
1.0 INTRODUCTION

This Draft Environmental Impact Report (Draft EIR or DEIR) was prepared in accordance with and in fulfillment of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the CEQA Guidelines. As described in the CEQA Guidelines Section 15121(a), “an environmental impact report (EIR) is a public informational document which will inform public agency decision makers and the public generally of the significant environmental effects of a project, identify possible ways to minimize the significant effects, and describe reasonable alternatives to the project.” CEQA requires that an EIR be prepared by the agency with primary responsibility over the approval of a project (the lead agency). The City of Rocklin (City) is the lead agency for the City of Rocklin General Plan Update, which also includes the Sixth Amendment to the Redevelopment Plan for the Rocklin Redevelopment Project. The City has also prepared a separate Climate Action Plan document, which is also addressed in this Draft EIR. Public agencies are charged with the duty to consider and minimize environmental impacts of proposed development where feasible and have the obligation to balance economic, environmental, and social factors.

1.1 PURPOSE OF THE EIR

CEQA requires the preparation of an EIR prior to approving any project which may have a significant effect on the environment. With respect to the proposed City of Rocklin General Plan Update, including the Sixth Amendment to the Redevelopment Plan for the Rocklin Redevelopment Project and the associated Climate Action Plan document, the City has determined that the proposed General Plan Update is a project under CEQA. These components are collectively referred to as the “project” or “proposed project.”

The City of Rocklin has determined that preparation of an EIR is the appropriate CEQA-required documentation due to the potential for significant environmental impacts that could result from implementation of the proposed project. This Draft EIR evaluates the existing environmental resources in the vicinity of the city, analyzes potential impacts on those resources due to the proposed project, and if necessary, identifies mitigation measures that could avoid or reduce the magnitude of those impacts. This EIR provides a general review of the environmental effects of infill and/or redevelopment of the city based on land use designations proposed by the General Plan Update and policy direction included in the General Plan Update, the Sixth Amendment to the Redevelopment Plan, and the Climate Action Plan. The EIR will be used to evaluate the direct and indirect environmental effects of subsequent development under the General Plan (e.g., residential development, rezones, commercial structures, park sites, recreation facility development, and infrastructure improvements).

This Draft EIR has been prepared to provide the public and responsible and trustee agencies with information about the probable effects of adoption and implementation of the comprehensive update for the proposed project. This Draft EIR identifies policies and implementation programs in the General Plan that mitigate these effects, as well as any necessary mitigation measures to minimize significant impacts to the environment. This DEIR also evaluates reasonable alternatives to the proposed project. An environmentally superior alternative is identified as part of the process. A required “No Project” alternative discusses the result of not implementing the project or any reasonable alternatives. For purposes of this Draft EIR, the “No Project” alternative does not mean no development, but rather continued development under the City’s current General Plan. Comments generated from public review of this document will be used to revise the Draft EIR and to prepare the Final EIR.

1.2 KNOWN TRUSTEE AND RESPONSIBLE AGENCIES

According to CEQA Guidelines Section 15386, the term “trustee agency” means a state agency having jurisdiction by law over natural resources affected by a project, which are held in trust for

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the people of the State of California. Specifically, the following trustee agencies may have an interest in the City of Rocklin General Plan Update and its implementation:

- California Department of Parks and Recreation
- California Department of Fish and Game
- California State Lands Commission
- University of California

According to CEQA Guidelines Section 15381, the term “responsible agency” includes all public agencies other than the lead agency that may have discretionary actions associated with the implementation of the City of Rocklin General Plan Update or an aspect of the project. Since potential future implementation decisions may occur many years from now when the General Plan is in common use, they cannot be known with certainty. However, the following agencies may have some role in implementing the City of Rocklin General Plan Update and have been identified as potential responsible agencies:

