



DATE: March 22, 2016

TO: Interested Parties

SUBJECT: Notice of Preparation of an Environmental Impact Report for the proposed Sierra Gateway Apartments Project

REVIEW PERIOD: March 24, 2016 – April 22, 2016 (30 days)

The City of Rocklin is the Lead Agency for the preparation of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the proposed Sierra Gateway Apartments project in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), and State CEQA Guidelines Section 15050. The purpose of this Notice of Preparation (NOP) is to provide responsible agencies and interested persons with sufficient information to make meaningful responses as to the scope and content of the EIR. Your timely comments will ensure an appropriate level of environmental review for the project. An agency may need to use the EIR prepared by the City when considering a permit or other approval of the project.

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION:** The Ezralow Company LLC (Applicant) is requesting the City of Rocklin’s approval of Design Review and Oak Tree Preservation Plan entitlements to develop a 195-unit apartment complex and associated infrastructure, parking and landscape (Proposed Project or Project) on a 10.2 +/- acre site currently designated by the Rocklin General Plan as High Density Residential (HDR) and currently zoned as Planned Development Residential, 20 dwelling units per acre (PD-20) (project site).

**PROJECT LOCATION:** The project site is located in the eastern portion of the City of Rocklin, at the southeast quadrant of the intersection of Sierra College Boulevard and Rocklin Road, and consists of APNs 045-161-014, 015 and 016.

For more information regarding the project, please contact Dara Dungworth, Associate Planner, City of Rocklin Economic and Community Development Department, (916) 625-5160, [dara.dungworth@rocklin.ca.us](mailto:dara.dungworth@rocklin.ca.us).

Copies of the NOP and Initial Study are available for review at the Rocklin library, the Economic and Community Development front counter, and the City website:

<http://www.rocklin.ca.us/depts/develop/planning/currentenvirodocs.asp>

**SCOPING MEETING:** The Lead Agency will hold a public Scoping Meeting to receive written comments on April 14, 2016 beginning at 5:30 PM, in the Rocklin City Council Chambers, located at 3970 Rocklin Road, Rocklin, CA.

**NOP COMMENT PERIOD:** Written comments on the NOP should be submitted at the earliest possible date, but not later than APRIL 22, 2016 to David Mohlenbrok, Environmental Services Manager, Public Services Department, 4081 Alvis Court, Rocklin, California, 95677, (916) 625-5162, fax (916) 625-5501, or [David.Mohlenbrok@rocklin.ca.us](mailto:David.Mohlenbrok@rocklin.ca.us)

Published in Placer Herald March 24, 2016

# NOTICE OF PREPARATION

## SIERRA GATEWAY APARTMENTS ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

### 1.0 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

#### 1.1 PROJECT LOCATION

The 10.2 +/- acre project site is located at the southeast quadrant of the intersection of Sierra College Boulevard and Rocklin Road. The project site is in the eastern portion of the City of Rocklin, northeast of the City of Roseville and west of the Town of Loomis (see Figure 1, Regional Location Map). The project site is comprised of three parcels, Placer County Assessor's Parcel Numbers (APNs) 045-161-014, 015 and 016 (see Figure 2, Project Location Map).

#### 1.2 EXISTING SETTING

##### Site Characteristics

The project site is undeveloped with the exception of the planned shared driveway with the existing Rocklin Manor apartments to the east and an existing roadway easement to the south. The project site is bound on the north by Rocklin Road, on the east by the existing Rocklin Manor apartment complex, on the south by single family residential development and on the west by Sierra College Boulevard. The project site is bifurcated by a 0.21 +/- acre roadway easement known as Water Lilly Lane which provides access to the single family residential development to the south of the project site. Water Lily Lane divides the project site into two areas, a rectangular-shaped area to the north of the roadway which is 8.5 +/- acres in size and a triangular-shaped area to the south of the roadway which is 1.1 +/- acres in size that is also referred to as the "panhandle".

The property occurs in the transition of the central valley and the Sierra Nevada foothills with elevations ranging between 320 feet and 340 feet above sea level. The project site's primary biological community is foothill woodland dominated by interior live oak. The project site's woodlands also contain scattered blue oaks, and to a lesser extent valley oaks and a few oracle (hybrid) oaks. The project site also consists of annual grassland and riparian woodlands, an intermittent stream and an associated wetland swale located in the southern portion of the property adjacent to Sierra College Boulevard, and a seasonal wetland located in the northern portion of the property; collectively these wetland resources total approximately 0.04 acres.

## **Surrounding Land Uses**

The surrounding area is mostly developed with retail commercial and residential uses. To the north of the project site are Rocklin Road, several isolated single family residences and vacant land designated for Mixed Use land uses under the Rocklin General Plan. To the northwest of the project site is the Sierra Community College campus, and to the west are Sierra College Boulevard, a small retail commercial shopping center consisting of approximately 36, 233 square feet contained in one main building and two separate pads, the Granite Creek apartment complex (2-stories, 80 units), the Shaliko apartment complex (2-stories, 152 units) and developed Medium Density Residential single-family residences further to the west. To the south are Water Lily Lane, a Medium Density Residential single-family subdivision consisting of 60 one- and two-story residences, vacant land designated for Medium Density Residential land uses under the Rocklin General Plan and an open space area associated with an intermittent tributary of Secret Ravine Creek. To the east are the existing Rocklin Manor apartment complex (2-stories, 157 units), the City of Rocklin/Town of Loomis border and single-family residential subdivisions within the Town of Loomis.

## **Site History**

The project site was annexed from the County in 1985 as part of the Monte Verde Annexation Area. An EIR was prepared and approved as part of that annexation. The proposed land uses and zoning were found to be consistent with the (then) existing General Plan text and the rezone was approved. The subject site was given the General Plan designation Retail Commercial (RC) with zoning of Planned Development Commercial (PD-C). Additionally, the City Council made findings that the proposed zoning and General Development Plan would form a transition area between the adjoining commercial and residential zones and that the area is uniquely situated on a corner making the proposed zoning and General Development Plan appropriate for the subject property.

The site is also within of the General Development Plan for Rocklin Road East of I-80 in which the previously approved zoning, PD-C, was not changed. City Council approved this General Development Plan (Ordinance 820) on December 14, 1999.

Until the mid-1980's, a single family home occupied the proposed project site. Due to safety concerns, the owner demolished the house and the property has since been vacant. Subsequent owners have proposed various commercial developments on the site. The first proposal was for a shopping center anchored by a grocery store. Before the project was submitted, but after receiving neighborhood input, the grocery anchor withdrew and the developer later sold the site to Granite Bay Ventures. Granite Bay Ventures applied for and received approval of a horizontal mixed use office and retail center on March 20, 2007. The

project approvals included the approval of the Sierra College Center Environmental Impact Report (EIR). Due to the economic downturn Granite Bay Ventures did not complete the improvement plan review process for this project. At various times, the site has been considered for a drive-through drug store, as well.

On April 16, 2013, the City Council approved a General Plan Amendment to change the designations from RC to High Density Residential (HDR) and a Rezone to change the zoning from PD-C to Planned Development 20 units per acre (PD-20).

The City Council previously approved this project in May 2016, based upon a Mitigated Negative Declaration that concluded that the project would have no significant environmental impacts with the adoption of identified mitigation measures. As a result of litigation challenging that prior approval, the City Council agreed to rescind it and to instead prepare an Environmental Impact Report.

### **1.3 PROJECT ELEMENTS**

The Sierra Gateway Apartments project (Proposed Project) consists of the development of a 195-unit apartment complex, associated infrastructure, private recreational facilities, parking and landscaping on 10.2 +/- acres. There is a “panhandle” portion of the property that is not being proposed for development at this time but a portion of it will be graded to accommodate curb, gutter and sidewalk and drainage improvements and an extension of the northbound right turn pocket along Sierra College Boulevard.

The apartment complex will consist of eleven residential buildings and a clubhouse building, which will include a leasing office and a manager’s apartment. The majority of the residential buildings will be three-story buildings comprised of one, two, and three bedroom units with private garages located at the ground level. There will also be four two-story buildings configured to provide private garages with carriage style apartment units above. The complex’s amenity spaces will be located near the proposed primary entrance to the site and will include a single level leasing office/clubhouse, fitness buildings, and a second story manager’s office all around a common pool area. Access to the project will be from Rocklin Road as a shared driveway with the existing Rocklin Manor apartments, and to accommodate increased traffic of the combined access the current access design will be widened to provide two entry and two exit lanes. The project will also have an exit only driveway to the south onto Water Lily Lane.

The project site is designated High Density Residential (HDR) under the Rocklin General Plan, and is zoned Planned Development Residential, 20 dwelling units per acre (PD-20); the project proposes no changes to the General Plan land use designation or zoning designation.

## **Utilities**

Water for the Proposed Project would be supplied by the Placer County Water Agency (PCWA) through connections to an existing 8-inch water main in Sierra College Boulevard and an existing 8-inch water main in Water Lily Lane. On-site water lines would range from 4 to 12 inches in diameter and would provide both domestic and fire suppression water.

Sewer service for the Proposed Project would be provided from the South Placer Municipal Utility District (SPMIUD) via connections to the existing 8-inch sewer line in the ten-foot SPMUD sewer easement parallel to Water Lily Lane which connects to a 15-inch sewer main on Sierra College Boulevard. The proposed sewer design would utilize gravity lines.

Electrical and gas service for the Proposed Project would be provided by Pacific Gas and Electric via connections to existing electrical and gas services in Rocklin Road and Sierra College Boulevard and Water Lily Lane.

Telephone and cable service for the Proposed Project would be provided via AT&T and Wave Cable, respectively, via connections to existing services in Rocklin Road and Sierra College Boulevard and Water Lily Lane.

Onsite drainage facilities would include the use of water quality filtration devices (Vortech or similar system) as Best Management Practices features to provide treatment of storm water as per the City of Rocklin standards. The existing drainage pattern and watershed boundaries are proposed to remain essentially the same with no significant areas being diverted to other drainage watersheds. Improvements including relocations, upsizing, extensions and expansions to the existing drainage infrastructure are proposed as a part of improvements to Sierra College Boulevard between Rocklin Road and El Don Drive and the associated construction of curb, gutter and sidewalk.

## **Off-site Improvements**

Drainage infrastructure improvements within Sierra College Boulevard, between the southeast corner of Sierra College Boulevard and Rocklin Road, along the project's western boundary to El Don Drive as described above.

## **Construction and Phasing**

The proposed project would be constructed in one phase, anticipated to last 12-24 months.

The majority of the project site, with the exception of some of the "panhandle" area, would be graded to construct the project. Grading would be required to implement the project for the construction of street improvements, building sites, parking and landscaped areas and

trenching and digging would be required for the installation of underground utilities and infrastructure. Approximately 42,600 cubic yards of earthwork excavation would be necessary to construct the Proposed Project. Approximately 26, 100 cubic yards would be used as fill and approximately 16,500 cubic yards of soil will be removed from the site, with the relocation site to be determined. The project would also require select backfill material and aggregate base rock for roadways and parking areas.

## **2.0 PROBABLE ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS AND SCOPE OF THE EIR**

A traffic study, drainage report, arborist report, noise study, biological resources assessment, Phase I Environmental Site Assessment, air quality and greenhouse gas study, and photometric lighting study were conducted for the Proposed Project. These assessments will be discussed in the Initial Study and/or EIR.

The Initial Study and EIR prepared for the Proposed Project will provide a project-level analysis of the impacts pertaining to the resource areas identified below. The EIR will be prepared in accordance with the CEQA Statutes, CEQA Guidelines and the City of Rocklin “Guidelines for Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act”. The impact analysis will consider impacts resulting directly from the Proposed Project as well as the Proposed Project’s contribution to cumulative impacts in the project area. The EIR will identify feasible mitigation measures to reduce or avoid project-specific and cumulative impacts. The EIR will also evaluate a range of reasonable alternatives to the Proposed Project and describe the comparative merits of the alternatives, including the No-Project alternative. The alternatives will be determined, in part, by public input received during the NOP comment period. To ensure that the EIR adequately addresses the full range of issues and alternative to the Proposed Project and that all significant issues are identified, comments and suggestions are invited from all interested parties.

