risks such as downslope or downstream flooding or landslide as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes (less than significant)

Placer County has adopted safety restrictions for grading from the CBSC, as well as General Plan policies and other regulations to control construction in landslide-prone areas in order to minimize the exposure of people and structures to these risks. As discussed in more detail in Section 3.7 and Section 3.10, General Plan policies require specific design requirements to minimize risk of exposure to geologic and hydrologic hazards, including flooding, landslides, runoff, and drainage changes. Furthermore, Placer County is a participating agency in the preparation and implementation of the County Local Hazard Mitigation Plan prepared by the OES, which includes strategies to reduce the loss of life, personal injury, and property damage that can result from disasters, including wildfire.

Due to the varying topography that is present throughout the county and higher-elevation areas in the eastern portions of the county, much of the county could be susceptible to landslide (Placer County 1994). If a wildfire were to take place on these slopes, there could be an increase in risk of landslide or flooding due to post-fire slope instability, which occurs when a wildfire removes the vegetation that holds soils in place, making it more likely for soil to move downslope, especially in tandem with precipitation. Future development as a result of project implementation could

temporarily increase the risk of downslope or downstream flooding or landslides due to the project area in which the housing units would be located.

However, the risk of wildfire within the project area would be minimized through compliance with all pertinent local, state, and federal policies and codes. Post-wildfire risk also would be reduced with implementation of applicable policies and regulatory requirements. This includes implementation of policies and strategies included in the Placer County Local Hazard Mitigation Plan, Placer County Community Wildfire Protection Plan, and Placer County General Plan. Any risks would be minimized with adherence to CBSC safety restriction and other adopted General Plan policies and other regulations (*Regulatory Setting)* to control construction in landslide-prone areas in order to minimize the exposure of people and structures to these risks. Impacts would be ***less than significant***.

3.18.3 References Cited

Anchorpoint Wildland Fire Solutions. 2012. Placer County Community Wildfire Protection Plan. December. https://www.placer.ca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/506/Community-Wildfire-Protection-Plan-PDF. Accessed: May 26, 2020.

California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection. 2007. Fire Hazard Severity Zones in SRA. November. Available: https://osfm.fire.ca.gov/divisions/wildfire-planning-engineering/wildland-hazards-building-codes/fire-hazard-severity-zones-maps/. Accessed: May 26, 2020.

California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection. 2008. Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones in LRA. November. Available: https://osfm.fire.ca.gov/divisions/wildfire-planning-engineering/wildland-hazards-building-codes/fire-hazard-severity-zones-maps/. Accessed: May 26, 2020.

Placer County. 2013. *Placer County General Plan, Section 8—Health and Safety*. Available: https://www.placer.ca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/8567/Health-and-Safety-PDF. Accessed: June 10, 2020.

Placer County. 2016. *Placer County Local Hazard Mitigation Plan Updated*. March. Available: https://www.placer.ca.gov/1381/Local-Hazard-Mitigation-Plan. Accessed: May 26, 2020.

Chapter 4
Alternatives Analysis

4.1 Introduction

In accordance with State California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines Section 15126.6, this Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) contains a comparative impact assessment of alternatives to the Placer County's proposed General Plan amendments, Zoning Ordinance update, and the development of design standards and guidelines for mixed-use development (project). The primary purpose for this chapter is to provide decision makers and the public with a reasonable range of alternatives to the project. An alternative selected for analysis in the EIR must meet all of the following basic criteria.

- It must attain most of the fundamental project objectives. Here, it must meet most or all of the objectives of the project.
- It must substantially avoid or reduce one or more of the project's significant environmental impacts.
- It must be potentially feasible. The potential feasibility of an alternative is determined based on a variety of factors, including effectiveness in reducing significant effects, availability of infrastructure, impracticality, or undesirability from a policy standpoint, and internal general plan consistency. The final feasibility of the three alternatives selected for analysis in this DEIR will be determined by the County Board of Supervisors at such time as they consider the project. In accordance with State CEQA Guidelines Section 15091, if approved, the Board will adopt findings at that time describing the specific reasons why any alternatives that were not selected to be part of the project are infeasible.

The selection of alternatives to the project is governed by the "rule of reason." Accordingly, an EIR need not consider every conceivable alternative to a project.

Every EIR must include an analysis of the No Project Alternative. In this DEIR, Alternative 1 describes the No Project Alternative.

State CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6 states that the discussion of alternatives shall focus on alternatives to the project or its location. The project would apply only within the jurisdiction of Placer County. Therefore, the range is limited to alternatives located within the unincorporated areas of the county.

This chapter also identifies the "environmentally superior" alternative. As required by CEQA, if the environmentally superior alternative is the No Project Alternative, then an environmentally superior alternative must be identified from among the other alternatives. CEQA does not obligate the County to adopt the environmentally superior alternative if it ultimately finds that alternative to be infeasible.

4.2 Preliminary Range of Alternatives

Based on comments received during the scoping process, workshops, hearings, and consideration of project objectives and potential significant effects, the following preliminary alternatives were identified.

- No Project Alternative
- No Workforce Housing Alternative
- Reduced Intensity Alternative

4.3 Alternatives Selection Criteria

4.3.1 Project Objectives

As stated in Chapter 2, *Project Description*, the project represents a component of a larger effort to implement elements of the Placer County Housing Strategy and Development Plan. The fundamental objectives of the project are as follows.

- Increase the availability of a mix of housing types in the county for existing and future residents, students, and employees whose income cannot support the cost of housing in the county
- Improve the County's overall employment growth by assisting County employers in reducing critical shortages of skilled workers in part driven by a lack of available housing
- Reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT) per capita by shortening commute distances for those who commute within Placer County for education or work, or other metric for VMT as determined appropriate by the County under Senate Bill 743 legislation
- Bring County housing policies, ordinances, standards, and guidelines into conformance with recent changes in State law
- Implement adopted General Plan, community plan and area plan policies that support efficient, resilient and sustainable housing development patterns that can be achieved through higher density, mixed use, transit oriented and infill development projects
- Align Placer County General Plan and Zoning Ordinance housing-related land uses, development standards and implementation methods with recently adopted specific plans, community plans, and area plans
- Implement County-adopted Strategic Plan (November 20, 2018), which supports new housing construction that provides a mix of housing types for existing and future residents at all income ranges.

4.3.2 Significant Environmental Impacts

This DEIR identifies several significant impacts of the project. For the purpose of selecting alternatives the County considered the following topic with significant and unavoidable impacts in order to develop project alternatives. Under the following alternative analysis detail is provided only for those subtopics that identified significant and unavoidable impacts.

- Cultural resources

4.4 Alternatives Eliminated from Further Consideration

The proposed project consists of targeted amendments to the General Plan, zoning ordinance update, zoning maps, and development of design standards and guidelines for mixed-use development. The project would facilitate housing development by allowing for more variation of development in areas where infrastructure and development already exists. One alternative was considered but eliminated from further analysis that included an assumption of higher density development than what is proposed by the project. That alternative was dismissed as it did not achieve the reduced constraints/streamlining which is a primary objective of the project. Furthermore, increasing density would have required multiple community plan amendments. An additional alternative regarding adding a fourth unit on all single family sites with water and sewer infrastructure and that are in close proximity to transit was also considered but ultimately rejected because it could potentially increase impacts related to vehicle miles travelled.