- California Highway Patrol (CHP)
- California Department of Conservation
- California Department of Food and Agriculture
- California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD)
- California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), District 3
- Native American Heritage Commission
- Regional Water Quality Control Board, Region 5 (Central Valley Region)
- California Resources Agency
- Placer County Air Pollution Control District (PCAPCD)
- Placer County Transportation Planning Agency
- Placer County Flood Control and Water Conservation District (PCFCWCD)
- South Placer Wastewater Authority (SPWA)
- South Placer Regional Transportation Agency (SPRTA)
- Highway 65 Joint Powers Authority
- Placer County Water Agency (PCWA)
- Rocklin Unified School District
- Loomis Union School District
- Placer Union High School District
- Sierra Community College
- South Placer Municipal Utility District (SPMUD)
- Placer County Local Agency Formation Commission (Placer County LAFCo)
- California Public Utilities Commission (PUC)
- Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)

1.3 TYPE OF DOCUMENT

The CEQA Guidelines identify several types of EIRs, each applicable to different project circumstances. This EIR serves as a “Program EIR.” Program EIRs are defined by the CEQA Guidelines (Section 15168) as “a series of actions that may be characterized as one large project and may be related either:

- 1) Geographically;
- 2) As logical parts in the chain of contemplated actions;
- 3) In connection with the issuance of rules, regulations, plans or other general criteria to govern the conduct of a continuing program; or
- 4) As individual activities carried out under the same authorizing statutory or regulatory authority and having generally similar environmental effects which may be mitigated in similar ways."

The program-level analysis considers the broad environmental effects of the overall proposed General Plan Update, including the Sixth Amendment to the Redevelopment Plan for the Rocklin Redevelopment Project and the associated Climate Action Plan document. This EIR will be used to evaluate subsequent projects (public and private) under the proposed City of Rocklin General Plan Update consistent with CEQA and the CEQA Guidelines. When individual projects or activities under the General Plan are proposed, the City would be required to examine the projects or activities to determine whether their effects were adequately analyzed in this EIR. If the projects or activities would have no effects beyond those analyzed in this EIR, no further CEQA compliance would be required.

1.4 INTENDED USE OF THE EIR

This Draft EIR is intended to evaluate the environmental impacts of adoption and implementation of the General Plan Update, including the Sixth Amendment to the Redevelopment Plan for the Rocklin Redevelopment Project and the associated Climate Action Plan document. The document will serve as a source of information in the environmental review of subsequent planning and development proposals. Such proposals may include, but are not limited to, specific plans, provision of infrastructure and public facilities, and individual development projects. In addition, the Draft EIR will also be used as a resource in the preparation of revisions to the City's Zoning Ordinance and updates to the Capital Improvement Program.

1.5 ORGANIZATION AND SCOPE

Sections 15122 through 15132 of the CEQA Guidelines identify content requirements for Draft and Final EIRs. An EIR must include a description of the environmental setting, an environmental impact analysis, mitigation measures, alternatives, significant irreversible environmental changes, growth-inducing impacts, and cumulative impacts. The environmental issues addressed in the Draft EIR were established through review of environmental documentation developed for the project, environmental documentation for nearby projects, and public agency responses to the Notice of Preparation (NOP). This Draft EIR is organized in the following sections:

SECTION 1.0 – INTRODUCTION

This section provides an overview that describes the intended use of the EIR, as well as the review and certification process.

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SECTION 2.0 – EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This section provides a project narrative and identifies environmental impacts and mitigation measures through a summary matrix consistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15123.

SECTION 3.0 – PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This section provides a detailed description of the proposed project and project objectives, along with background information and physical characteristics consistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15124.

SECTION 4.0 – ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING, IMPACTS, AND MITIGATION MEASURES

This section contains technical analyses relative to each environmental topic. Included in this section is a comprehensive analysis related to impacts and mitigations that correspond to project implementation. Each subsection contains a description of the existing setting of the project area. The environmental topics are summarized as follows:

- Land Use
- Air Quality
- Aesthetics/Light and Glare
- Transportation and Circulation
- Noise
- Geology and Soils
- Hazards/Hazardous Materials
- Cultural Resources
- Hydrology and Water Quality
- Biological Resources
- Population and Housing
- Public Services
- Public Utilities
- Water Resources
- Climate Change

SECTION 5.0 – CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

This section discusses the cumulative impacts associated with the proposed project that, when combined with past, present, and reasonably anticipated future events, may have a cumulative impact. Although the City's growth projections indicate that non-residential development would not be fully built out at the General Plan horizon year of 2030, the Draft EIR assumes that non-residential development (and residential development) would reach buildout by the year 2030 to provide a conservative analysis of the potential environmental effects of implementation of the proposed General Plan Update.