The Initial Study included with this NOP has been prepared to determine if the Proposed Project will have a significant effect on the environment. The Initial Study tiers from the certified Final Environmental Impact Report for the Rocklin General Plan, as adopted by the Rocklin City Council on October 9, 2012 (the “General Plan EIR”). The General Plan EIR already analyzes, at a programmatic level, the environmental impacts that will result from development under the General Plan, including the urban development of this Project site. (While the Initial Study takes into account the fact that the General Plan EIR in 2012 contemplated retail commercial rather than high-density residential development of this project site, the City notes that the impacts of the current project are generally less than would be the impacts of commercial development of this site.) Consistent with CEQA Guidelines, one of the purposes of an Initial Study is to assist in the preparation of an EIR by: focusing the EIR on potentially

significant effects not already analyzed in the General Plan EIR (including any site-specific effects), identifying the effects determined not to be significant, and explaining the reasons for determining that potentially significant effects would not be significant. In this instance, the Initial Study prepared for the Proposed Project has determined that some potentially significant effects would not be significant and the discussion within the Initial Study provides the explanation and reasoning for arriving at such determinations. Through the Initial Study's analysis, the EIR that will be prepared for the Proposed Project will focus only on those effects that have been determined to be potentially significant, unless determined otherwise as a result of comments received on the NOP. A summary of the Initial Study's conclusions is provided below.

- Aesthetics – The existing visual character of the site can be described as an undeveloped site containing numerous oak trees, grassland, and gently rolling topography. The surrounding area is mostly developed with retail commercial and residential uses. To the north of the project site are Rocklin Road, several isolated single family residences and vacant land designated for Mixed Use land uses under the Rocklin General Plan. To the northwest of the project site is the Sierra Community College campus, and to the west are Sierra College Boulevard, a small retail commercial shopping center, two separate apartment complexes and single-family residences further to the west. To the south are Water Lily Lane, a single-family subdivision and an open space area associated with an intermittent tributary of Secret Ravine Creek. To the east are an apartment complex, the City of Rocklin/Town of Loomis border and single-family residential subdivisions within the Town of Loomis. The proposed project would add a 195 unit multi-family apartment complex and associated infrastructure, including new sources of lighting to an undeveloped site. The proposed project will affect the visual character of the project area, due to the transition of the project site from undeveloped land to an urbanized land use.

The EIR will address the proposed project's potential aesthetic impacts related to any potential degrading of the existing visual character or quality of the site

- Agricultural and Forest Resources – The proposed project site is not prime farmland, agricultural or forestry lands and the proposed project will not cause impacts to these resources; therefore these issues will not be discussed in the EIR.
- Air Quality – Construction and operation of the proposed project will introduce new sources of pollutant emissions to the project area as a result of the diesel-powered construction equipment, trucks hauling building supplies, vehicle exhaust from

construction workers, future residents and service workers, landscape maintenance equipment, and water heater/air conditioning energy use.

The EIR will address the proposed project's potential air quality impacts.

- Biological Resources – The vegetation communities found on the proposed project site are primarily foothill woodland, annual grassland and riparian woodland. An arborist report of the proposed project site was conducted by the firm of Abacus that resulted in the identification of 376 oak trees on the project site. There are also approximately 0.03 acres of jurisdictional wetlands on the proposed project site.

The EIR will address the proposed project's potential biological resources impacts.

- Cultural Resources –A cultural resources assessment of the proposed project site was prepared by the firm Peak and Associates. The assessment concluded that the proposed project site did not contain any known cultural resources. Unknown buried archaeological resources, paleontological resources and/or human remains could be inadvertently discovered during construction of the proposed project. The proposed project's Initial Study identified a mitigation measure outlining procedural steps to be taken should such a discovery occur. Implementation of the project-specific mitigation measure identified in the proposed project's Initial Study would reduce impacts to cultural resources to a less-than-significant level. The project-specific mitigation measure will be included in the EIR's Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Plan, but otherwise cultural resources impacts will not be discussed further in the EIR
- Geology and Soils – Grading, trenching and backfilling associated with the construction of the proposed project would alter the topography on the project site and may result in soil erosion impacts. Compliance with the City's development review process, the City's Improvement Standards and Standard Specifications and the Uniform Building Code will reduce any potential geology and soils impacts to a less-than-significant level; therefore these issues will not be discussed in the EIR.
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions – Construction and operation of the proposed project will generate greenhouse gas emissions. The CalEEMod software modeling program was used by the firm of De Novo Planning Group to estimate the proposed project's short-term construction related and long-term operational greenhouse gas emissions and identify potentially significant impacts. Compliance with the mitigation measures incorporated into the General Plan goals and policies would reduce impacts related to



GHG emissions to a less-than-significant level; therefore this issue will not be discussed in the EIR.

- Hazards and Hazardous Materials - Construction and operation of a multi-family residential project is not anticipated to involve the transportation, use and disposal of large amounts of hazardous materials. Compliance with the mitigation measures incorporated into the General Plan goals and policies and applicable City Code and compliance with applicable Federal, State and local laws and regulations would reduce impacts related to hazards and hazardous materials to a less-than-significant level; therefore these issues will not be discussed in the EIR.
- Hydrology and Water Quality - The proposed project would involve grading activities that would remove vegetation and expose soil to wind and water erosion and potentially impact water quality, and additional impervious surfaces would be created with the development of the proposed project. Waterways in the Rocklin area have the potential to flood and expose people or structures to flooding. According to FEMA flood maps (Map Panel 06061CO481G, effective date November 21, 2001) the proposed project site is located in flood zone X, which indicates that the proposed project is not located within a 100-year flood hazard area and outside of the 500-year flood hazard area. Compliance with the mitigation measures incorporated into Rocklin General Plan goals and policies, the City's Grading and Erosion and Sedimentation Control Ordinance (Rocklin Municipal Code, Chapter 15.28), the Stormwater Runoff Pollution Control Ordinance (Rocklin Municipal Code, Chapter 8.30) and the City's Improvement Standards would reduce impacts to hydrology and water quality to a less-than-significant level; therefore these issues will not be discussed in the EIR.
- Land Use and Planning - The proposed project site is designated High Density Residential on the City of Rocklin General Plan land use map and is zoned Planned Development Residential, 20 dwelling units per acre (PD-20), which allow for a project such as the one being proposed. The proposed project requires Design Review and Oak Tree Preservation Plan entitlements from the City of Rocklin. Approval of such entitlements and compliance with the mitigation measures incorporated into the General Plan goals and policies would ensure that development of the infill site would not result in significant impacts to land use and planning; therefore these issues will not be discussed in the EIR.
- Mineral Resources - The City of Rocklin planning area and the proposed project site has no mineral resources as classified by the State Geologist. The planning area and the

proposed project site have no known or suspected mineral resources that would be of value to the region and to residents of the state. No mineral resources impact is anticipated; therefore this issue will not be discussed in the EIR.

- Noise - Development of the proposed project will result in an increase in short-term noise impacts from construction activities. The development and occupation of a 195-unit apartment complex is not anticipated to have significant long-term operational noise impacts. A noise assessment of the proposed project was prepared by the firm of JC Brennan and Associates which identified a potentially significant impact that roadway noise levels could exceed interior noise level standards for future residents of the apartments. The proposed project's Initial Study identified a mitigation measure to reduce the impact to a less than significant level. Compliance with the mitigation measures incorporated into the General Plan goals and policies, the City of Rocklin Construction Noise Guidelines and the project-specific mitigation measure identified in the proposed project's Initial Study would reduce noise related impacts to a less-than-significant level. The project-specific mitigation measure will be included in the EIR's Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Plan, but otherwise noise impacts will not be discussed further in the EIR.
- Population and Housing - The proposed project will provide future housing opportunities, but not to such a degree that it would induce substantial population growth because the project site has long been identified for development of urban uses in the City of Rocklin General Plan. The proposed project site is vacant and development would not displace substantial numbers of people. The proposed project would have a less than significant impact on population and housing; therefore these issues will not be discussed in the EIR.
- Public Services - The proposed project would create a need for the provision of new and/or expanded public services or facilities since an undeveloped site would become developed. Although the proposed project may increase the need for public services, compliance with General Plan goals and policies and payment of necessary fees, including participation in any applicable financing district and applicable development impact fees, would reduce the impact to a less than significant level; therefore these issues will not be discussed in the EIR.
- Recreation - The proposed project would result in additional residents that would be expected to utilize City of Rocklin and other recreational facilities. However, compliance with General Plan goals and policies and payment of necessary fees, including park and

recreation fees, would ensure the impacts to recreational facilities are less than significant; therefore these issues will not be discussed in the EIR.

- Transportation and Traffic - The proposed project is anticipated to cause increases in traffic because an undeveloped site will become developed with a 195-unit apartment complex whose residents will generate automobile trips

The EIR will address the proposed project's potential transportation and traffic impacts.

- Utilities and Service Systems – The proposed project will increase the need for utility and service systems because an undeveloped site will become developed. Such increases are not anticipated to impact the ability of the utility and service providers to adequately provide such services because the proposed project site is within the existing service areas of utility and service systems providers and the proposed project site has long been identified for development of urban uses in the City of Rocklin General Plan. Compliance with General Plan goals and policies and payment of necessary fees would ensure the impacts to utilities and service systems are less than significant; therefore these issues will not be discussed in the EIR.

### **3.0 PROJECT APPROVALS**

Anticipated approvals and permits required prior to construction of the proposed project are listed below. Other regulatory framework is discussed in the proposed project's Initial Study or will be discussed in the applicable sections of the EIR.

#### **City of Rocklin Approvals**

The proposed project would require the following City of Rocklin actions:

- Design Review entitlement to ensure that the proposed project's design makes the most efficient use of available resources and harmonizes with existing and proposed residential development, as well as with existing development of like character;
- An Oak Tree Preservation Plan Permit to allow for the removal of oak trees on the proposed project site and ensure mitigation for such removal is consistent with the City's Oak Tree Preservation Ordinance;
- Certification of the EIR and adoption of the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Plan for the Sierra Gateway Apartments project;
- City of Rocklin Engineering Division approval of Improvement Plans, and
- City of Rocklin Building Inspections Division issuance of Building Permits.

### **Other Public Agencies Whose Approval May Be Required**

- Placer County Water Agency construction of water facilities;
- South Placer Municipal Utility District construction of sewer facilities;
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers issuance of 404 permit;
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service issuance of Biological Opinion (Section 7 Consultation)
- Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board issuance of 401 water quality certification, and
- California Department of Fish and Wildlife Section 1600 Streambed Alteration Agreement