4.5 Alternatives Analyzed in this EIR

4.5.1 Alternative 1—No Project Alternative

According to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6e(3), for a project that is a revision of an existing land use plan or policy it is required that the "no project" alternative "will be the continuation of the existing plan, policy or operation into the future." Therefore, for the Proposed Housing-Related Code Amendments DEIR, the No Project Alternative will consist of the continuation of the existing adopted General Plan and Zoning Ordinance, without changes. Under this alternative, the County would continue to operate under the existing policies and zoning regulations established by the Adopted 1994 General Plan, as updated May 21, 2013.

The No Project Alternative would have the same impacts identified in the Adopted General Plan as updated May 21, 2013. The No Project Alternative would have fewer impacts than the project because it does not include amendments to the General Plan. the Zoning Ordinance, Zoning Maps, and Community Design Guidelines Manual that could result in new development in certain areas of the County and potentially result in significant and unavoidable impacts related to cultural resources.

4.5.2 Alternative 2—No Workforce Housing Alternative

Description

Under Alternative 2—No Workforce Housing Alternative, the project alternative would involve all General Plan, Zoning Text Amendments, and Community Design Guidelines Manual changes as presented in Table 2-3 (see Chapter 2) with the exclusion of Workforce Housing Changes WF-1 and WF-2.

As with the project, the No Workforce Housing Alternative would also provide updates to areas that have Higher Density Residential (HDR) and General Commercial (GC) land use designations and would clarify the allowance for the Mixed-Use/Multifamily uses in HDR and GC land use designations, in part, by updating Floor Area Ratio (FAR) guidelines. The Zoning Ordinance amendments would also allow Multifamily development by right in several commercial zones and the new Mixed-Use zone, subject to conformance with the new Mixed-Use and Multifamily Design Standards and Guidelines Manual. While the No Workforce Housing Alternative would be consistent with the project in that it would include new standards and guidelines that permit an increase in the allowable density of mobile home parks; updates to the development standards, including standards for parking, building heights, and lot coverage standards; updates to the review for by-right development; updates to the Density Bonus Ordinance; and allowance for cluster housing, (that collectively would enable the development of up to 194 units); it would not permit the additional allowance of construction workforce housing. All revisions to the Community Design Guidelines Manual would continue as presented under Section 2.4.3, *Community Design Guidelines Manual*.

The changes to the Zoning Ordinance under the No Workforce Housing Alternative would result in no expansion of the availability of "mobile homes, recreational home, or tiny houses." However, as with the project, a total of 194 units could be developed in areas throughout the county. The locations of these units are illustrated in Figure 2-3. Any future development resulting from project implementation must adhere to design controls, similar to the project.

Impact Analysis

If implemented, the General Plan and Zoning Map Amendments that are a part of the No Workforce Housing Alternative would be included in the project as nearly identical to those established under Table 2-3. The removal of workforce housing would reduce the scope of the project by excluding Zoning Amendments WF-1 and WF-2,[1] which would reduce the potential for new "mobile homes, recreational home, or tiny houses when they are for caretaker or employee housing, with the exception of FOR and TPZ zones," but this change would not reduce the potential number of units that could be developed throughout the County. Therefore, this analysis assumes that Alternative 2—No Workforce Housing Alternative would result in the same number of total housing units and be subject to the same mitigation measures as the project.

Air Quality

The No Workforce Housing Alternative would have the same air quality impacts as the project because it would not change the development potential in identified areas of the County. As with the project, specific project-level information to develop a quantitative estimate of emissions that would be generated by development of these units is not currently available, as it would depend on factors such as economic conditions, market and housing demands, and other considerations. While the construction emissions impacts associated with each new project would be short-term in nature (relative to the buildout year) and limited to the period of time when construction activity is taking place for that particular project, the concurrent construction of various individual projects that could occur at any one time under the No Workforce Housing Alternative would generate combined

[1] WF-1 under the project states: "Where currently permissible, allow with zoning clearance the construction of mobile homes, recreational homes or tiny houses when they are for caretaker or employee housing, with the exception of FOR and TPZ zones. WF-2 under the project states: "Define Tiny Houses on Wheels and allow for use as a single-family and secondary dwelling."

criteria pollutant emissions on a daily basis that could exceed Placer County Air Pollution Control District (PCAPCD) thresholds. Additionally, depending on the size and scale of an individual project, along with its construction schedule and other parameters, there may also be instances where the daily construction emissions generated by a single project could also exceed criteria pollutant concentration thresholds. As with the project, the alternative's impact would be less than significant with mitigation.

Cultural Resources

The No Workforce Housing Alternative would have the same cultural resources impacts as the project because it would not change the development potential in identified areas of the County. Due to the uncertainty of future impacts on historic resources and due to the requirement, that destruction of a historic resource would result in a significant and unavoidable impact, the No Workforce Housing Alternative would result in a significant and unavoidable impact.

Greenhouse Gas Emissions

The No Workforce Housing Alternative would have the same greenhouse gas (GHG) emission impacts as the project because it would not change the mobile GHG emissions per capita rate estimated under the project. In addition, the No Workforce Housing Alternative would generally comply with relevant plans, policies, or regulatory programs have been adopted to achieve greenhouse gas reduction goals. As with the project, following implementation of Mitigation Measures GHG-2a and GHG-2b, the No Workforce Housing Alternative would also result in a less than significant impact.

4.5.3 Alternative 3—Reduced Intensity Alternative

Description

Under Alternative 3—Reduced Intensity Alternative, the project alternative would involve all General Plan, Zoning Text Amendments, and Community Design Guidelines Manual changes as presented in Table 2-3 (see Chapter 2) with the exclusion of the permitting of a fourth unit on select parcels as presently listed under Zoning Text Amendment "Density Bonus DB-4."

As with the project, the Reduced Intensity Alternative would also provide updates to areas that have HDR and GC land use designations and would clarify the allowance for the Mixed-Use/Multifamily uses in HDR and GC land use designations, in part, by updating FAR guidelines. The Zoning Ordinance amendments would also allow Multifamily development by right in several commercial zones and the new Mixed-Use zone, subject to conformance with the new Mixed-Use and Multifamily Design Standards and Guidelines Manual. While the Reduced Intensity Alternative would be consistent with the project in that it would include new standards and guidelines that permit an increase in the allowable density of mobile home parks; allowance of construction workforce housing; updates to the development standards, including standards for parking, building heights, and lot coverage standards; updates to the review for by-right development; and allowance for cluster housing; its updates to the Density Bonus Ordinance would be limited to allow only duplexes and triplexes on Single Family (RS) and permitting duplexes, triplexes, and fourplexes on Multifamily residential zones where adequate infrastructure and public services are available. Fourplexes would no longer be included on all lots zoned for Low Density Residential. All revisions to the Community Design Guidelines Manual would continue as presented under Section 2.4.3. The

changes to the Zoning Ordinance under the Reduced Intensity Alternative would result in an approximately 30 percent reduction in total number of new units constructed as a result of the project by reducing the density of units permitted on land zoned RS. Any future development resulting from project implementation must adhere to design controls, similar to the project.