SECTION 6.0 – PROJECT ALTERNATIVES

This section discusses alternatives to the proposed project, including the CEQA mandatory "No Project" alternative, that are intended to avoid or reduce significant environmental impacts of the proposed General Plan Update.

SECTION 7.0 – LONG-TERM IMPLICATIONS

This section contains discussions of significant irreversible environmental changes which would be involved in the proposed action should it be implemented as well as unavoidable significant environmental effects, including those that can be mitigated but not reduced to a level of insignificance.

SECTION 8.0 – REPORT PREPARERS

This section lists all authors and agencies that assisted in the preparation of the report by name, title, and company or agency affiliation.

VOLUME II – TECHNICAL APPENDICES

This volume includes all notices and other procedural documents pertinent to the EIR, as well as all technical material prepared to support the analysis.

CITATIONS

This document utilizes numerous resources and references that are identified by brief citations throughout the document, with more complete citations to the specific resource or reference included in a listing at the end of each chapter.

1.6 ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW PROCESS

The review and certification process for the EIR will involve the following general procedural steps:

NOTICE OF PREPARATION

In accordance with Section 15082 of the CEQA Guidelines, the City prepared a Notice of Preparation of an EIR for the project on July 31, 2008. The City was identified as the lead agency for the proposed project. The notice was circulated to the public, local, state, and federal agencies, and other interested parties to solicit comments on the proposed project. A scoping meeting was held on August 21, 2008, to receive additional comments. Concerns raised in response to the NOP were considered during preparation of the Draft EIR. The NOP and responses by interested parties are presented in **Appendix A**.

DRAFT EIR

This document constitutes the Draft EIR. The Draft EIR contains a description of the project, description of the environmental setting, identification of project impacts, and mitigation measures for impacts found to be significant, as well as an analysis of project alternatives. Upon completion of the Draft EIR, the City will file the Notice of Completion (NOC) with the Governor's Office of Planning and Research to begin the public review period (Public Resources Code, Section 21161).

PUBLIC NOTICE/PUBLIC REVIEW

Concurrent with the NOC, the City will provide public notice of the availability of the Draft EIR for public review and invite comment from the general public, agencies, organizations, and other

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interested parties. The public review and comment period is forty-five (45) days. Public comment on the Draft EIR will be accepted both in written form and orally at public hearings. Notice of the time and location of the hearing will be published prior to the hearing. All comments or questions regarding the Draft EIR should be addressed to:

CITY OF ROCKLIN
Community Development Department, Planning Division
3970 Rocklin Road
Rocklin, CA 95677
Attention: Laura Webster, Acting Planning Services Manager

RESPONSE TO COMMENTS/FINAL EIR

Following the public review period, a Final EIR (FEIR) will be prepared. The Final EIR will respond to written comments received during the public review period and to oral comments made at any public hearing held during the public review period. The Final EIR will also include any necessary revisions to the Draft EIR.

CERTIFICATION OF THE EIR/PROJECT CONSIDERATION

The City will review and consider the Final EIR. If the City finds that the FEIR is "adequate and complete," the City may certify the FEIR. Upon review and consideration of the FEIR, the City may act upon the proposed General Plan Update. A decision to approve the project would be accompanied by written findings in accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15091 and, if applicable, Section 15093. The City would also adopt a Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program, as described below, for mitigation measures that have been incorporated into or imposed upon the project to reduce or avoid significant effects on the environment. The Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program will be designed to ensure that these measures are carried out during project implementation.