Figure 1, Regional Location Map

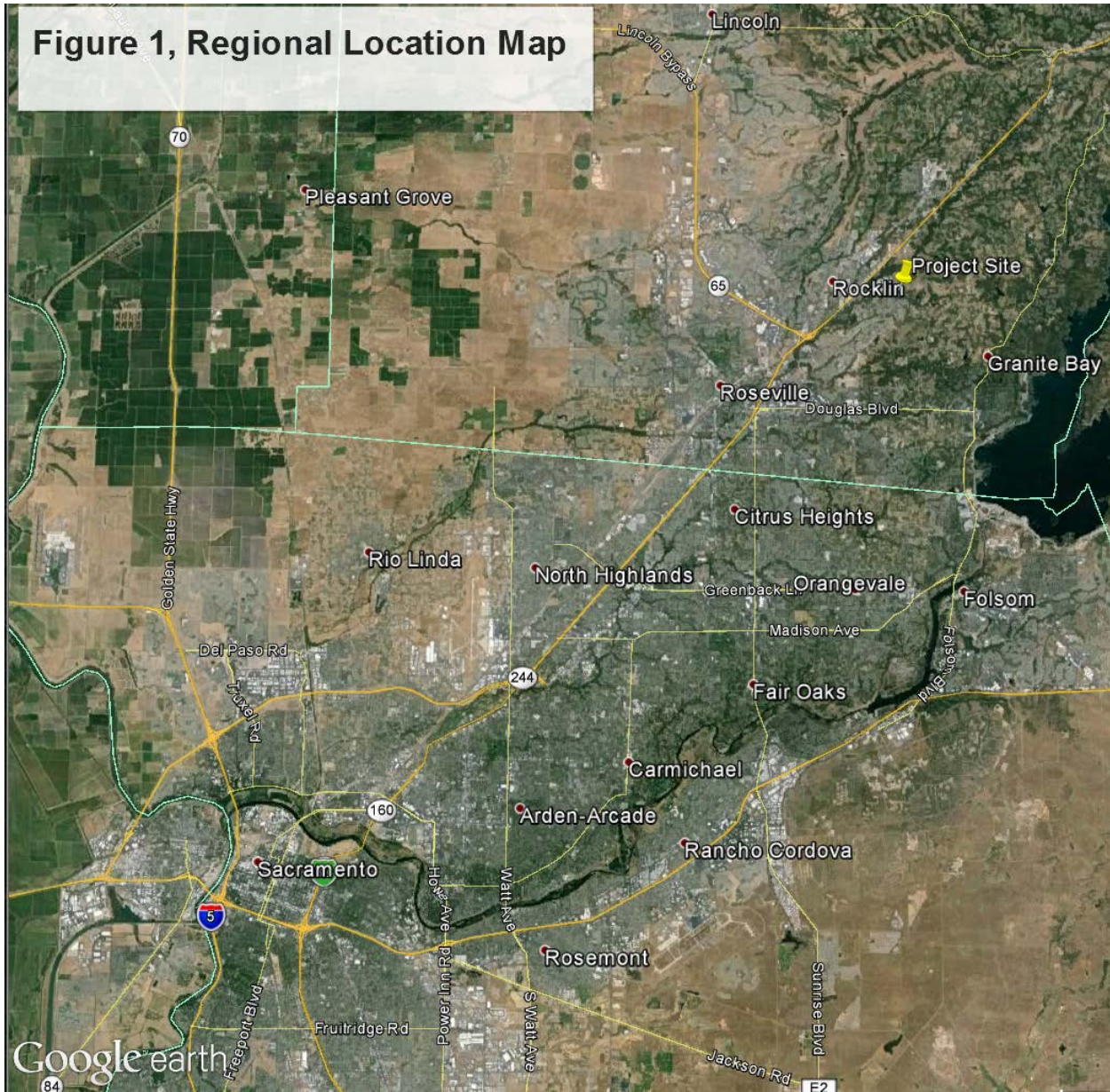




Figure 2, Project Location Map





ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT  
CITY OF ROCKLIN

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3970 Rocklin Road  
Rocklin, California 95677  
(916) 625-5160

## ATTACHMENT 1

### INITIAL STUDY AND ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST

Sierra Gateway Apartments

DR2015-0018 and TRE2016-0001

The southeast corner of the intersection of Sierra College Boulevard  
and Rocklin Road, in the City of Rocklin.

APNs 045-161-014, 015 and 016.

March 24, 2016

***PREPARED BY:***

David Mohlenbrok, Environmental Services Manager, (916) 625-5162

***CONTACT INFORMATION:***

This Initial Study has been prepared by the City of Rocklin, as Lead Agency, under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Any questions regarding this document should be addressed to David Mohlenbrok at the City of Rocklin Economic and Community Development Department, Planning Division, 3970 Rocklin Road, Rocklin, California 95677 (916) 625-5160.

***APPLICANT/OWNER:***

The applicant is Ezralow Company LLC and the property owners are Richard and Melba Resch.

# SECTION 1. INTRODUCTION

## A. Purpose of an Initial Study

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) was enacted in 1970 for the purpose of providing decision-makers and the public with information regarding environmental effects of proposed projects; identifying means of avoiding environmental damage; and disclosing to the public the reasons behind a project’s approval even if it leads to environmental damage. The City of Rocklin has determined the proposed project is subject to CEQA and no exemptions apply. Therefore, preparation of an initial study is required.

An initial study is a preliminary analysis conducted by the lead agency, in consultation with other agencies (responsible or trustee agencies, as applicable), to determine whether there is substantial evidence that a project may have a significant effect on the environment. If the initial study concludes that the project, with mitigation, may have a significant effect on the environment, an environmental impact report should be prepared; otherwise the lead agency may adopt a negative declaration or mitigated negative declaration.

This Initial Study (IS) has been prepared in accordance with CEQA (Public Resources Code §21000 et seq.), the State CEQA Guidelines (Title 14, California Code of Regulations, §15000 et seq.), and the City of Rocklin CEQA Guidelines (1981, amended July 31, 2002).

This Initial Study has been prepared to identify and assess the anticipated environmental impacts of the Sierra Gateway Apartments project. The document relies on a combination of a previous environmental document and site-specific studies to address in detail the effects or impacts associated with the proposed project. In particular, this Initial Study assesses the extent to which the impacts of the proposed project have already been addressed in the certified Final Environmental Impact Report for the Rocklin General Plan, as adopted by the Rocklin City Council on October 9, 2012 (the “General Plan EIR”).



## B. Document Format

This Initial Study is organized into five sections as follows:

Section 1, Introduction: provides an overview of the project and the CEQA environmental documentation process.

Section 2, Summary Information and Determination: Required summary information, listing of environmental factors potentially affected, and lead agency determination.

Section 3, Project Description: provides a description of the project location, project background, and project components.

Section 4, Evaluation of Environmental Impacts: provides a detailed discussion of the environmental factors that would be potentially affected by this project as indicated by the screening from the CEQA Guidelines Appendix G checklist.

Section 5, References: provides a list of reference materials used during the preparation of this Initial Study.

## C. CEQA Process

To begin the CEQA process, the lead agency identifies a proposed project. The lead agency then prepares an initial study to identify the preliminary environmental impacts of the proposed project. The City previously prepared an initial study that concluded that the Sierra Gateway Apartments project would have no significant environmental impacts which could not be mitigated, and the City Council thus approved a Mitigated Negative Declaration for the project in May 2015. As a result of litigation challenging the project approval, the City Council agreed to rescind that approval and to instead prepare an Environmental Impact Report (EIR). This Initial Study for the Sierra Gateway Apartments project has thus been prepared in advance of the EIR to focus the EIR on potentially significant site-specific impacts not already analyzed in the programmatic-level General Plan EIR.

This Initial Study determined that the proposed project could have significant environmental impacts that would require further study and/or the implementation of mitigation measures and the lead agency has decided to prepare an Environmental Impact Report focused on those impacts. A Notice of Preparation is prepared to notify public agencies and the general public that the lead agency is starting the preparation of an EIR for the proposed project. The Notice of Preparation and initial study are circulated for a 30-day review and comment period. During this review period, the lead agency requests comments from agencies, interested parties, stakeholders, and the general public on the scope and content of the environmental information to be included in the EIR.

After the close of the 30-day review and comment period, the lead agency continues the preparation of the Draft EIR and associated technical studies (if any). Once the Draft EIR is complete, a Notice of Availability is prepared to inform the public agencies and the general public of the document and the locations where the document can be reviewed. The Draft EIR and Notice of Availability are circulated for a 45-day review and comment period. The purpose of this review and comment period is to provide public agencies and the general public an opportunity to review the Draft EIR and comment on the adequacy of the analysis and the findings of the lead agency regarding potential environmental impacts of the proposed project. After the close of the 45-day review and comment period, responses to all comments received on the Draft EIR are prepared. The lead agency prepares a Final EIR, which incorporates the Draft EIR or a revision to the Draft EIR, Draft EIR comments and list of commenters, and a response to comments discussion. In addition, the lead agency must prepare the findings of fact for each significant effect identified, a statement of overriding considerations if there are significant impacts that cannot be mitigated, and a mitigation monitoring and reporting program to ensure that all proposed mitigation measures are implemented.

The City Council will consider the Final EIR, together with any comments received during the public review process, and is responsible for certifying the Final EIR and approving the project.

During the project approval process, persons and/or agencies may address either the Environmental Services staff or the City Council regarding the project. Public notification of agenda items for the City Council is posted 72 hours prior to the public meeting. The Council agenda can be obtained by contacting the Office of the City Clerk at City Hall, 3970 Rocklin Road, Rocklin, CA 95667 or via the internet at <http://www.rocklin.ca.us>

Within five days of project approval, the City will file a Notice of Determination with the County Clerk. The Notice of Determination will be posted by the County Clerk within 24 hours of receipt. This begins a 30-day statute of limitations on legal challenges to the approval under CEQA. The ability to challenge the approval in court may be limited to those persons who objected to the approval of the project, and to issues that were presented to the lead agency by any person, either orally or in writing, during the public comment period.

## **SECTION 2. INITIAL STUDY SUMMARY AND DETERMINATION**

### **A. Summary Information**

**Project Title:**

Sierra Gateway Apartments

**Lead Agency Name and Address:**

City of Rocklin, 3970 Rocklin Road, Rocklin, CA 95677

Initial Study Page 4 Reso. No.	<i>Sierra Gateway Apartments DR2015-0018 and TRE2016-0001</i>
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**Contact Person and Phone Number:**

David Mohlenbrok, Environmental Services Manager, 916-625-5162

**Project Location:**

The 10.2 +/- acre project site is located at the southeast quadrant of the intersection of Sierra College Boulevard and Rocklin Road. The project site is in the eastern portion of the City of Rocklin, northeast of the City of Roseville and west of the Town of Loomis. The project site is comprised of three parcels, Placer County Assessor’s Parcel Numbers (APNs) 045-161-014, 015 and 016 (see Attachment 1, Project Vicinity Map)

**Project Sponsor’s Name:**

The applicant is Ezralow Company LLC, and the property owners are Richard and Melba Resch.

**Current and Proposed General Plan Designation:** High Density Residential (HDR)

**Current and Proposed Zoning:** Planned Development Residential, 20 dwelling units per acre (PD-20)

**Description of the Project:**

The Sierra Gateway Apartments project consists of the development of a 195-unit apartment complex, associated infrastructure, private recreational facilities, parking and landscaping on 10.2 +/- acres. There is a “panhandle” portion of the property that is not being proposed for development at this time but a portion of it will be graded to accommodate curb, gutter and sidewalk and drainage improvements and an extension of the northbound right turn pocket along Sierra College Boulevard. This project will require Design Review and Oak Tree Preservation Plan entitlements. For a more detailed project description, please refer to the Project Description set forth in Section 3 of this Initial Study.

**Surrounding Land Uses and Setting:**

The surrounding area is mostly developed with retail commercial and residential uses. To the north of the project site are Rocklin Road, several isolated single family residences and vacant land designated for Mixed Use land uses under the Rocklin General Plan. To the northwest of the project site is the Sierra Community College campus, and to the west are Sierra College Boulevard, a small retail commercial shopping center consisting of approximately 36, 233 square feet contained in one main building and two separate pads, the Granite Creek apartment complex (2-stories, 80 units), the Shaliko apartment complex (2-stories, 152 units) and developed Medium Density Residential single-family residences further to the west. To the south are Water Lily Lane, a Medium Density Residential single-family subdivision consisting of 60 one- and two-story residences, vacant land designated for Medium Density Residential land uses under the Rocklin General Plan and an open space area associated with an intermittent tributary of Secret Ravine Creek. To the east are the existing Rocklin Manor apartment complex

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(2-stories, 157 units), the City of Rocklin/Town of Loomis border and single-family residential subdivisions within the Town of Loomis.

**Other Public Agencies Whose Approval May Be Required (e.g., Permits, Financing Approval, or Participation Agreement):**

- Rocklin Engineering Division approval of Improvement Plans
- Rocklin Building Inspections Division issuance of Building Permits
- Placer County Water Agency construction of water facilities
- South Placer Municipal Utility District construction of sewer facilities
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers issuance of 404 permit
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service issuance of Biological Opinion (Section 7 Consultation)
- Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board issuance of 401 water quality certification
- California Department of Fish and Wildlife Section 1600 Streambed Alteration Agreement

**B. Environmental Factors Potentially Affected:**

Those factors checked below involve impacts that are “Potentially Significant”:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Aesthetics	<input type="checkbox"/>	Agriculture Resources	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Air Quality
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Biological Resources	<input type="checkbox"/>	Cultural Resources	<input type="checkbox"/>	Geology/Soils
<input type="checkbox"/>	Greenhouse Gas Emissions	<input type="checkbox"/>	Hazards & Hazardous Materials	<input type="checkbox"/>	Hydrology/Water Quality
<input type="checkbox"/>	Land Use/Planning	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mineral Resources	<input type="checkbox"/>	Noise
<input type="checkbox"/>	Population/Housing	<input type="checkbox"/>	Public Services	<input type="checkbox"/>	Recreation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Transportation/Traffic	<input type="checkbox"/>	Utilities/Service Systems	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Mandatory Findings of Sig.
<input type="checkbox"/>	None After Mitigation				

C. Determination:

On the basis of this Initial Study:

- I find that the proposed project WILL NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.
- I find that as originally submitted, the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment; however, revisions in the project have been made by or agreed to by the project proponent which will avoid these effects or mitigate these effects to a point where clearly no significant effect will occur. A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.
- I find that the proposed project MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and an ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required.
- I find that the proposed project MAY have a “potentially significant impact” or “potentially significant unless mitigated” impact on the environment, but at least one effect 1) has been adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and 2) has been addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis as described on the attached Environmental Checklist. An ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required, to analyze the effects that remain to be addressed.
- I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, because all potentially significant effects (a) have been analyzed adequately in an earlier EIR or (MITIGATED) NEGATIVE DECLARATION pursuant to applicable standards, and (b) have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to that earlier EIR or (MITIGATED) NEGATIVE DECLARATION, including revisions or mitigation measures that are imposed upon the proposed project, nothing further is required.