Impact Analysis

Air Quality

The Reduced Intensity Alternative would have the potential to result in reduced construction air quality impacts, because it would reduce the overall potential for development by approximately 30 percent. However, as with the project, specific project-level information to develop a quantitative estimate of emission that would be generated by development of these units is not currently available, as it would depend on factors such as economic conditions, market and housing demands, and other considerations. The construction emission impacts associated with each new project would be short-term in nature (relative to the buildout year) and limited to the period of time when construction activity is taking place for that particular project it is not expected that the concurrent construction of various individual projects that could occur at any one time under the proposed project would generate combined criteria pollutant emissions on a daily basis that would exceed PCAPCD thresholds. As such, with implementation of Mitigation Measures AQ-3a and AQ-3b, construction emissions generated by implementation of the Reduced Intensity Alternative would result in a less than significant impact on air quality. Operational emissions would be less than significant with implementation of Mitigation Measure AQ-2, similar to the project.

Cultural Resources

The Reduced Intensity Alternative, which proposes a reduction of approximately 30 percent in housing unit capacity when compared to the project, does not include site-specific development projects. Therefore, as with the project, it is not possible to predetermine the presence of archaeological resources. Thus, while the overall housing development footprint could be reduced, the Reduced Intensity Alternative would have the same cultural resources impacts as the project. Due to the uncertainty of future impacts on historic resources and due to the requirement, that destruction of a historic resource would result in a significant and unavoidable impact, the Reduced Intensity Alternative would result in a significant and unavoidable impact.

Greenhouse Gas Emissions

The Reduced Intensity Alternative would have the same greenhouse gas (GHG) emission impacts as the project because it would not change the mobile GHG emissions per capita rate estimated under the project. In addition, the Reduced Intensity Alternative would generally comply with relevant plans, policies, or regulatory programs that have been adopted to achieve greenhouse gas reduction goals. As with the project, following implementation of Mitigation Measures GHG-2a and GHG-2b, the Reduced Intensity Alternative would also result in a less than significant impact.

4.5.4 Summary of Impacts

Table 4-1 summarizes the impacts of the three alternatives and compares them to the impacts of the project. Note that the project's significance levels represent its highest impact level in each impact category.

Table 4-1. Impacts of Project Alternatives

	Impact Category and Significance[1]		
	Air Quality	**Cultural Resources**	**Greenhouse Gas Emissions**
Project	LTS/M	SU	LTS/M
1. No Project	LTS	LTS	LTS
2. No Workforce Housing	LTS/M	SU	LTS/M
3. Reduced Intensity	LTS/M	SU	LTS/M

[1] LTS = less than significant; LTS/M = less than significant with mitigation

4.6 Environmentally Superior Alternative

Alternative 3—Reduced Intensity Alternative would be the environmentally superior alternative because it would marginally reduce construction air quality, cultural resource, and GHG emission impacts below the level of the project, but not to a less than significant level. While Alternative 2—No Workforce Housing Alternative may marginally reduce the project's significant impacts on air quality and GHG emissions and it would not affect the significant and unavoidable impacts on cultural resources in comparison to the project.

4.7 References Cited

Placer County Air Pollution Control District. 2017. *Placer County CEQA Handbook.* Available: https://www.placer.ca.gov/1801/CEQA-Handbook. Accessed June 2020.

Chapter 5
Other CEQA Considerations

This chapter contains discussions of additional topics required by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), including cumulative impacts, growth-inducing impacts, significant and unavoidable impacts, and significant irreversible environmental changes.

5.1 Cumulative Impacts

Cumulative impacts result from individually minor, but collectively significant, impacts occurring over a period of time. The purpose of the cumulative impact analysis is to place the project's contribution to significant environmental impacts that are caused by multiple projects (not simply the project alone) into a larger context. A project impact that is less than significant when the project is viewed by itself can nonetheless be considered *cumulatively considerable* if it would make a substantial contribution to the overall impact. There is often no clear line determining whether a project's contribution is substantial. Where the cumulative impact is particularly severe, even a small contribution may be considered substantial.

The term *cumulative impact* does not mean the impact of all resource areas (i.e., aesthetics, biological resources, etc.) together. Rather, it refers to a significant effect in any of the individual resource areas that results from the contributions of many activities.

State CEQA Guidelines Section 15130 requires that an environmental impact report (EIR) include a discussion of the potential cumulative impacts of a proposed project. *Cumulative impacts* are defined as two or more individual effects that, when considered together, are significant. The cumulative impact from several projects is the change in the environment that results from the incremental impact of the development when added to other closely related past, present, and reasonably foreseeable or probable future developments.

As stated in State CEQA Guidelines Section 15130:

> …a cumulative impact consists of an impact which is created as a result of the combination of the project evaluated in the EIR together with other projects causing related impacts...An EIR may determine that a project's contribution to a significant cumulative impact will be rendered less than cumulatively considerable and thus is not significant. A project's contribution is less than cumulatively considerable if the project is required to implement or fund its fair share of a mitigation measure or measures designed to alleviate the cumulative impact.

An adequate discussion of significant cumulative impacts can utilize either of the following means.

- A list of past, present, and probable future projects producing related or cumulative impacts, including, if necessary, those projects outside the control of the agency
- A summary of projections contained in an adopted general plan or related planning document, or in a prior environmental document, which has been adopted or certified, which described or evaluated regional or area-wide conditions contributing to the cumulative impact. Any such planning document will be referenced and made available to the public at a location specified by the lead agency.

The cumulative impact analysis in this Draft EIR relies upon the summary of projections approach.

The Housing Strategy and Development Plan indicates that there is capacity in the county for approximately 80,000 housing units (Placer County 2019). It is reasonable to assume that approximately one quarter, or 20,000 new units throughout the entire county are reasonably foreseeable for buildout through 2040. This includes potential buildout of the approved Specific Plans located in the western portion of the County including Placer Vineyards, Regional University, Bickford and the more recently approved Placer Ranch Specific Plan. These specific plan areas include an area approximately 10,530 acres in size and include a total of approximately 23,780 dwelling units. Dwelling units not part of the aforementioned Specific Plans are assumed to be spread evenly throughout unincorporated Placer County. Together, this county-wide growth is hereafter referred to in this Draft EIR as the cumulative projects.

Due to the generalized nature of the cumulative project growth, the following analysis is largely qualitative. A qualitative analysis is sufficient to gauge their contribution to existing and future planned conditions.

The determination of a project's cumulative effects involves identifying the following.

- Significant impacts that are the result of the cumulative contributions of past, present, and reasonably probable future projects. Cumulative effects that are less than significant are not required to be analyzed.
- Whether the present project would contribute to any of those cumulative impacts. The EIR is not required to analyze a cumulative impact to which the project would not contribute.
- Whether, in the context of the cumulative impact, the present project's contribution would be cumulatively considerable. An impact that is less than significant when viewed as a project impact may nonetheless be a cumulatively considerable contribution to a cumulative impact.