MITIGATION MONITORING

State CEQA Section 21081.6(a) requires lead agencies to adopt a mitigation monitoring and reporting program to describe measures which have been adopted or made a condition of project approval in order to mitigate or avoid significant effects on the environment. The specific "reporting or monitoring" program required by CEQA is not required to be included in the EIR; however, it will be presented to the City Council for adoption. Throughout the EIR, however, mitigation measures have been clearly identified and presented in language that will facilitate establishment of a monitoring program. Any mitigation measures adopted by the City as conditions for approval of the project will be included in a mitigation monitoring program to verify compliance.

1.7 COMMENTS RECEIVED ON THE NOTICE OF PREPARATION

The City received several comment letters on the Notice of Preparation for the City of Rocklin General Plan Update DEIR. A copy of each letter is provided in **Appendix A** of this DEIR. The City received letters from the following federal, state, and local agencies, and other interested parties.

- California Regional Water Quality Control Board

- California Department of Conservation
- California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), District 3
- City of Roseville Community Development Department
- Friends of Rocklin Open Space
- Governor's Office of Emergency Services (now called California Emergency Management Agency)
- Governor's Office of Planning and Research
- Placer County Air Pollution Control District
- Placer County Flood Control and Water Conservation District
- Public Utilities Commission
- Native American Heritage Commission
- Resident, Don Perera
- Resident, Omel Turk
- South Placer Municipal Utility District
- South Placer Wastewater Authority
- Town of Loomis
- United Auburn Indian Community of the Auburn Rancheria

The following summarizes issues raised in the comment letters as well as the author of the letter.

KIM A. SCHWAB, CALIFORNIA REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD

- Use of post-construction stormwater best management practices (BMPs) to maximum extent possible (MEP).

BRIAN LEAHY, CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION

- Discuss location of agricultural lands, prime, statewide importance, current and past agricultural use of the area, types of crops grown, yields, farm gate sales volume.
- Identify impacts to agricultural lands.
- Use of LESA model to assess impacts to farmland.
- Mitigate impacts to farmland using conservation easements.
- Identify probable Williamson Act termination and associated impacts to adjacent lands.

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- Discuss proposed uses for lands in planning area under Williamson Act.
- Discuss any proposed General Plan designation or zoning within agricultural preserves affected by the project.
- Identification of Williamson Act contracts by agricultural land use type and potential impacts.
- Identification of proposed General Plan designations or zoning within agricultural preserves.

NICHOLAS DEAL, CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION (CALTRANS), DISTRICT 3

- Hydraulics – Address net increases in floodway and drainage.
- Traffic Operation – Prepare a traffic study to address impacts to State Highway System.
- Establish traffic impact fee mechanism to collect fees.

MARK MORSE, CITY OF ROSEVILLE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

- Discuss impacts of the project on the City of Roseville's transportation network.
- Discuss how future development will impact regional transportation facilities.
- Discuss policies to implement fair share funding (improvements to Highway 65 north of I-80, Placer Parkway) and other regionally significant features.

FRANK GEREMIA, FRIENDS OF ROCKLIN OPEN SPACE

- Concerned about impacts to open space, recreation and conservation land, degradation of Rocklin's rural character.
- Concerned about quantity of open space/possible conversion to other uses.
- Provided language regarding provision to protect open space.

DENNIS CASTRILLO, GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF EMERGENCY SERVICES (NOW CALLED CALIFORNIA EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY)

- Examine sections of state planning law that involve potential hazards the City may face.
- Include a table in the DEIR identifying hazards and where they are addressed in the General Plan to demonstrate that the City has complied with the requirements. If not met by the General Plan, identify mitigation measures in the EIR.
- Comply with state requirements for consultations with state agencies.

SCOTT MORGAN, GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF PLANNING AND RESEARCH

- Responsible agencies must transmit their comments on the scope and content of the NOP within 30 days of receipt of the NOP from the City.
- Agencies are encouraged to express their concerns regarding the project early in the environmental review process.

TOM R. THOMPSON, PLACER COUNTY AIR POLLUTION CONTROL DISTRICT

- Identification of the effects of climate change and the requirements of AB 32.