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Marc Mondell  
Director of Economic and Community Development

Date

## SECTION 3. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

### A. Project Location

The project site is generally located at the southeast corner of the intersection of Sierra College Boulevard and Rocklin Road, in the City of Rocklin. The Assessor's Parcel Numbers are 045-161-014, 015 and 016 (Please see Attachment A, Vicinity Map).

The City of Rocklin is located approximately 25 miles northeast of Sacramento, and is within the County of Placer. Surrounding jurisdictions include: unincorporated Placer County to the north and northeast, the City of Lincoln to the northwest, the Town of Loomis to the east and southeast, and the City of Roseville to the south and southwest.

### B. Description

The Sierra Gateway Apartments project consists of the development of a 195-unit apartment complex, associated infrastructure, private recreational facilities, parking and landscaping on 10.2 +/- acres. There is a "panhandle" portion of the property that is not being proposed for development at this time but a portion of it will be graded and modified to accommodate curb, gutter and sidewalk and drainage improvements and an extension of the northbound right turn pocket along Sierra College Boulevard.

The apartment complex will consist of eleven residential buildings and a clubhouse building, which will include a leasing office and a manager's apartment. The majority of the residential buildings will be three-story buildings comprised of one, two, and three bedroom units with private garages located at the ground level. There will also be four two-story buildings configured to provide private garages with carriage style apartment units above. The complex's amenity spaces will be located near the proposed primary entrance to the site and will include a single level leasing office/clubhouse, fitness buildings, and a second story manager's office all around a common pool area. Access to the project will be from Rocklin Road as a shared driveway with the existing Rocklin Manor apartments, and to accommodate increased traffic of the combined access the current access design will be widened to provide two entry and two exit lanes. The project will also have an exit only driveway to the south onto Water Lily Lane.

The project site is designated High Density Residential (HDR) under the Rocklin General Plan, and is zoned Planned Development Residential, 20 dwelling units per acre (PD-20); the project proposes no changes to the General Plan land use designation or zoning designation. The project will require the following entitlements from the City of Rocklin: Design Review to ensure that the design makes the most efficient use of available resources and harmonizes with existing and proposed residential development, as well as with existing development of like character, and an Oak Tree Preservation Plan Permit to allow for the removal of oak trees and

ensure mitigation for such removal is consistent with the City’s Oak Tree Preservation Ordinance.

It is anticipated that site development will involve some clearing and grading of the site, removal of oak trees, trenching and digging for underground utilities and infrastructure, and ultimately the construction of new roadways, driveways, buildings, signage and landscaping.

### C. Existing Environmental Setting

The project site is undeveloped with the exception of the planned shared driveway with the existing Rocklin Manor apartments to the east and an existing roadway easement to the south. The project site is bound on the north by Rocklin Road, on the east by the existing Rocklin Manor apartment complex, on the south by single family residential development and on the west by Sierra College Boulevard. The project site is bifurcated by a 0.21 +/- acre roadway easement known as Water Lilly Lane which provides access to the single family residential development to the south of the project site. Water Lily Lane divides the project site into two areas, a rectangular-shaped area to the north of the roadway which is 8.5 +/- acres in size and a triangular-shaped area to the south of the roadway which is 1.1 +/- acres in size that is also referred to as the “panhandle”.

The property occurs in the transition of the central valley and the Sierra Nevada foothills with elevations ranging between 320 feet and 340 feet above sea level. The project site’s primary biological community is foothill woodland dominated by interior live oak. The project site’s woodlands also contain scattered blue oaks, and to a lesser extent valley oaks and a few oracle (hybrid) oaks. The project site also consists of annual grassland and riparian woodlands, an intermittent stream and an associated wetland swale located in the southern portion of the property adjacent to Sierra College Boulevard, and a seasonal wetland located in the northern portion of the property; collectively these wetland resources total approximately 0.03 acres. The project site’s perimeter is surrounded with an 8-foot tall chain link fence that was installed in the summer of 2015.

### D. Surrounding Land Uses

The surrounding area is mostly developed with retail commercial and residential uses. To the north of the project site are Rocklin Road, several isolated single family residences and vacant land designated for Mixed Use land uses under the Rocklin General Plan. To the northwest of the project site is the Sierra Community College campus, and to the west are Sierra College Boulevard, a small retail commercial shopping center consisting of approximately 36, 233 square feet contained in one main building and two separate pads, the Granite Creek apartment complex (2-stories, 80 units), the Shaliko apartment complex (2-stories, 152 units) and developed Medium Density Residential single-family residences further to the west. To the south are Water Lily Lane, a Medium Density Residential single-family subdivision consisting of 60 one- and two-story residences, vacant land designated for Medium Density Residential land

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uses under the Rocklin General Plan and an open space area associated with an intermittent tributary of Secret Ravine Creek. To the east are the existing Rocklin Manor apartment complex (2-stories, 157 units), the City of Rocklin/Town of Loomis border and single-family residential subdivisions within the Town of Loomis.

#### E. Site History

The project site was annexed from the County in 1985 as part of the Monte Verde Annexation Area. An EIR was prepared and approved as part of that annexation. The proposed land uses and zoning were found to be consistent with the (then) existing General Plan text and the rezone was approved. The subject site was given the General Plan designation Retail Commercial (RC) with zoning of Planned Development Commercial (PD-C). Additionally, the City Council made findings that the proposed zoning and General Development Plan would form a transition area between the adjoining commercial and residential zones and that the area is uniquely situated on a corner making the proposed zoning and General Development Plan appropriate for the subject property.

The site is also within of the General Development Plan for Rocklin Road East of I-80 in which the previously approved zoning, PD-C, was not changed. City Council approved this General Development Plan (Ordinance 820) on December 14, 1999.

Until the mid-1980's, a single family home occupied the proposed project site. Due to safety concerns, the owner demolished the house and the property has since been vacant. Subsequent owners have proposed various commercial developments on the site. The first proposal was for a shopping center anchored by a grocery store. Before the project was submitted, but after receiving neighborhood input, the grocery anchor withdrew and the developer later sold the site to Granite Bay Ventures. Granite Bay Ventures applied for and received approval of a horizontal mixed use office and retail center on March 20, 2007. The project approvals included the approval of the Sierra College Center Environmental Impact Report (EIR). Due to the economic downturn Granite Bay Ventures did not complete the improvement plan review process for this project. At various times, the site has been considered for a drive-through drug store, as well.

On April 16, 2013, the City Council approved a General Plan Amendment to change the designations from RC to High Density Residential (HDR) and a Rezone to change the zoning from PD-C to Planned Development 20 units per acre (PD-20).

The City Council previously approved this project in May 2015 based upon a Mitigated Negative Declaration that concluded that the project would have no significant environmental impacts with the adoption of identified mitigation measures. As a result of litigation challenging that prior approval, the City Council agreed to rescind it and to instead prepare an EIR.

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## SECTION 4. EVALUATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

### A. Explanation of CEQA Streamlining and Tiering Utilized in this Initial Study

This Initial Study will evaluate this project in light of the previously approved General Plan EIR, which is hereby incorporated by reference. This document is available for review during normal business hours at the City of Rocklin Planning Department, 3970 Rocklin Road, Rocklin, CA, and can also be found on the City's website under Planning Department, Current Environmental Documents.

CEQA Guidelines Section 15183 provides a means of streamlining analysis for qualifying projects. Under Section 15183, effects are not considered "peculiar to the project or the parcel" if they are addressed and mitigated by uniformly applied development policies and standards adopted by the City to substantially mitigate that effect (unless new information shows that the policy or standard will not mitigate the effect). Policies and standards have been adopted by the City to address and mitigate certain impacts of development that lend themselves to uniform mitigation measures. These policies and standards include those found in the Oak Tree Ordinance (Rocklin Municipal Code, Chapter 17.77), the Flood Ordinance (Rocklin Municipal Code, Chapter 15.16), the Grading and Erosion and Sedimentation Control Ordinance (Rocklin Municipal Code, Chapter 15.28), the Stormwater Runoff Pollution Control Ordinance (Rocklin Municipal Code, Chapter 8.30), and the Goals and Policies of the Rocklin General Plan. Where applicable, the Initial Study will state how these policies and standards apply to the project. Where the policies and standards will substantially mitigate the effects of the proposed project, the Initial Study concludes that these effects are "not peculiar to the project or the parcel" and thus need not be revisited in the text of the environmental document for the proposed project.

This Initial Study has also been prepared pursuant to CEQA Guidelines sections 15063 and 15168. Section 15063 sets forth the general rules for preparing Initial Studies. One of the identified functions of an Initial Study is for a lead agency to "[d]etermine, pursuant to a program EIR, tiering, or another appropriate process, which of a project's effects were adequately examined by an earlier EIR or negative declaration... The lead agency shall then ascertain which effects, if any, should be analyzed in a later EIR or negative declaration." (CEQA Guidelines, section 15063, subd. (b)(1)(C).) Here, the City has used this initial study to determine the extent to which the General Plan EIR has "adequately examined" the effects of the proposed project.

Section 15168 sets forth the legal requirements for preparing "program EIRs" and for reliance upon program EIRs in connection with "[s]ubsequent activities" within the approved program. (See *Citizens for Responsible Equitable Environmental Development v. City of San Diego Redevelopment Agency* (2005) 134 Cal.App.4<sup>th</sup> 598, 614-617.) The General Plan EIR was a program EIR with respect to its analysis of impacts associated with eventual buildout of future

anticipated development identified by the General Plan. Subdivision (c) of section 15168 provides as follows:

- (c) Use with Later Activities. Subsequent activities in the program must be examined in light of the program EIR to determine whether an additional environmental document must be prepared.
  - (1) If a later activity would have effects that were not examined in the program EIR, a new Initial Study would need to be prepared leading to either an EIR or a Negative Declaration.
  - (2) If the agency finds that pursuant to Section 15162, no new effects could occur or no new mitigation measures would be required, the agency can approve the activity as being within the scope of the project covered by the program EIR, and no new environmental document would be required.
  - (3) An agency shall incorporate feasible mitigation measures and alternatives developed in the program EIR into subsequent actions on the project.
  - (4) Where the subsequent activities involve site specific operations, the agency should use a written checklist or similar device to document the evaluation of the site and the activity to determine whether the environmental effects of the operation were covered in the program EIR.

The Sierra Gateway Apartment project is a “subsequent activity” that falls within the scope of the programmatic General Plan EIR. Urban development of the proposed project site was contemplated by the General Plan EIR, and this Initial Study serves the function of a “written checklist or similar device” documenting the extent to which the environmental effects of the proposed project “were covered in the program EIR” for the General Plan. As stated below, the City has concluded that the impacts of the proposed project are “within the scope” of the analysis in the General Plan EIR. Stated another way, these “environmental effects of the [site-specific project] were covered in the program EIR.” Site-specific studies were prepared for the project with respect to impacts that were not “adequately examined,” were not “within the scope” of the prior analysis, or were not thoroughly analyzed in the General Plan EIR. These studies are hereby incorporated by reference and are available for review during normal business hours at the Rocklin Economic and Community Development Department, 3970 Rocklin Road, Rocklin, CA 95677. The specific studies are listed in Section 5, References.

The Initial Study is a public document to be used by the City decision-makers to determine whether a project may have a significant effect on the environment. If the City as lead agency, finds substantial evidence that any effects of the project were not “adequately examined” in the General Plan EIR or were not “within the scope” of the analysis in that document AND that

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these effects may have a significant effect on the environment if not mitigated, the City is required to prepare an EIR with respect to such potentially significant effects. Moreover, given the low “fair argument” threshold requiring preparation of an EIR, if the Initial Study cannot demonstrate with certainty the extent to which an impact can be mitigated, or whether certain mitigation measures could effectively mitigate an impact, the City may determine to prepare an EIR to more fully analyze these issues.