5.1.1 Aesthetics

The geographic context for cumulative aesthetics impacts is generally confined to areas that are visible from the project site or have views of the project site. Aesthetic and visual resources impacts are project-specific and highly localized; for purposes of this analysis it is conservatively assumed that development resulting from the project could combine with other cumulative projects in the affected area. Aesthetic impacts of potential cumulative projects visible from the same areas where the proposed project would be visible, were evaluated to determine whether there would be significant cumulative aesthetic and visual impacts. The visual settings of the cumulative projects are similar to those described for the project area.

Implementation of the project would not significantly alter existing views of scenic vistas or the character of the county with implementation of recommended mitigation measures. The potential dwelling unit locations are spread out throughout the county and individual projects, while constituting an increase in development compared to existing conditions, would be relatively small. Future development under the proposed project, combined with other approved and proposed projects in the county, would potentially result in alteration of the existing urban, semi-rural, rural, and natural landscape of the region if not mitigated. Individual projects proposed in the county must be designed consistent with policies established in the Placer County General Plan and Design Manual. Each development proposal would be reviewed by the County's Development Review

Committee to ensure that proposed development projects are designed in harmony and compatible with the existing landscape and surrounding development.

The project's contribution to this impact is considered cumulatively considerable and mitigation is required. Impacts are typically mitigated separately for each project. Cumulative impacts can be mitigated to less-than-significant levels with use of building materials that are consistent with the general character of the area, landscaping design, scenic resource preservation, open space conservation, and proper lighting techniques to direct light on-site and away from adjacent properties. As the proposed project areas develop, the visual impacts on the existing scenic resources and rural character of the community would be reduced to less-than-significant levels with consistency with the Design Manual. Further, projects proposed within the proposed project area would be analyzed on a project-by-project basis. Projects would be subject to the County's Design Manual and review process, which would provide design and aesthetic requirements. Adherence to the Design Manual would ensure building design, site planning, lighting, and tree protection are consistent with the General Plan and the Zoning Ordinance. Any inconsistencies with County standards discovered by the Development Review Committee would warrant additional conditions of approval.

Implementation of Mitigation Measure AES-2 would ensure that the project's contribution to cumulative aesthetic, light, and glare impacts would be less than cumulatively considerable with mitigation.

5.1.2 Agriculture and Forestry Resources

The cumulative context for agricultural and forestry resources is Placer County and the cumulative project that could combine with the proposed project are described above. The proposed project, which would amend or change the Placer County General Plan, Placer County Zoning Ordinance, Zoning Maps, and Community Design Guidelines Manual, would affect a small number of parcels that are not located on Important Farmland, land under Williamson Act or Farmland Security Zone contract, or forested land, including land zoned timberland production zone.

A cumulative impact on Important Farmland exists in Placer County. The county saw approximately 13,000 acres of Important Farmland converted to nonagricultural uses between 2006 and 2016. However, the project does not propose General Plan amendments that would result in additional conversion of Important Farmland, nor would the project adversely affect Important Farmland or land under Williamson Act or Farmland Security Zone contract. It is possible that future development adjacent to Important Farmland would experience odors and noise from adjacent agricultural uses that could be perceived as a nuisance. However, the project would not make a considerable contribution to the cumulative impact by placing nonagricultural uses adjacent to agricultural uses because Placer County's Right-to-Farm code would protect existing agricultural uses from complaints resulting from new residential uses near the agricultural land.

A cumulative impact on forestry resources exists in Placer County. The General Plan EIR estimated that approximately 3 percent of the county's forestry resources would be converted to non-commercial-timber uses by 2010 along Interstate (I-) 80 and Foresthill. However, it is unlikely that there would be nuisance complaints that would result in conversion of forested land to non-commercial-timber uses. Therefore, the project would not make a considerable contribution to a cumulative impact.

5.1.3 Air Quality

According to the Placer County Air Pollution Control District (PCAPCD), significant cumulative impacts related to air quality would occur if the project conflicts with the applicable air quality attainment plans, or if project emissions exceed district cumulative thresholds.

No specific development projects are being proposed as part of the project. However, the project would allow for higher-density development within residential and mixed-use developments in community regions and rural communities. As discussed under Impact AQ-1 in Section 3.3, *Air Quality*, the development of these additional units is not expected to be a substantial increase from existing conditions or General Plan projections. The project is, therefore, consistent with applicable air quality attainment plans, and the impact would not be cumulatively considerable.

According to the PCAPCD, during construction, project emissions would be cumulatively considerable if emissions exceed 82 pounds per day of reactive organic gases (ROG), 82 pounds per day of nitrogen oxide (NO_X), or 82 pounds per day of particulate matter 10 micrometers or less in diameter (PM10). As discussed under Impact AQ-2 in Section 3.2, *Air Quality*, buildout of the proposed project is anticipated to occur over a 10-year period, with full buildout in 2030. As shown in Table 3.3-5 in Section 3.2, *Air Quality*, emissions resulting from construction would not generate emissions in excess of PCAPCD's threshold. For this reason, the proposed project's impact related to emissions of criteria air pollutants during construction would be less cumulatively considerable.

As discussed under Impact AQ-2, project operational emissions would be cumulative considerable if emissions exceed 55 pounds per day of ROG, 55 pounds per day of NO_X, or 82 pounds per day of PM10. Table 3.3-7 in Section 3.2, *Air Quality*, outlines daily emissions related to operation of the potential 194 additional units within the county. Prior to mitigation, operation of the proposed units would generate emissions of ROG in excess of PCAPCD's cumulative significance thresholds. However, with implementation of Mitigation Measure AQ-2, which prohibits the installation of wood-burning or natural gas appliances in new development, operation of the proposed project would not generate emissions above PCAPCD thresholds. As such, the proposed project's impact related to emissions of criteria air pollutants during operation would be less than cumulatively considerable.

5.1.4 Biological Resources

The cumulative context for biological resources is Placer County. The proposed project would potentially affect a small number of parcels, some of which have potential to support sensitive biological resources. In general, a project's potential impacts related to sensitive biological resources depend on the specific project site and whether it supports sensitive natural communities, special-status species, and/or aquatic resources. The proposed project does not include any specific development projects, and future development projects resulting from the proposed project would require site-specific biological resource surveys, which could inform design recommendations to reduce each project's impacts.

The proposed project would convert relatively small portions of the county that are currently undeveloped to residential uses, which would have potential to contribute to the loss of sensitive biological resources, including special-status species and their habitats, sensitive natural communities, and federally and state regulated wetlands. However, with the General Plan's extensive goals, policies, and actions to minimize effects of development on biological resources and

implementation of recommended mitigation measures, the project's impacts would be minimal and compensated. Therefore, the project is not expected to make a cumulatively considerable contribution to losses of sensitive biological resources in the county.