ANDREW DARROW, PLACER COUNTY FLOOD CONTROL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

- Potential incremental effects of higher peak flow rates at downstream locations and the effects of an overload to the capacity of existing stormwater facilities.
- Potential alteration of floodplain boundaries.

DANIEL KEVIN, PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

- Installation of vandal-resistant fencing or walls to limit the access of pedestrians onto the railroad right-of-way.
- Evaluation of traffic queues for intersections that are allowed to operate at LOS E or F over railroad tracks.

KATY SANCHEZ, NATIVE AMERICAN HERITAGE COMMISSION:

- Identification of mitigation for previously unknown cultural resources and the need to contact the appropriate Information Center as well as the Native American Heritage Commission regarding cultural resources.
- Proper disclosure of potential hazards the City may face as well as proper compliance with state requirements.
- Impacts to open space, recreation, and conservation lands as well as quantity of converted open space under the proposed General Plan.

RESIDENT, DON PERERA

- Analysis of traffic volumes, mass transit, solar requirements, and oak tree preservation.
- The analysis of net increases of floodways and drainages, impacts to the State Highway System, and establishment of traffic impact fees.

RESIDENT, OMEL TURK

- Impacts to the availability of street parking.
- Impacts to air quality and noise-related issues due to new construction.

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RICHARD R. STEIN, SOUTH PLACER MUNICIPAL UTILITY DISTRICT

- No comments specific to environmental analysis.

DERRICK WHITEHEAD, SOUTH PLACER WASTEWATER AUTHORITY

- The use of the Systems Evaluation Report for buildout.
- The evaluation of the wastewater conveyance system to determine if upsizing is needed to accommodate the General Plan.
- The analysis of impacts associated with expanding wastewater treatment plants in the future.
- The identification of issues relating to the construction and installation of wastewater collection and conveyance facilities for all parcels outside the 2005 Study Area Boundary.
- The identification of wastewater treatment and recycled water demands, parameters for cumulative flow analysis, and potential impacts to conveyance and treatment facilities, as well as system upgrades to accommodate the project.
- Potential to avoid additional project-level review due to addressing construction and operation of wastewater-related facilities at a project level in the DEIR and inclusion of all South Placer Wastewater Authority participants in the General Plan EIR process.
- Analysis of new or modified capital facilities required by the project.
- Analysis of potential construction and operation of additional wastewater treatment facilities required to serve the proposed Urban Growth Area.
- Analysis of inducing growth and potential cumulative effects associated with other past, present, or foreseeable future projects.
- Potential for an alternatives analysis for wastewater collection, treatment, and disposal, and recycled water storage and distribution.

DONALD B. MOONEY, ATTORNEY FOR TOWN OF LOOMIS

- Adequate assessment of greenhouse gas emissions, global warming, and cumulative traffic to areas outside of Rocklin.
- Potential to lessen impacts to traffic and circulation, agricultural resources, and greenhouse gas emissions by expanding alternative analysis.
- Adequate assessment of land use impacts to neighboring Town of Loomis.

GREG BAKER, UNITED AUBURN INDIAN COMMUNITY OF THE AUBURN RANCHERIA

- Include evaluation of cultural resources in the planning area based on updated cultural resources report that includes an updated records search from the North Central Information Center.

- Recommends that new development be designed to incorporate known prehistoric archaeological sites, including isolated bedrock mortars into open space or other protected areas.

In addition to the written comments received on the Notice of Preparation, the City also conducted a NOP scoping meeting on August 21, 2008. A total of seven people signed in on the attendance sheet for the scoping meeting and provided oral comments to the City. Three of the seven persons in attendance at the scoping meeting also submitted written comments that are noted above. The oral comments from those three persons mirrored the concerns that were expressed in their written comments. The other four individuals expressed concerns regarding the following:

- Levels of traffic that exist today as well as in the future
- Future growth and development of the city, including roadway connections
- The need to provide enhanced transit services
- Protection of open space areas
- Impacts to the Front Street Historical Master Plan Area