**B. Significant Cumulative Impacts; Statement of Overriding Considerations**

The Rocklin City Council has previously identified the following cumulative significant impacts as unavoidable consequences of urbanization contemplated in the Rocklin General Plan, despite the implementation of all available and feasible mitigation measures, and on that basis has adopted a statement of overriding considerations for each cumulative impact:

1. Air Quality:

Development in the City and the Sacramento Valley Air Basin as a whole will result in the following: violations of air quality standards as a result of short-term emissions from construction projects, increases in criteria air pollutants from operational air pollutants and exposure to toxic air contaminants, the generation of odors and a cumulative contribution to regional air quality impacts.

2. Aesthetics/Light and Glare:

Development in the City and the South Placer region as a whole will result in substantial degradation of the existing visual character, the creation of new sources of substantial light and glare and cumulative impacts to scenic vistas, scenic resources, existing visual character and creation of light and glare.

3. Traffic and Circulation:

Development in the City and the South Placer region as a whole will result in impacts to segments and intersections of the state/interstate highway system.

4. Noise

Development in the City and the South Placer region as a whole will result in impacts associated with exposure to surface transportation and stationary noise sources, and cumulative transportation noise impacts within the Planning area.

5. Cultural and Paleontological Resources

Development in the City and the South Placer region as a whole will result in cumulative impacts to historic character.

6. Biological Resources

Development in the City and the South Placer region as a whole will result in the loss of native oak and heritage trees, the loss of oak woodland habitat, and cumulative impacts to biological resources.

7. Climate Change and Greenhouse Gases

Development in the City and the South Placer region as a whole will result in the generation of greenhouse gas emissions.

C. Mitigation Measures Required and Considered

It is the policy and a requirement of the City of Rocklin that all public agencies with authority to mitigate significant effects shall undertake or require the undertaking of all feasible mitigation measures specified in the prior environmental impact reports relevant to a significant effect which the project will have on the environment. Project review is limited to effects upon the environment which are site-specific and which were not addressed as significant effects in the General Plan EIR or which substantial new information shows will be more significant than described in the General Plan EIR. This Initial Study anticipates that feasible mitigation measures previously identified in the General Plan EIR have been, or will be, implemented as set forth in those documents, and evaluates this Project accordingly.

D. Evaluation of Environmental Checklist:

- 1) A brief explanation is provided for all answers except “No Impact” answers that are adequately supported by the information sources cited in the parentheses following each question. A “No Impact” answer is adequately supported if the referenced information sources show that the impact simply does not apply to projects like the one involved (e.g., the project falls outside a fault rupture zone). A “No Impact” answer is explained where it is based on project-specific factors as well as general standards (e.g., the project will not expose sensitive receptors to pollutants, based on a project-specific screening analysis).
- 2) All answers take account of the whole action involved, including off-site as well as on-site elements, cumulative as well as project-level impacts, indirect as well as direct impacts, and construction as well as operational impacts.

- 3) If a particular physical impact may occur, then the checklist answers must indicate whether the impact is potentially significant, less than significant with mitigation, or less than significant. "Potentially Significant Impact" is appropriate if there is substantial evidence that an effect may be significant.
  
- 4) Answers of "Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated" describe the mitigation measures agreed to by the applicant and briefly explain how they reduce the effect to a less than significant level. Mitigation measures and supporting explanation from earlier EIRs or Negative Declaration may be cross-referenced and incorporated by reference.
  
- 5) Earlier analyses may be used where an effect has been adequately analyzed in an earlier EIR or negative declaration, and the City intends to use tiering. All prior EIRs and Negative Declarations and certifying resolutions are available for review at the Rocklin Economic and Community Development Department. In this case, a brief discussion will identify the following:
  - a) Which effects are within the scope of and adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and whether such effects are addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis; and
  
  - b) For effects that are "Less than Significant with Mitigation Measures Incorporated," the mitigation measures which are incorporated or refined from the earlier document and the extent to which they address site-specific conditions for the project.

## E. Environmental Checklist

<b>I.</b>	<b>AESTHETICS</b>	<b>Potentially Significant Impact</b>	<b>Less Than Significant With Mitigation</b>	<b>Less Than Significant Impact</b>	<b>No Impact</b>	<b>Impact for which General Plan EIR is Sufficient</b>
	<b>Would the project:</b>					
a)	Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?				<b>X</b>	
b)	Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings?	<b>X</b>				
c)	Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway.			<b>X</b>		
d)	Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?			<b>X</b>		

### **DISCUSSION OF DETERMINATION:**

#### **Project Impacts:**

The development of a 195-unit apartment complex on a 10.2 +/- acre site will change the existing visual nature or character of the project site and area. The development of the project site would create new sources of light and glare typical of urban development. As discussed below, impacts to scenic vistas or viewsheds would not be anticipated.

#### **Prior Environmental Analysis:**

As a “program EIR” under CEQA Guidelines section 15168, the General Plan EIR analyzed the anticipated impacts that would occur to the visual character of the Planning Area as a result of the future urban development that was contemplated by the General Plan. When previously undeveloped land becomes developed, aesthetic impacts include changes to scenic character and new sources of light and glare (City of Rocklin General Plan Update Draft EIR, 2011, pages 4.3-1 through 4.3-18). Mitigation measures to address these impacts are incorporated into the General Plan in the Land Use and the Open Space, Conservation, and Recreation Elements, and

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include policies that encourage the use of design standards for unique areas and the protection of natural resources, including open space areas, natural resource areas, hilltops, waterways and oak trees, from the encroachment of incompatible land use.

While vacant areas have a natural aesthetic quality, there are no designated scenic vistas within the city or Planning Area. Alteration of vacant areas would change the visual quality of various areas throughout the Planning Area. However, since there are no designated scenic vistas, no impact would occur in this regard.

The City of Rocklin does not contain an officially designated state scenic highway. State Route 65 (SR 65) borders the western portion of the city but is not considered a scenic highway. Likewise, Interstate 80 (I-80) traverses the eastern portion of the city but does not have a scenic designation. Therefore, no impacts are anticipated in association with damage to scenic resources within a state scenic highway.

All development in the Planning Area is subject to existing City development standards set forth in the City's Zoning Ordinance as well as the City's Design Review Guidelines. Together, the Zoning Ordinance and Design Review Guidelines help to ensure that development form, character, height, and massing are consistent with the City's vision for the character of the community.

There are no specific features within the proposed project that would create unusual light and glare. Implementation of existing City Design Review Guidelines and the General Plan policies addressing light and glare would also ensure that no unusual daytime glare or nighttime lighting is produced. However, the impacts associated with increased light and glare would not be eliminated entirely, and the overall level of light and glare in the Planning Area would increase in general as urban development occurs and that increase cannot be fully mitigated.

The General Plan EIR concluded that, despite the goals and policies addressing visual character, views, and light and glare, significant aesthetic impacts will occur as a result of development under the General Plan and further, that these impacts cannot be reduced to a less than significant level. Specifically, the General Plan EIR found that buildout of the Rocklin General Plan will change and degrade the existing visual character, will create new sources of light and glare and will contribute to cumulative impacts to scenic vistas, scenic resources, existing visual character and creation of light and glare. Findings of fact and a statement of overriding consideration were adopted by the Rocklin City Council in regard to these impacts, which were found to be significant and unavoidable.

**Mitigation Measures from Uniformly Applied Development Policies and Standards:**

All applicable mitigation measures from the General Plan EIR, including the mitigation measures for aesthetic/visual impacts incorporated as goals and policies in the General Plan, will be

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applied to the project. These serve as uniformly applied development policies and standards and/or as conditions of approval for this project to ensure consistency with the General Plan and compliance with City rules and regulations.

**Conclusion:**

a) The General Plan EIR states that there are no designated scenic vistas in the City. Because recognized or recorded scenic vistas or views do not exist in the project area, the proposed project is not anticipated to impact scenic vistas or viewsheds.

b) The proposed project would result in the development of a 195-unit, three- and four-story apartment complex and associated infrastructure within the project site, which could change the visual nature or character of the site and its surroundings.

The potential aesthetic impact of the change of the project site from a generally undeveloped wooded and grassland area to developed uses will be discussed in the EIR.

c) The project site is not located near a state scenic highway or other designated scenic corridor; therefore impacts to these resources would not be anticipated. The project site does not contain any historic buildings or significant rock out croppings that have aesthetic value.

d) New and/or increased sources of light and glare would be introduced to the project area. A preliminary lighting photometric plan prepared for the proposed project by Omni Means indicates that light levels from the proposed project will primarily be at a 0.0-0.1 foot-candle level around the project site’s perimeter, with the exception being 0.7-1.0 foot-candle levels at the project’s driveway at Rocklin Road. Notwithstanding the higher foot-candle levels at the project’s driveway which are needed for safety reasons, the 0.0-0.1 foot-candle levels are not considered to be excessive (by way of reference, a typical lighting level in an emergency stairwell is approximately 7-10 foot-candles and a deep twilight night is approximately 0.1 foot-candle). In addition, as a part of the design and development review process for this project, the City will require that “All exterior lighting shall be designed and installed to avoid adverse glare on adjacent properties. Cut-off shoebox type lighting fixtures, or equivalent, shall be used and mounted such that all light is projected directly toward the ground. The lighting design plan shall be approved by the Director of Community Development for compliance with this condition.” Adherence to the design and development review process standards will minimize light and glare impacts to a less than significant level.

**Significance:**

There will be no aesthetic impacts related to effects on scenic vistas, damage to scenic resources within a state scenic highway and the creation of new sources of substantial light and glare; therefore these issues will not be discussed further in the EIR.

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Potential aesthetic impacts related to the project degrading the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings will be discussed in the EIR.

**II.**

**AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES**

In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997) prepared by the California Dept. of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. In determining whether impacts to forest resources, including timberland, are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to information compiled by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection regarding the state’s inventory of forest land, including the Forest and Range Assessment Project and the Forest Legacy Assessment project; and forest carbon measurement methodology provided in Forest Protocols adopted by the California Air Resources Board. Would the project:

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact	Impact for which General Plan EIR is Sufficient
a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?				<b>X</b>	
b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?				<b>X</b>	
c) Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code section 12220 (g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code section 51104 (g))?				<b>X</b>	
d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?				<b>X</b>	
e) Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?				<b>X</b>	

**DISCUSSION OF DETERMINATION:**

**Project Impacts:**

As discussed below, impacts are not anticipated.

**Conclusion:**

**a, b, c, d and e)** The project area is not prime farmland, agricultural or forestry lands. This site has not been used for any type of agriculture for more than two decades, and has been zoned for urban development for more than ten years. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in the conversion of designated prime farmlands to non-agricultural use, nor would it result in the conversion of forest land to non-forest use.

The Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP) land classifications system monitors and documents land use changes that specifically affect California’s agricultural land and is administered by the California Department of Conservation (CDC). The FMMP land classification system is cited by the State CEQA Guidelines as the preferred information source for determining the agricultural significance of a property (CEQA Guidelines, Appendix G). The CDC, Division of Land Resource Protection, Placer County Important Farmland Map of 2012 designates the project site as grazing land. This category is not considered Important Farmland under the definition in CEQA of “Agricultural Land” that is afforded consideration as to its potential significance (See CEQA Section 21060.1[a]).

The project site is not located adjacent to land in productive agriculture or lands zoned for agricultural uses or timberland production. Also, the project site contains no parcels that are under a Williamson Act contract. Therefore, because the project would not convert important farmland to non-agricultural uses, would not conflict with existing agricultural or forestry use zoning or Williamson Act contracts, or involve other changes that could result in the conversion of important farmlands to non-agricultural uses or the conversion of forest lands to non-forest uses, impacts of the project on agricultural or forestry uses would less than significant.

**Significance:**

There are no impacts to agricultural and forestry resources; therefore these issues will not be discussed further in the EIR.

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<b>III.</b> <u><b>AIR QUALITY</b></u> <b>Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management or air pollution control district may be relied upon to make the following determination. Would the project:</b>	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact	Impact for which General Plan EIR is Sufficient
a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of applicable air quality plan?	<b>X</b>				
b) Violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation?	<b>X</b>				
c) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard (including releasing emissions which exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors)?	<b>X</b>				
d) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	<b>X</b>				
e) Create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people?	<b>X</b>				

**DISCUSSION OF DETERMINATION:**

**Project Impacts:**

In the short-term, air quality impacts from the proposed project will result from construction related activities associated with grading and excavation to prepare the site for the installation of utilities and above ground structures and improvements, as well as from the application of architectural coatings and installation of asphalt. These air quality impacts will primarily be related to the generation of airborne dust (Particulate Matter of 10 microns in size or less (PM<sub>10</sub>)).