5.1.5 Cultural Resources

The geographic scope of the cumulative impacts on cultural resources is Placer County. The project, in combination with past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects, could result in cumulatively considerable disturbance to or destruction of historical resources, unique archaeological resources, or human remains. Because the project would permit development in areas that have not experienced substantial growth or other disturbance, these cumulative impacts could be significant.

Past activities have disturbed archaeological deposits in the county and it is possible that future projects may also disturb archaeological deposits. Other projects would be required to adhere to state and local regulations concerning cultural resources as well as California Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 for the discovery of human remains. Compliance with General Plan policies and County ordinances described in Section 3.5, *Cultural Resources*, to protect cultural resources would reduce impacts, but due to lack of specificity on specific development sites, it cannot be stated with certainty that a future project would avoid all impacts on historic or archaeological resources. Because the same can be said for any foreseeable project in the county, impacts on cultural resources as a result of project implementation could be cumulatively considerable.

All projects that involve ground-disturbing activities have the potential to disturb unknown pre-contact or historic archaeological sites or human remains. However, projects, including the proposed project, would have to follow the law regarding human remains and incorporate actions such as those described in Mitigation Measure CUL-3. Implementation of Mitigation Measure CUL-3 would ensure that the project's contribution to cumulative impacts on human remains would be less than cumulatively considerable with mitigation.

5.1.6 Energy

The cumulative context for energy is the service areas for various providers. Due to requirements related to use of renewable energy and overall sustainability, the overall cumulative impact is not expected to be significant. Nevertheless, the project, in combination with past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects, would not result in cumulatively considerable impacts related to wasteful use of energy resources. Energy use during future construction resulting from implementation of the proposed project would include electricity used to power electric construction equipment and mobile offices, gasoline and diesel fuel used for transportation of employees and haul trucks to and from project sites, and fuel used for operation of off-road equipment. During operation, future project would require energy for motor vehicle travel and building-related uses such as lighting; cooling and heating; and conveyance, treatment, and distribution of water. Implementation of the proposed project would not result in the wasteful, inefficient, and unnecessary consumption of energy, nor would project construction or operation conflict with or obstruct any applicable renewable energy or energy efficiency plans. As such, the proposed project's contribution to cumulative impacts on energy would be less than cumulatively considerable.

5.1.7 Geology, Soils, and Paleontological Resources

The cumulative context for geology and soils resources is Placer County. In general, a project's potential impacts related to geology and soils are individual and localized, depending on the project site and underlying soils. The proposed project does not include any specific development projects that would cumulate and future development projects resulting from the proposed project would need to complete a site-specific soils and/or geotechnical report, which would provide design recommendations to reduce each project's impacts. Therefore, there is no cumulative impact on geology and soils within the county. As there is no existing cumulative impact, the proposed project would not make a cumulatively considerable contribution to an existing impact.

A cumulative impact on paleontological resources exists in Placer County because of the existence of geologic units with high paleontological sensitivity in the county and the nonrenewable nature of paleontological resources. Because paleontological resources are assessed by geologic unit, which is generally larger than project sites, paleontological resource impacts are not site-specific. Past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects all have potential to affect paleontological resources in the county. However, project-level mitigation would fully mitigate for impacts on paleontological resources, ensuring that scientific information that fossils convey would not be lost. The project would not make a cumulatively considerable contribution to the existing cumulative impact.

5.1.8 Greenhouse Gas Emissions

The geographic scope for cumulative GHG emission impacts is global. Because climate change is the result of cumulative global emissions, no single project, when taken in isolation, can cause climate change—a single project's emissions are insufficient to change the radiative balance of the atmosphere. Because climate change is the result of GHG emissions, and GHGs are emitted by innumerable sources worldwide, cumulative GHG emissions that contribute to global climate change will have a significant cumulative impact on the natural environment as well as on human development and activity. The global increase in GHG emissions that has occurred and will occur in the future is the result of the actions and choices of individuals, businesses, local governments, states, and nations. Furthermore, although climate change impacts will likely vary by geography and intensity, the impacts that will result from cumulative global emissions will be felt worldwide. The GHG emissions analysis within Section 3.8, *Greenhouse Gas Emissions*, is inherently a cumulative analysis. However, a summary of the discussion is provided below.

As discussed under Impact GHG-1 and GHG-2 of Section 3.8, the proposed project would result in operational GHG emissions in excess of the applicable PCAPCD efficiency threshold. Implementation of Mitigation Measure AQ-2 would reduce the above impact associated with the generation of GHG Emissions to a level considered less than cumulatively considerable by reducing project-related emissions to a level sufficient to meet the PCAPCD's efficiency threshold. Implementation of Mitigation Measures GHG-2a and GHG-2b would ensure that the project would comply with the applicable local and statewide plans, policies, and regulatory programs designed to reduce GHG emissions. Therefore, the proposed project would not be considered to generate GHG emissions, either directly or indirectly, that would have a significant impact on the environment, or conflict with any applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of GHGs. Consequently, the project would not result in a cumulatively considerable incremental

contribution to impacts related to GHG emissions or climate change and the project's impact would be less than cumulatively considerable.

5.1.9 Hazards and Hazardous Materials

The cumulative context for hazards and hazardous materials is Placer County. In general, a project's potential impacts related to hazards are individual and localized, depending on activities occurring at the project site and proximity to hazardous facilities. Hazardous materials used during construction as a result of project implementation would be of low toxicity and would consist of fuels, oils, and lubricants. Because these materials are required for operation of construction vehicles and equipment, best management practices (BMP) would be implemented to reduce the potential for or exposure to accidental spills or fires involving the use of hazardous materials. While foreseeable projects have the potential to cause similar impacts, it is assumed these projects would also implement similar BMPs and follow all regulations regarding the transport, disposal, and handling of hazardous wastes during construction.

Numerous businesses and industries throughout the county utilize or store hazardous materials. As a result of the regulatory scheme described in Section 3.9, *Hazards and Hazardous Materials*, there would be no cumulative significant effect from hazardous materials. The project's impact is less than significant, and its contribution would not create a new cumulative impact.

5.1.10 Hydrology and Water Quality

The cumulative context for hydrology and water quality is Placer County. Development of the project, combined with other past and future development or redevelopment within the potentially affected geographic area, could degrade stormwater quality through an increase in impervious surface area and an increase in contaminated runoff. This could ultimately violate water quality standards, affect beneficial uses, and/or further impair 303(d)-listed waters within the watershed. Stormwater drainage can result in cumulative effects on water quality within the affected basin. Development in the vicinity of the project could degrade stormwater quality during construction through land disturbance and during operation through an increase in impervious surface area and contaminated runoff during construction and operation.

Effects of the proposed project on water quality in combination with the potential effects of other cumulative projects, have the potential for cumulative impacts on surface and groundwater quality resulting in a cumulatively significant impact. However, all new projects are subject to the requirements of the Placer County Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System Permit, the construction general permit, and Placer County General Plan and ordinances as they relate to water quality; these regulatory requirements have been designed to protect water quality. New projects are also required to comply with the County's standards for low-impact development (LID) to reduce stormwater runoff and associated pollutants. Additionally, development projects would be subject to an environmental review process as well as Mitigation Measures WQ-1a through WQ-1f, WQ-3a through WQ-3c, which would identify potential site- and/or project-specific water quality impacts and mitigate for any potential significant impacts. Therefore, cumulative impacts on water quality as a result of the proposed project would be less than considerable.