In the long term, air quality impacts from the proposed project will result from vehicle trip generation to and from the project site and the resultant mobile source emissions of air pollutants (primarily carbon monoxide and ozone precursor emissions).

**Prior Environmental Analysis:**

The General Plan EIR analyzed the anticipated impacts that would occur to regional air quality as a result of the future urban development that was contemplated by the General Plan. These impacts included 8-hour ozone attainment, short-term construction emissions, operational air pollutants, increases in criteria pollutants, odors and regional air quality impacts. (City of Rocklin General Plan Update Draft EIR, 2011, pages 4.2-1 through 4.2-43). Mitigation measures to address these impacts are incorporated into the General Plan in the Land Use, the Open Space, Conservation, and Recreation, and the Circulation Elements, and include policies that encourage a mixture of land uses, provisions for non-automotive modes of transportation, consultation with the Placer County Air Pollution Control District, and the incorporation of stationary and mobile source control measures.

The General Plan EIR concluded that, despite these goals and policies, significant air quality impacts will occur as a result of development under the General Plan and further, that these impacts cannot be reduced to a less than significant level. Specifically, the General Plan EIR found that buildout of the Rocklin General Plan and other development within the Sacramento Valley Air Basin as a whole will result in the following: violations of air quality standards as a result of short-term emissions from construction projects, increases in criteria air pollutants from operational air pollutants and exposure to toxic air contaminants, the generation of odors and a cumulative contribution to regional air quality impacts. Findings of fact and a statement of overriding consideration were adopted by the Rocklin City Council in regard to these impacts, which were found to be significant and unavoidable.

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**Mitigation Measures from Uniformly Applied Development Policies and Standards:**

All applicable mitigation measures from the General Plan EIR, including the mitigation measures for air quality impacts incorporated as goals and policies in the General Plan, will be applied to the project. These serve as uniformly applied development policies and standards and/or as conditions of approval for this project to ensure consistency with the General Plan and compliance with City rules and regulations.

**Construction Emissions**

During construction of the project, various types of equipment and vehicles would temporarily operate on the project site. Construction exhaust emissions would be generated from construction equipment, vegetation clearing and earth movement activities, construction workers' commute, and construction material hauling for the entire construction period. The aforementioned activities would involve the use of diesel- and gasoline-powered equipment that would generate emissions of criteria air pollutants. Project construction activities also represent a source of fugitive dust, which includes particulate matter (PM) emissions. As construction of the proposed Sierra Gateway Apartments project would generate air pollutant emissions intermittently within the site and the vicinity of the site, until all construction has been completed, construction is a potential concern because the proposed Sierra Gateway Apartments project is in a non-attainment area for ozone and PM.

**Operational Emissions**

Operational emissions of ROG, NO<sub>x</sub>, and PM<sub>10</sub> would be generated by the proposed Sierra Gateway Apartments project from both mobile and stationary sources. Day-to-day activities such as vehicle trips to and from the project site would make up the majority of the mobile emissions. Emissions would occur from stationary sources such as natural gas combustion from heating mechanisms, hearth fuel combustion, landscape maintenance equipment fuel combustion, and consumer products (e.g., deodorants, cleaning products, spray paint, etc.). The modeling performed for the project takes these factors into consideration.

**Cumulative Impacts**

Placer County is classified as a severe non-attainment area for the federal ozone standards. In order to improve air quality and attain health-based standards, reductions in emissions are necessary within non-attainment areas. The project is part of a pattern of urbanization occurring in the greater Sacramento ozone non-attainment area. The growth and combined population, vehicle usage, and business activity within the non-attainment area from the project, in combination with other past, present and reasonably foreseeable projects within Rocklin and surrounding areas, would either delay attainment of the standards or require the adoption of additional controls on existing and future air pollution sources to offset project-

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related emission increases. Thus, the project could cumulatively contribute to regional air quality health effects through emissions of criteria and mobile source air pollutants.

**Conclusion:**

**a)** The proposed project site is located within the boundaries of the Placer County Air Pollution Control District (PCAPCD), which is within the Sacramento Valley Air Basin (SVAB). Placer County is in attainment for PM<sub>10</sub>, but is located within the Sacramento region's severe non-attainment area for federal ozone standards. The PCAPCD has the primary responsibility for planning, maintaining, and monitoring the attainment of air quality standards in Placer County. The PCAPCD along with other local air districts in the Sacramento region are required to comply and implement the State Implementation Plan (SIP) to demonstrate how and when the region can attain the federal ozone standards. Accordingly, the Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management Air District (SMAQMD) prepared the *Sacramento Regional 8-Hour Ozone Attainment and Reasonable Further Progress Plan* in December 2008, with input from the other air districts in the region. The Placer County Air District adopted the Plan on February 19, 2009. The California Air Resources Board (CARB) determined that the Plan meets Clean Air Act requirements and approved the Plan on March 26, 2009 as a revision to the SIP. An update to the Plan, the *Sacramento Regional 8-Hour Ozone Attainment and Reasonable Further Progress Plan (2013 SIP Revisions)*, has been prepared and was approved and adopted on September 26, 2013. The *2013 Revisions to the Sacramento Regional 8-Hour Ozone Attainment and Reasonable Further Progress Plan (2013 Plan)* have been submitted to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) as a revision to the SIP. Accordingly, the 2013 Plan is the applicable air quality plan for the proposed site.

The proposed project's potential to conflict with or obstruct implementation of an applicable air quality plan will be discussed in the EIR.

**b)** The PCAPCD has developed project-level operational and construction emission thresholds for Reactive Organic Gases (ROG), Nitric Oxide (NO<sub>x</sub>), and Respirable Particulate Matter (PM<sub>10</sub>). The proposed project's potential to violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation will be discussed in the EIR.

**c)** The PCAPCD has developed cumulative significance thresholds for emissions of ROG and NO<sub>x</sub>. The proposed project's potential to result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard (including releasing emissions which exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors) will be discussed in the EIR.

**d)** The proposed project involves the development of residential uses; thus, the project would introduce sensitive receptors to the area. The nearest existing sensitive receptors to the project site are the residences located east, west and south of the project site. The proposed project's

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potential to expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations will be discussed in the EIR.

e) Typical odor sources include industrial or intensive agricultural uses. The project is not located adjacent to any substantial industrial, agricultural or other odor-producing facilities and high density residential developments of this type would not be expected to create objectionable odors. The proposed project's potential for creating objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people will be discussed in the EIR.

**Significance:**

The proposed project's potential air quality impacts will be discussed in the EIR.



<b>IV.</b> <u><b>BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES</b></u> <b>Would the project:</b>	<b>Potentially Significant Impact</b>	<b>Less Than Significant With Mitigation</b>	<b>Less Than Significant Impact</b>	<b>No Impact</b>	<b>Impact for which General Plan EIR is Sufficient</b>
a) Have 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 the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	<b>X</b>				
b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	<b>X</b>				
c) Have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?	<b>X</b>				
d) Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?	<b>X</b>				
e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?	<b>X</b>				
f) Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?	<b>X</b>				

**DISCUSSION OF DETERMINATION:**

**Project Impacts:**

The proposed project will modify habitats through the removal of native and other plant material; the project site contains oak trees, most of which will be removed with implementation of the project. Impacts to wetlands/waters of the U.S. and to special status animal and plant species could occur due to their presence or potential presence on the project site.

**Prior Environmental Analysis**

The General Plan EIR analyzed the anticipated impacts that would occur to the biological resources of the Planning Area as a result of the future urban development that was contemplated by the General Plan. These impacts included special-status species, species of concern, non-listed species, biological communities and migratory wildlife corridors (City of Rocklin General Plan Update Draft EIR, 2011, pages 4.10-1 through 4.10-47). Mitigation measures to address these impacts are incorporated into the General Plan in the Open Space, Conservation and Recreation Element, and include policies that encourage the protection and conservation of biological resources and require compliance with rules and regulations protecting biological resources, including the City of Rocklin Oak Tree Preservation Ordinance.

The General Plan EIR concluded that, despite these goals, policies and rules and regulations protecting biological resources, significant biological resources impacts will occur as a result of development under the General Plan and further, that these impacts cannot be reduced to a less than significant level. Specifically the General Plan EIR found that buildout of the Rocklin General Plan will impact sensitive biological communities, will result in the loss of native oak and heritage trees, will result in the loss of oak woodland habitat and will contribute to cumulative impacts to biological resources. Findings of fact and a statement of overriding considerations were adopted by the Rocklin City Council in regard to these impacts, which were found to be significant and unavoidable.

**Mitigation Measures from Uniformly Applied Development Policies and Standards:**

All applicable mitigation measures from the General Plan EIR, including the mitigation measures for biological resources impacts incorporated as goals and policies in the General Plan, will be applied to the project. These serve as uniformly applied development policies and standards and/or as conditions of approval for this project to ensure consistency with the General Plan and compliance with City rules and regulations.

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Project Site Description

The project site is composed primarily of foothill woodland, annual grassland and riparian woodland. Topography on the site is gently rolling with elevations ranging from approximately 320 to 365 feet above mean sea level. Surface runoff flows mainly towards and exits the project site via an intermittent tributary of Secret Ravine which is located on the southwesterly side of the project site. The project site is vacant and land uses surrounding the project site include residential development to the south and east, and retail commercial and residential development to the west. Potential jurisdictional waters of the U.S. within the project area total approximately 0.03 acres. This acreage includes the unnamed tributary to Secret Ravine, an upland swale and a wetland swale.

**Conclusion:**

**a)** The proposed project would have impacts on biological resources as the site is converted from a vacant site to a developed site, which could affect candidate, sensitive or special status species.

The proposed project’s potential to have 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 the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will be discussed in the EIR.

**b)** The proposed project’s potential to have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will be discussed in the EIR.

**c)** The project site does contain jurisdictional waters of the United States that will be impacted by the development of the proposed project. The proposed project’s potential to have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means will be discussed in the EIR.

**d)** The surrounding area is mostly developed in an urban fashion, including retail commercial development to the west and residential development to the west, east and south of the project site. The project site is also bound on the west by Sierra College Boulevard and on the north by Rocklin Road. The southwestern portion of the project site is adjacent to an open space preserve area that potentially serves as a wildlife corridor, but the proposed project does not include development in this area. The proposed project’s potential to interfere with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites will be discussed in the EIR.

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e) The project site includes a total of 376 oak trees within the boundaries of the project. Composition of the 376 oak trees includes 317 Interior Live Oaks, 53 Blue Oaks, 5 Valley Oaks and 1 Oracle Oak. Of the 376 oak trees, 5 are dead, 137 are noted for removal due to their poor condition, 122 may be retained if all of the arborist’s recommendations are followed, 111 are rated as fair/good, and 1 is rated excellent. The project proposes the preservation of 53 oak trees and the removal of 323 oak trees.

The City of Rocklin regulates the removal of and construction within the dripline of native oak trees with a trunk diameter of 6 inches or more under the Oak Tree Preservation Ordinance and the Oak Tree Preservation Guidelines. Seven oak species and five hybrids between these species are defined as “native oaks” by the City. Per the City’s oak tree ordinance, the diameter at breast height (DBH) of a multiple trunk tree is the measurement of the largest trunk only, and heritage trees are defined as native oak trees with a trunk diameter of 24 inches or more.

The project’s proposed oak tree removal which may conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, including the City’s Oak Tree Preservation Ordinance, will be discussed in the EIR.

f) The proposed project’s potential for conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan will be discussed in the EIR.

**Significance:**

The proposed project’s potential biological resources impacts will be discussed in the EIR.

V. <u>CULTURAL RESOURCES</u> Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact	Impact for which General Plan EIR is Sufficient
a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in §15064.5?					X
b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to §15064.5?					X
c) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?		X			
d) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?		X			
e) Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a Tribal Cultural Resource as defined in Public Resources Code §21074?	X				

**DISCUSSION OF DETERMINATION:**

**Project Impacts:**

The proposed project could affect unknown/undiscovered historical, archaeological, and/or paleontological resources or sites as development occurs.