During construction of other reasonably foreseeable development projects within the Sacramento Valley–North American, Olympic Valley, and the Martis Valley Groundwater Basins, potential dewatering could be conducted on a one-time or temporary basis during the construction phase but

would not result in a loss of water that would deplete groundwater supplies. During operation, new impervious areas can reduce the potential for groundwater recharge. However, most other reasonably foreseeable projects in the basin would be required to comply with the County's standards for LID to allow for recharge through infiltration due to increased impervious area. Therefore, groundwater recharge from percolating rainfall would not be adversely affected, and an indirect lowering of the local groundwater table is not likely to occur. The project would not substantially interfere with groundwater recharge because it would not appreciably decrease the size of groundwater recharge areas, compared to the overall size of the groundwater basin. The Placer County General Plan and Development Design Manual promote a variety of green infrastructure, LID, and open space which would allow water to infiltrate. Future development projects would also follow the State Water Resources Control Board's requirements for site design measures and LID design standards. Therefore, groundwater recharge would not be adversely affected and cumulative groundwater recharge impacts would be less than considerable.

Future development projects could require increases in water supplies. During construction, the project would comply with requirements to reduce impacts related to dewatering and groundwater resources. Individual projects resulting from implementation of the project would not rely on surface water or groundwater supplies and therefore would not affect groundwater supplies during construction or operation. Landscape and LID features would continue to allow for groundwater infiltration, and the project would contribute only minimally to cumulative impacts on groundwater recharge. Therefore, impacts related to development of the project would not be considerable, and cumulative impacts on groundwater recharge and supply would be less than cumulatively considerable.

Future development within the vicinity of the project would likely occur in undeveloped areas without existing impervious surfaces potentially increasing the volume and rate of stormwater runoff. Such increases could cause localized flooding if the storm drainage capacity is exceeded or convey excess flows to overbank areas where flood storage may not be available.

All new development is required to handle stormwater in a manner that ensures that flooding would not increase and flood flows would not be redirected to other areas that are not currently prone to flooding. All future projects would be required to include stormwater management features, such as LID measures into project designs to reduce flows to pre-project conditions. If improvements to storm drainage capacity are needed, the County would ensure that new storm drainage systems are designed in conformance with the Placer County Flood Control and Water Conservation District's Stormwater Management Manual and the County's Land Development Manual. Post-construction stormwater management BMPs include implementation of permeable materials and swales allowing stormwater infiltration and reducing impacts associated with the increase in impervious areas. Post-construction measures must also meet the County's volume and flow-based sizing of permanent post-construction BMPs.

Therefore, impacts related to runoff and storm drainage capacity related to development of the project would not be considerable, and cumulative impacts on drainage would be less than cumulatively considerable.

5.1.11 Land Use and Planning

Because land use policies are regional in scope, the geographic context for the cumulative impacts associated with land use issues is broader than the county and would include regional development

under the jurisdiction of SACOG. Past, present, and future cumulative development within this geographic context assumes full buildout of the general plans of the six SACOG counties as well as development envisioned in the Land Use Element of the Placer County General Plan.

CEQA requires that an EIR consider whether a proposed project may conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation that was adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental impact. This environmental determination differs from the larger policy determination of whether a proposed project is consistent with a jurisdiction's general plan. Regional growth in general is reviewed for consistency with adopted land use plans and policies by the individual cities and counties in the geographic context in accordance with the requirements of CEQA, which require findings of plan and policy consistency prior to approval of entitlements for development. Analysis of project consistency with land use policies or regulations adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental impact is similarly evaluated for each individual project and addressed in the analysis for each specific resource area. For example, if an individual project were to result in the division of an established community, this would be addressed in the land use section of that project's EIR or other environmental document. The environmental evaluation for the project would also include an analysis of the division of an established community on a cumulative basis.

Because consistency with land use plans and policies is inherently a project-specific issue, and each jurisdiction would decide on project consistency at the project level, there would be no cumulative impact as a result of cumulative development in the SACOG region. Implementation of the project would be generally consistent with the existing and proposed plans, including the adopted General Plan. Therefore, the project's cumulative impact would be less cumulatively considerable.

5.1.12 Mineral Resources

The cumulative context for mineral resources is Placer County. Currently, there are no other foreseeable projects within the county that would convert or change land uses in a way that would contribute to the loss of or limit the availability of mineral resources. Therefore, the project would not have an incremental contribution to a significantly cumulative impact on mineral resources and would not result in a cumulatively considerable significant impact on mineral resources.

5.1.13 Noise

For noise, the cumulative context is comprised of the general vicinity near the affected parcels. As noted in Section 3.13.1, *Existing Conditions,* traffic noise is the most prevalent noise source in the project area, and other sources of noise include railroad tracks, airports, waste facilities, and industrial uses. The geographic extent that these noise sources affect is highly dependent on the type and characteristics of each source. Noise from a rural, two-lane road affects a much smaller area than a large, 12-lane freeway, for example. In general, noise from roadways represents a substantial source of noise in most communities. Although the General Plan includes policies to ensure noise levels in new residential buildings, such as those that would be constructed for the proposed project, are compatible with the General Plan, older and existing housing units may not meet the compatibility standards from the County's General Plan (see Table 3.13-8). Particularly those housing units located near I-80 would be most affected by vehicle traffic noise, and the allowable exposure from transportation sources may be exceeded.

Impacts from other existing sources of noise, such as industrial facilities, airports, and railroad tracks, likely also contribute substantially to ambient noise levels at existing residences and other noise-sensitive land uses, such that the allowable noise standards by district (see Table 3.13-7) may not be achievable. Consequently, existing noise in the county is considered to be cumulatively significant, because residents and others are exposed to noise that may not be consistent with the General Plan.

No specific development projects are being proposed as part of the project. However, the project would allow for higher-density development within residential and mixed-use developments in community regions and rural communities in the county.

Considered together with the cumulative context, it is unlikely that there would be a cumulatively considerable increase in noise on any roadways in the county. As noted under Impact NOI-1, traffic noise increases from the project alone would be relatively small. On State Route 89, for example, the project-induced increase relative to existing traffic would be 1.8 percent. In general, the project's ability to contribute to roadway noise is constrained by the small number of units that would be added countywide (194 units total). Thus, even though traffic on roadways in the county represents a significant cumulative impact, the project's contribution would not be considerable, because the magnitude of noise increase would not be perceptible. Therefore, the project's contribution to traffic noise would not be cumulatively considerable. This impact is less than significant.

Regarding exposure to aircraft noise, while the project could increase the density of residential development in some areas and increase the number of residences that could be exposed to aircraft noise if those areas are in the vicinity of airports or airport flight paths, policies are in place that would not permit new development in those areas unless noise can be mitigated to a less-than-significant level (namely, Policy 9.A.8). Therefore, implementation of the project would not substantially contribute to the significant cumulative aircraft noise impacts from air traffic at Auburn Municipal Airport, Blue Canyon-Nyack Airport, or Truckee-Tahoe Airport.

5.1.14 Population and Housing

The geographic scope of the cumulative impacts on population and housing encompasses the project area and surrounding areas. The project would result in less-than-significant impacts on population and housing. The project would have a marginal impact on where developers chose to accommodate demand for residential development within different areas and parcels of the county. Overall, the project would result in a less-than-significant impact related to housing.

Future development could result in an increase in population; however, the project, which could result in a slight increase in population, would not substantially change the population projections under the existing General Plan. Therefore, when combined with other foreseeable projects it would not result in a cumulatively considerable significant impact.

5.1.15 Public Services, Recreation, and Utilities and Service Systems

Project implementation would result in an increase in individuals throughout the county, which would increase the service demands on fire protection, policy protection, schools, and other public facilities. In combination with other development projects throughout the county, the project's contribution to an increase in public service and facility demands could be cumulatively

considerable. However, the General Plan contains policies and strategies that prevent development within the county from exceeding acceptable service levels. In accordance with the Policy 4.A.2 of the General Plan, the County will ensure through the development review process that adequate public facilities and services are available to serve new development, and the County will not approve new development where existing facilities are inadequate unless the following conditions are met. The County achieves this by requiring all applicants to demonstrate that all necessary public facilities will be installed or adequately financed through developer fees or other means. This requirement applies to both the development of a maximum of 194 additional units under full project implementation as well as future potential non-project development. Therefore, while it is not anticipated that isolated population growth throughout the county would contribute to service ratio declines at public facilities such that facility expansion or construction would need to be built or expanded, adherence to existing General Plan policies would ensure that the project's contribution is not cumulatively considerable, and impacts would be less than significant.

While the addition of up to 194 new dwelling units throughout the county would likely result in increased use of some existing recreational features, the dwelling units would not directly contribute to parkland level of service deficiencies due to compliance with General Plan Policy 5.A.3. This policy requires new development within the county to provide a minimum of 5 acres of improved parkland and 5 acres of passive recreation area or open space and one mile of recreational trail for every 1,000 new residents of the area covered by the development, thereby offsetting any additional parkland needs within geographic regions of the county that do not currently meet desired standards to at least a neutral level. Because parkland impacts would be offset by this mandatory dedication, the project's cumulative contribution to impacts on parkland and recreational resources would be less than significant.

If implemented, the project would require water use, this usage would not contribute to a cumulative effect because construction of all of these units would be required to comply with General Plan Policy 4.C.1, which requires that developers demonstrate the availability of a long-term, reliable water supply to serve their planned developments within the County. Therefore, because dwelling units would only be constructed under existing water entitlements, the project's cumulative contribution to such impacts would be less than significant.

The project could result in additional wastewater generation. If the project's wastewater contributions, in combination with the contributions anticipated with implementation of future non-project-related development, were to exceed wastewater treatment facility capacity, the project's cumulative impact would be significant. However, the General Plan updates that constitute the project would only allow development in areas where adequate infrastructure, including wastewater treatment infrastructure, is available to serve such development. Therefore, the project's cumulative contribution to such impacts would be less than significant.

Project implementation could result in a slight increase in population generating additional solid waste requiring disposal. If the project's solid waste contributions, in combination with the solid waste contributions from future non-project development were to exceed standards or local disposal capacity, the project's impact would be cumulatively considerable. However, because the County currently meets its residential solid waste disposal standards, it is not expected that the dwelling units that would be constructed as part of the project would result in exceedances of this standard. Because the anticipated amount of solid waste that could be generated by future development associated with the project accounts for only 0.07 percent of the Western Regional

Sanitary Landfill's maximum daily throughput capacity, the project's impacts are not cumulatively considerable, and impacts would be less than significant.

5.1.16 Transportation

Construction-related impacts, such as restrictions to emergency access or restrictions due to road closures, would be temporary. However, it is possible that construction activities for the proposed project could coincide with similar activities for other projects in the area, resulting in more substantial effects. Reasonably foreseeable projects could also require the closure of roadways and could further reduce emergency access or increase roadway hazards. Therefore, a cumulative contribution to impacts related to emergency access and an introduction of roadway hazards could occur. However, County requirements for construction projects, described in Section 3.16, *Transportation*, which includes county requirements such as signage and an access plan to ensure continued emergency access during construction, would minimize roadway and transportation hazards during project construction, and would reduce any potential project-related increases in hazards or emergency access restrictions to less-than-significant levels. For this reason, the project would not be expected to have a cumulatively considerable contribution to this potential cumulative impact.

With regard to potential cumulative vehicle miles traveled (VMT) impacts, VMT per capita are expected to decrease overall county-wide. Additionally, because dwelling units in some of the anticipated growth areas would be located within 0.5 mile of an existing transit stop and future development of new residential or commercial land uses near transit and the improvement of transit, bike, and pedestrian infrastructure, vehicle trip generation and associated trip lengths are not expected to increase overall, in the long term. The dwelling units associated with the proposed project would continue to be deed-restricted to affordable levels, so their VMT per capita would continue to be less than VMT per capita of market-rate housing for the reasons identified in 3.16, *Transportation*. Therefore, the proposed project's VMT per capita, combined with VMT resulting from future projects, would not be expected to result in a cumulative VMT impact in the region. The proposed project's incremental contribution to a cumulative impact related to VMT would be less than cumulatively considerable.

5.1.17 Tribal Cultural Resources

The geographic scope of the cumulative impacts on cultural resources is Placer County. The project, in combination with past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects, could result in cumulatively considerable disturbance to or destruction of tribal cultural resources. Because the project would permit development in areas that have not experienced substantial growth or other disturbance, these cumulative impacts could be significant. However, County policies related to tribal cultural resources avoidance and mitigation would be applicable to the proposed project and any foreseeable projects proposed for permitting. Implementation of Mitigation Measure CUL-2 would ensure that any previously undiscovered tribal cultural resources would be properly treated if found during construction. Therefore, the project's incremental contribution to a cumulative impact on tribal cultural resources would not be considerable.

5.1.18 Wildfire

The geographic scope of the cumulative impacts on wildfire is areas surrounding new development. Typically, when structures and people are added to an area, the risk of wildfire increases. As evident in the past couple of years, wildfires throughout the state of California can be far reaching and amount to widespread damage. The severity and damage done by a wildfire is dependent on the amount of rain the area has received at that point in time, fuel availability, and whether certain fire management techniques have been implemented, among many other factors. With increased development throughout the county, there is a cumulative impact with respect to wildfire.