**Prior Environmental Analysis:**

The General Plan EIR analyzed the anticipated impacts that would occur to historical, cultural and paleontological resources within the Planning area as a result of the future urban development that was contemplated by the General Plan. These impacts included potential destruction or damage to any historical, cultural, and paleontological resources (City of Rocklin General Plan Update Draft EIR, 2011, pages 4.8-1 through 4.8-21). Mitigation measures to address these impacts are incorporated into the General Plan in the Land Use and Open Space, Recreation and Conservation Elements, and include goals and policies that encourage the preservation and protection of historical, cultural and paleontological resources and the proper treatment and handling of such resources when they are discovered.

The General Plan EIR concluded that despite these goals and policies, significant cultural resources impacts will occur as a result of development under the General Plan and further, that these impacts cannot be reduced to a less than significant level. Specifically, the General Plan EIR found that buildout of the Rocklin General Plan will contribute to cumulative impacts to historic character. Findings of fact and a statement of overriding considerations were adopted by the Rocklin City Council in regard to these impacts, which were found to be significant and unavoidable.

**Mitigation Measures from Uniformly Applied Development Policies and Standards:**

Historically significant structures and sites as well as the potential for the discovery of unknown archaeological or paleontological resources as a result of development activities are discussed in the Rocklin General Plan. Policies and mitigation measures have been included in the General Plan to encourage the preservation of historically significant known and unknown areas.

All applicable mitigation measures from the General Plan EIR, including the mitigation measures for cultural resources impacts incorporated as goals and policies in the General Plan, will be applied to the project. These serve as uniformly applied development policies and standards and/or as conditions of approval for this project to ensure consistency with the General Plan and compliance with City rules and regulations.

**Project-Level Environmental Analysis:**

The firm of Peak and Associates Inc., a Sacramento area consulting firm with recognized expertise in cultural resources, prepared a cultural resource report for the Sierra College Apartments project. Their report, dated August 2014, is available for review during normal business hours at the City of Rocklin Planning Department, 3970 Rocklin Road, Rocklin, CA, and is incorporated into this Initial Study by this reference. City staff has reviewed the documentation and is also aware that Peak and Associates has a professional reputation that makes their conclusions presumptively credible and prepared in good faith. Based on its review of the analysis and these other considerations, City staff accepts the conclusions in the Peak and Associates report, which is summarized below.

**Conclusion:**

**a, b, c and d)** The Peak and Associates report concluded that records searches of the North Central Information Center, field parcel surveys performed by a qualified archaeologist, queries sent to the Native American Heritage Commission and Native American contacts for the project area revealed no historic properties recorded within the project site; therefore the proposed project would not impact known sites of historical or cultural significance on the project site. However, the project site may contain unknown cultural resources that could potentially be discovered during construction activities.

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To address the potential discovery of unknown cultural resources, the following mitigation measure, agreed to by the applicant, is being applied to the project:

*V.-1 (CULTURAL RESOURCES) If an inadvertent discovery of cultural materials (e.g., unusual amounts of shell, charcoal, animal bone, bottle glass, ceramics, burned soil, structure/building remains) is made during project-related construction activities, ground disturbances in the area of the find shall be halted and a qualified professional archaeologist, the City's Environmental Services Manager and the Native American Heritage Commission shall be notified regarding the discovery. The archaeologist shall determine whether the resource is potentially significant as per CEQA (i.e., whether it is a historical resource, a unique archaeological resource, or a unique paleontological resource) and shall develop specific measures to ensure preservation of the resource or to mitigate impacts to the resource if it cannot feasibly be preserved in light of costs, logistics, technological considerations, the location of the find, and the extent to which avoidance and/or preservation of the find is consistent or inconsistent with the design and objectives of the project. Specific measures for significant or potentially significant resources would include, but are not necessarily limited to, preservation in place, in-field documentation, archival research, subsurface testing, and excavation. The specific type of measure necessary would be determined according to evidence indicating degrees of resource integrity, spatial and temporal extent, and cultural associations, and would be developed in a manner consistent with CEQA guidelines for preserving or otherwise mitigating impacts to archaeological and cultural artifacts.*

*In the event of the accidental discovery or recognition of any human remains, there shall be no further excavation or disturbance of the site or any nearby area reasonably suspected to overlie adjacent human remains, until compliance with the provisions of Sections 15064.5 (e)(1) and (2) of the CEQA Guidelines, as well as Public Resources Code Section 5097.98, has occurred. If any human remains are discovered, all work shall stop in the immediate vicinity of the find and the County Coroner shall be notified, according to Section 7050.5 of the California Health and Safety Code. The City's Environmental Services Manager shall also be notified. If the remains are Native American, the Coroner will notify the Native American Heritage Commission, which in turn will inform a most likely descendant. The descendant will then recommend to the landowner appropriate disposition of the remains and any grave goods, and the landowner shall comply with the requirements of AB2641 (2006).*

The applicant is agreeable to the above mitigation measure; implementation of the above measure will reduce impacts to unknown cultural resources to a less than significant level.

**e)** Per Assembly Bill 52 (AB-52, Gatto 2014), as of July 1, 2015 Public Resources Code (PRC) Sections 21080.3.1 and 21080.3 require public agencies to consult with the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) and Native American tribes for the purpose of mitigating impacts to tribal cultural resources; that consultation process is described in part below:

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Within 14 days of determining that an application for a project is complete or a decision by a public agency to undertake a project, the lead agency shall provide formal notification to the designated contact of, or a tribal representative of, traditionally and culturally affiliated California Native American tribes that have requested notice, which shall be accomplished by means of at least one written notification that includes a brief description of the proposed project and its location, the lead agency contact information, and a notification that the California Native American tribe has 30 days to request consultation pursuant to this section (PRC Section 21080.1 (d)).

As of the writing of this document, the United Auburn Indian Community (UAIC) and the Lone Band of Miwok Indians (IBMI) are the only tribes that are traditionally and culturally affiliated with the project area that have requested notification. Consistent with Public Resources Code (PRC Section 21080.3.1 (d) and per AB-52, the City of Rocklin provided formal notification of the Sierra Gateway Apartment project and the opportunity to consult on it to the designated contact of the UAIC in a letter received by that organization on January 11, 2016. The UAIC had 30 days to request consultation on the project pursuant to AB-52 and they did not request such prior to February 9, 2016, the end of the 30-day period.

Consistent with Public Resources Code (PRC Section 21080.3.1 (d) and per AB-52, the City of Rocklin provided formal notification of the Sierra Gateway Apartment project and the opportunity to consult on it to the designated contact of the IBMI in a letter dated March 15, 2016. If the IBMI responds within the 30-day period and requests consultation on the project, such will be addressed in the project's EIR.

The City of Rocklin has complied with AB-52 with the UAIC per PRC Section 21082.3 (d) (3), but must wait for the IBMI before releasing the EIR for this project per PRC 21083.3.1 (b). Given that the UAIC did not submit a formal request for consultation on the proposed project within the required 30 day period, the project is not anticipated to cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a Tribal Cultural Resource as defined in PRC Section 21074 as it pertains to the UAIC. As noted above, the City is awaiting a response on AB-52 consultation efforts from the IBMI and if a request for consultation is received within the 30-day period, the outcome of such efforts will be discussed in the EIR. Therefore, the project's impact on tribal cultural resources are considered potentially significant.

**Significance:**

Implementation of the project-specific mitigation measure identified above would reduce impacts to unknown cultural resources to a less-than-significant level. The project-specific mitigation measure will be included in the EIR's Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Plan, but otherwise cultural resources impacts will not be discussed further in the EIR unless the IBMI requests consultation.

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VI. <u>GEOLOGY AND SOILS</u> Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact	Impact for which General Plan EIR is Sufficient
a) Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving: i) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone Map issued by the state Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.			X		X
ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?					X
iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?					X
iv) Landslides?					X
b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?					X
c) Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on-or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse?					X
d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table I8-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial risks to life or property?					X
e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water?				X	

**DISCUSSION OF DETERMINATION:**

**Project Impacts:**

Branches of the Foothill Fault system, which are not included on the Alquist-Priolo maps, pass through or near the City of Rocklin and could pose a seismic hazard to the area including ground shaking, seismic ground failure, and landslides. Construction of the proposed project will involve clearing and grading of the site, which could render the site susceptible to a temporary increase in erosion from the grading and construction activities.

**Prior Environmental Analysis:**

The General Plan EIR analyzed the anticipated impacts of local soils and geology on development that would occur as a result of the future urban development that was contemplated by the General Plan. These impacts included seismic hazards such as groundshaking and liquefaction, erosion, soil stability, and wastewater conflicts (City of Rocklin General Plan Update Draft EIR, 2011 pages 4.6-1 through 4.6-27). The analysis found that while development and buildout of the General Plan can result in geological impacts, these impacts would be reduced to a less than significant level through the application of development standards contained in the City’s Improvement Standards and Standard Specifications and in the Rocklin Municipal Code, the application of General Plan goals and policies that would assist in minimizing or avoiding geologic hazards and compliance with local, state and federal standards related to geologic conditions.

These goals, policies and standards include, but are not limited to, erosion control measures in the City’s Improvement Standards and Standard Specifications, the City’s Grading and Erosion and Sediment Control Ordinance, the City’s Stormwater Runoff Pollution Control Ordinance, and goals and policies in the General Plan Community Safety Element requiring soils and geotechnical reports for all new development, enforcement of the building code, and limiting development of severe slopes.

**Mitigation Measures from Uniformly Applied Development Policies and Standards:**

All applicable mitigation measures from the General Plan EIR, including the mitigation measures for geology and soils impacts incorporated as goals and policies in the Rocklin General Plan, will be applied to the project. These serve as uniformly applied development policies and standards and/or as conditions of approval for this project to ensure consistency with the General Plan and compliance with City ordinances, rules and regulations.

In addition, the proposed project would be subject to the provisions of the City’s Grading and Erosion and Sediment Control Ordinance. Chapter 15.28 of the Rocklin Municipal Code, Grading and Erosion Sediment Control, regulates grading activity on all property within the City of

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Rocklin to safeguard life, limb, health, property, and public welfare; to avoid pollution of watercourses with nutrients, sediments, or other earthen materials generated or caused by surface runoff on or across the permit area; to comply with the City's National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit issued by the California Regional Water Quality Control Board; and to ensure that the intended use of a graded site is consistent with the City of Rocklin General Plan, provisions of the California Building Standards Code as adopted by the City relating to grading activities, City of Rocklin improvement standards, and any applicable specific plans or other land use entitlements. This chapter (15.28) also establishes rules and regulations to control grading and erosion control activities, including fills and embankments; establishes the administrative procedure for issuance of permits; and provides for approval of plans and inspection of grading construction and erosion control plans for all graded sites.

Also, a geotechnical report, prepared by a qualified engineer, will be required with the submittal of project improvement plans. The report will provide site-specific recommendations for the construction of all features of the building foundations and structures to ensure that their design is compatible with the soils and geology of the project site.

**Conclusion:**

**a)** The City of Rocklin is located in an area known to be subject to seismic hazards, but it is not near any designated Alquist-Priolo active earthquake faults. The Foothill Fault System has been identified in previous environmental studies as potentially posing a seismic hazard to the area; however, the Foothill Fault system is located near Folsom Lake, and not within the boundaries of the City of Rocklin. There are, however, two known and five inferred inactive faults within the City of Rocklin. Existing building code requirements are considered adequate to reduce potential seismic hazards related to the construction and operation of the proposed project to a less than significant level.

It should also be noted that the site does not contain significant grade differences and therefore, does not possess the slope/geological conditions that involve landslide hazards. The potential for liquefaction due to earthquakes and groundshaking is considered minimal due to the site specific characteristics that exist in Rocklin; Rocklin is located over a stable granite bedrock formation and much of the area is covered by volcanic mud (not unconsolidated soils which have liquefaction tendencies).

**b)** Standard erosion control measures are required of all projects, including revegetation and slope standards. The project proponent will be required to prepare an erosion and sediment control plan through the application of the City's Improvement Standards and Standard Specifications as a part of the City's development review process. The erosion and sediment control plan are reviewed against the Placer County Stormwater Management Manual and the Regional Water Quality Control Board's Erosion and Sediment Control Field Manual. The erosion and sediment control plan includes the implementation of Best Management

Practices/Best Available Technology (BMPs/BATs) to control construction site runoff. The project will also be required to comply with the City's Grading and Erosion and Sedimentation Control Ordinance (Rocklin Municipal Code, Chapter 15.28), and the Stormwater Runoff Pollution Control Ordinance (Rocklin Municipal Code, Chapter 8.30). The application of standard erosion control measures to the proposed project, as well as compliance with the above noted Ordinances, would reduce potential erosion-related impacts to a less than significant level for on-site grading.