The proposed project's contribution to a cumulative impact would not, however, be cumulatively considerable. The proposed project itself would not cumulatively increase the risk of wildfire, as the proposed project would not involve the addition of a significant amount of structures or people to unincorporated areas of the county, and development of the actual housing sites would be subject to project-by-project review. In addition, no significant impacts related to wildfire resulting from project implementation within the unincorporated areas have been identified. Development of other future projects in the county's unincorporated areas would be required to adhere to any state and federal environmental regulations, including those related to wildfire risk, associated with construction, demolition, and/or remediation, consequently improving overall environmental quality and reducing the cumulative impact related to wildfire. Therefore, implementation of the proposed project would not result in a cumulatively considerable contribution to a significant cumulative wildfire impact.

5.2 Growth-Inducing Impact

CEQA requires a discussion of the ways in which the project would induce growth. State CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.2(e) identifies a project as growth-inducing if it fosters economic or population growth or the construction of additional housing, either directly or indirectly, in the surrounding environment. The project would not directly induce growth because it would not directly authorize new development. The project could, however, indirectly induce growth by removing barriers to growth, by creating a condition that attracts additional population or new economic activity, or by providing a catalyst for future growth in the area. Nonetheless, while the project may have a potential to induce growth, it would not automatically result in growth. Growth can happen only through capital investment in new economic opportunities by the public or private sectors.

By law, Placer County is required to adopt "a comprehensive, long-term general plan for the physical development of the county" (Government Code § 65300). According to Government Code Section 65583, the General Plan's Housing Element is required to include:

> An identification and analysis of existing and projected housing needs and a statement of goals, policies, quantified objectives, financial resources, and scheduled programs for the preservation, improvement, and development of housing. The housing element shall identify adequate sites for housing, including rental housing, factory-built housing, mobile homes, and emergency shelters, and shall make adequate provision for the existing and projected needs of all economic segments of the community.

On a regular basis (now every 8 years), SACOG prepares the Regional Housing Needs Allocation and adopts the associated Regional Housing Needs Plan that establishes the share of projected future

housing growth that Placer County must accommodate in its General Plan. Unincorporated Placer County's regional housing share under the 2013–2021 Regional Housing Needs Plan is 5,031 dwelling units. The housing element was adopted on October 29, 2013 to account for the new allocations. SACOG's Metropolitan Transportation Plan 2035 neither regulates local land use authority nor precludes a local jurisdiction from planning and approving growth that is different in terms of total units or geographic extent (Sacramento Area Council of Governments 2012).

5.3 Significant and Unavoidable Impacts

According to Section 15126.2(a) (c) of the State CEQA Guidelines, an EIR shall identify and focus on the significant environmental effects of the proposed project, including effects that cannot be avoided if the proposed project were implemented. The significant and unavoidable impacts are summarized in Table 5-1.

5.4 Significant Irreversible Environmental Changes

State CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.2 requires that the EIR for a general plan amendment address any significant irreversible environmental change that would result from implementation of that amendment. Specifically, per the Guidelines (§ 15126.2(d)), such an impact would occur if:

- The project would involve a large commitment of nonrenewable resources
- Irreversible damage can result from environmental accidents associated with the project
- The proposed consumption of resources is not justified

Approval and implementation of project-related activities would be typical of these sorts of land use planning and regulatory actions associated with development of general plan and zoning amendments. Such activities would result in an irretrievable commitment of nonrenewable resources such as fossil fuel–based energy supplies and construction-related materials. Energy resources would be used for construction, heating and cooling of buildings, transportation of people and goods, heating and refrigeration, lighting, and other associated energy needs.

Implementing the project would result in environmental changes because the physical environment would be altered through continued commitments of land and construction materials to urban and rural development. There would be an irretrievable commitment of labor, capital, and materials used in construction and a permanent loss of open space over time. Nonrenewable resources would be committed primarily in the form of fossil fuels and would include oil, natural gas, and gasoline used to support the additional development associated with implementation of the current General Plan.

Implementing the project would also result in the consumption of other nonrenewable or slowly renewable resources including lumber and other forest products, sand and gravel, asphalt, steel, copper, and water. Although alternative energy sources such as solar, geothermal, or wind energy are in use in the county, the proportion of energy generated by these sources is so much smaller than the proportion generated by fossil fuel sources that it is unlikely that real savings in nonrenewable energy supplies (e.g., oil and gas) could be realized in the immediate future.

Development in unincorporated Placer County would result in the construction of structures, facilities, or infrastructure on lands that are currently undeveloped. Development of lands generally would result in their future and permanent commitment to urban, suburban, or rural uses.

Table 5-1. Significant and Unavoidable Impacts

Impact	Level of Significance[1]	Mitigation Measures[2]	Level of Significance After Mitigation[1]
3.5 Cultural Resources			
Impact CUL-1: Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in Section 15064.5	S	N/A	SU
5.2 Cumulative Impacts			
Cultural Resources (adverse change to resource)	S	None	SU

Note:
[1] S = significant; SU = significant and unavoidable; LTS = less than significant; NI = no impact
[2] The full texts of the mitigation measures are found in the respective impact sections under Chapter 3.

5.5 References Cited

Placer County. 2019. Housing Opportunity Site Evaluation Tool. https://www.placer.ca.gov/5287/Research-Reports-and-Demographics. Accessed May 19, 2020.

Sacramento Area Council of Governments. 2012. *Executive Summary: Table 1 – Allocations – Total and by Income Category, SACOG 2013-2021 RHNA – Final Allocations.* Available: https://www.sacog.org/sites/main/files/file-attachments/rhnp_allocations_2013-21_adopted.pdf. Accessed June 14, 2020.

Chapter 6
Report Preparers

6.1 Placer County

- Shawna Purvines, Principal Planner, Planning Services Division
- Patrick Dobbs, Senior Planner, Planning Services Division
- Katie Jackson, Public Works
- Leigh Chavez, Principal Planner/Environmental Coordinator, Community Development Resource Agency

6.2 ICF

- Erin Efner—Project Director, Project Description and Other CEQA
- Tina Sorvari— Project Manager, Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Leo Mena—Project Description
- Kirsten Chapman—Aesthetics, Land Use and Planning
- Diana Roberts—Agriculture and Forest Resources, Geology, Soils, Mineral Resources, and Paleontology
- Sarah Halterman—Air Quality, Energy, Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Laura Yoon—Air Quality, Energy, Greenhouse Gas Emissions review
- Matt McFalls—Air Quality, Energy, Greenhouse Gas Emissions review
- Angela Alcala—Biological Resources
- Lisa Webber—Biological Resources
- Jena Rogers—Cultural and Paleontological Resources, Tribal Cultural Resources
- Erik Allen—Cultural and Paleontological Resources, Tribal Cultural Resources
- Patrick Maley—Geology, Soils, Mineral Resources, and Paleontology, Minerals
- Katrina Sukola—Hydrology and Water Quality
- Cory Matsui—Noise
- Devan Atteberry—Population and Housing, Wildfire
- Aileen Cole—Public Services, Recreation, and Utilities and Service Systems
- Caroline Vurlumis—Alternatives
- Christine McCrory—Editor
- Jesse Cherry—Publications Specialist
- Jesika Allen—GIS
- Teresa Giffen—Graphics

6.3 DKS Associates

8950 Cal Center Drive, Suite 340, Sacramento, CA 95826

- David Tokarski, Senior Transportation Planner—Transportation