**c and d)** A geotechnical report, prepared by a qualified engineer, will be required with the submittal of the project improvement plans. The report will be required to provide site-specific recommendations for the construction of all features of the building foundations and structures to ensure that their design is compatible with the soils and geology of the project site. Through the preparation of such a report and implementation of its recommendations as required by City policy during the development review process, impacts associated with unstable soil or geologic conditions and expansive soil conditions would be reduced to a less than significant level.

**e)** Sewer service is available to the project site and the proposed project will be served by public sewer. Septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems would not be necessary; therefore impacts associated with the disposal of wastewater are not anticipated.

**Significance:**

Compliance with the City's development review process, the City's Improvement Standards and Standard Specifications and the Uniform Building Code will reduce any potential geology and soils impacts to a less-than-significant level; therefore these issues will not be discussed in the EIR.

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VII. <u>GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS</u> <b>Would the project:</b>	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact	Impact for which General Plan EIR is Sufficient
a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?			<b>X</b>		
b) Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?			<b>X</b>		

**DISCUSSION OF DETERMINATION:**

**Project Impacts:**

An individual project, even a very large project, does not in itself generate enough greenhouse gas emissions to measurably influence global climate change. Global climate change is therefore by definition a cumulative impact. A project contributes to this potential cumulative impact through its cumulative incremental contribution combined with the emissions of all other sources of greenhouse gases (GHG).

Area- and mobile-source emissions of greenhouse gases would be generated by the construction and operation of the proposed project. Neither the Placer County Air Pollution Control District nor the City of Rocklin has established significance thresholds for measuring the significance of a project’s incremental contribution to global climate change. However, individual projects can contribute to greenhouse gas emission reductions by incorporating features that reduce vehicle emissions and maximize energy-efficiency.

**Prior Environmental Analysis:**

The General Plan EIR analyzed the anticipated impacts that would occur related to climate change and greenhouse gas emissions as a result of the future urban development that was contemplated by the General Plan. These impacts included consistency with greenhouse gas reduction measure, climate change environmental effects on the City and generation of greenhouse gas emissions (City of Rocklin General Plan Update Draft EIR, 2011, pages 4.15-1 through 4.15-25). Mitigation measures to address these impacts are incorporated into the General Plan in the Land Use and Circulation Elements, and include goals and policies that encourage the use of alternative modes of transportation and promote mixed use and infill development.

The General Plan EIR concluded that despite these goals and policies, significant greenhouse gas emission impacts will occur as a result of development under the General Plan and further, that these impacts cannot be reduced to a less than significant level. Specifically, the General Plan EIR found that buildout of the Rocklin General Plan will result in the generation of greenhouse gas emissions which are cumulatively considerable. Findings of fact and a statement of overriding considerations were adopted by the Rocklin City Council in regard to this impact, which was found to be significant and unavoidable.

**Mitigation Measures from Uniformly Applied Development Policies and Standards:**

Generation of greenhouse gas emissions as a result of development activities are discussed in the Rocklin General Plan. Policies and mitigation measures have been included in the General Plan that encourage the use of alternative modes of transportation and promote mixed use and infill development.

All applicable mitigation measures from the General Plan EIR, including the mitigation measures for greenhouse gas emissions impacts incorporated as goals and policies in the General Plan, will be applied to the project. These serve as uniformly applied development policies and standards and/or as conditions of approval for this project to ensure consistency with the General Plan and compliance with City rules and regulations.

**Project Level Environmental Analysis:**

The firm of De Novo Planning Group, a Sacramento area consulting firm with recognized expertise in air quality, prepared an Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Analysis report for the Sierra Gateway Apartments project. The report, dated December 8, 2015, is available for review during normal business hours at the City of Rocklin Planning Department, 3970 Rocklin Road, Rocklin, CA and is incorporated into this Initial Study by this reference. City staff has reviewed the documentation and is also aware that De Novo Planning Group has a professional reputation that makes its conclusions presumptively credible and prepared in good faith. Based on its review of the analysis and these other considerations, City staff accepts the conclusions in the De Novo Planning Group report, which is summarized below.

**Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

Emissions of greenhouse gases (GHGs) contributing to global climate change are attributable in large part to human activities associated with the industrial/manufacturing, utility, transportation, residential and agricultural sectors. Therefore, the cumulative global emission of GHGs contributing to global climate change can be attributed to every nation, region, city and virtually every individual on Earth. A project's GHG emissions are at a micro-scale relative to global emissions, but could result in a cumulatively considerable incremental contribution to a significant cumulative macro-scale impact.

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The analysis found that the project’s construction CO<sub>2</sub> emissions would be a total of approximately 799.76 metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions (MTCO<sub>2</sub>e) for the project’s assumed construction period. The analysis also found that the operation of the project would result in 2,071.38 metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions on an annual basis.

**Conclusion:**

**a and b)** In September 2006, then Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger signed AB 32, the California Climate Solutions Act of 2006. AB 32 requires that statewide GHG emissions be reduced to 1990 levels by the year 2020. AB 32 delegated the authority for its implementation to the California Air Resources Board (CARB) and directs CARB to enforce the statewide cap. In accordance with AB 32, CARB prepared the *Climate Change Scoping Plan* (Scoping Plan) for California, which was approved in 2008. The Scoping Plan provides the outline for actions to reduce California’s GHG emissions. Based on the reduction goals called for in the 2008 Scoping Plan, a 29 percent reduction in GHG levels relative to a Business As Usual (BAU) scenario would be required to meet 1990 levels by 2020. The BAU condition is project and site specific and varies. The BAU scenario is based on what could or would occur on a particular site in the year 2020 without implementation of a proposed project or consideration of any State regulation emission reductions or voluntary GHG reduction measures. The CARB, per the 2008 Scoping Plan, explicitly recommends that local governments utilize a 15 percent GHG reduction below “today’s” levels by 2020 to ensure that community emissions match the State’s reduction target, where today’s levels would be considered 2010 BAU levels.

In 2011, the baseline or BAU level for the Scoping Plan was revised to account for the economic downturn and State regulation emission reductions (i.e., Pavley, Low Carbon Fuel Standard [LCFS], and Renewable Portfolio Standard [RPS]). Accordingly, the Scoping Plan emission reduction target from BAU levels required to meet 1990 levels by 2020 was modified from 29 percent to 21.7 percent where the BAU level is based on 2010 levels singularly, or 16 percent where the BAU level is based on 2010 levels and includes State regulation emission reductions noted above. The amended Scoping Plan was re-approved August 24, 2011.

The Scoping Plan must be updated every five years. The *First Update to the Climate Change Scoping Plan* (Scoping Plan Update) was approved by CARB on May 22, 2014 and builds upon the initial Scoping Plan with new strategies and recommendations. The Scoping Plan Update highlights the State’s progress towards the 2020 GHG emission reduction goals defined in the original Scoping Plan and evaluates how to align the State’s longer-term GHG reduction strategies with other State policy priorities for water, waste, natural resources, clean energy, transportation and land use. According to the Scoping Plan Update, the State is on track to meet the 2020 GHG goal and has created a framework for ongoing climate action that could be built upon to maintain and continue economic sector-specific reductions beyond 2020, on the path to 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050, as required by AB 32.

Global climate change is a change in the average weather of the Earth, which can be measured by wind patterns, storms, precipitation, and temperature. It is exacerbated by greenhouse gases, which trap heat in the atmosphere (thus the “greenhouse” effect). Greenhouse gases include carbon dioxide, methane, and nitrous oxide, and are emitted by natural processes and human activities. The accumulation of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere regulates the Earth’s temperature, and is natural and desirable, as without it the Earth’s surface would significantly cooler.

Scientific evidence suggests that emissions from human activities, such as electricity production and vehicle emissions, have elevated the concentration of these gases in the atmosphere, and are increasing the rate and magnitude of climate change to a degree that could present hazardous conditions. Potential adverse effects of global warming include the exacerbation of air quality problems, a reduction in the quality and supply of water to the state from the Sierra snowpack, a rise in sea levels, changes to ecosystems and the natural environment, and an increase in the incidences of infectious diseases, asthma, and other human health-related problems.

The potential for climate change impacts at specific locations remains uncertain, and to assign specific impacts to the project site would be speculative. Some conclusions can be drawn about the potential in general for the project area to be subject to increased likelihood of flooding, drought, and susceptibility to the increased potential for infectious diseases as cited above. An individual project, even a very large project, does not in itself generate enough greenhouse gas emissions to measurably influence global climate change. Global climate change is a cumulative process. A project contributes to this potential impact through its cumulative incremental contribution combined with the emissions of all other sources of greenhouse gases. Area- and mobile-source emissions of greenhouse gases would be generated by the construction and operation of the proposed project. Estimated GHG emissions attributable to future development would primarily be associated with increases of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) and other GHG pollutants, such as methane (CH<sub>4</sub>) and nitrous oxide (N<sub>2</sub>O).

The PCAPCD, as part of the Sacramento Regional GHG Thresholds Committee, has recently developed regional GHG emission thresholds. The thresholds were based on project data provided by the PCAPCD and other regional air districts, including the Sacramento Air Quality Management District (SMAQMD). The SMAQMD recently adopted the thresholds, and the PCAPCD recommends using their adopted threshold of 1,100 metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent units per year (MTCO<sub>2</sub>e/year) for construction and operation. Projects exceeding the 1,100 MTCO<sub>2</sub>e/year GHG screening level threshold of significance would be required to perform a further detailed analysis showing whether the project would comply with AB 32 reduction goals. For that further detailed analysis and in accordance with CARB and PCAPCD recommendations, the City of Rocklin, as lead agency, requires a quantitative GHG analysis for development projects in order to demonstrate that such a project would promote sustainability and implement operational GHG reduction strategies that would reduce the project’s GHG



emissions from BAU levels by 15 percent; that 15 percent reduction threshold is in compliance with AB 32 and CARB’s recommendation from the 2008 Scoping Plan that local governments utilize a 15 percent reduction below 2010 BAU levels by 2020. It should be noted that although CARB’s 2011 Scoping Plan emission reduction target modified the State’s overall emission reduction target from 29 percent to 21.7 percent, the 2011 Scoping Plan did not provide a specific recommendation for emission reductions for local governments and thus the City of Rocklin has chosen to continue to apply the 15 percent emission reduction target from the 2008 Scoping Plan. In accordance with the reduction recommendation set forth in the 2008 Scoping Plan for local governments, the City of Rocklin, as lead agency, utilizes a threshold of a 15 percent reduction from BAU levels, where BAU levels are based on 2010 levels, compared to a project’s estimated 2020 levels. Therefore, if the proposed project does not meet the 1,100 metric tons screening threshold and it also does not show a 15 percent reduction of project-related GHG emissions between BAU levels and estimated 2020 levels, the project would be considered to result in a cumulatively considerable contribution to global climate change. The 2008 threshold utilized to evaluate the project was calculated specifically to aid local governments in determining compliance with AB-32 at a *local* level, and thus use of that threshold is appropriate to determine whether this project would result in cumulatively considerable GHG emissions. GHG emission reduction measures could include, but are not limited to, compliance with local, State, or federal plans or strategies for GHG reductions, on-site and off-site mitigation recommendations from the Office of the Attorney General, and project design features. It should be noted that the proposed project would be required to comply with the minimum mandated measures of the 2010 California Green Building Standards Code (CalGreen Code), such as a 20 percent mandatory reduction in indoor water use and diversion of 50 percent of construction waste from landfills. A variety of voluntary CalGreen Code measures also exist that would further reduce GHG emissions, but are not mandatory.

Implementation of the proposed project would contribute to increases of GHG emissions that are associated with global climate change. The proposed project’s short term construction-related and long-term operational GHG emissions were estimated using the CalEEMod software. CalEEMod is a statewide model designed to provide a uniform platform for government agencies, land use planners, and environmental professionals to quantify GHG emissions from land use projects. The model quantifies direct emissions from construction and operation (including vehicle use), as well as indirect GHG emissions, such as GHG emissions from energy use, solid waste disposal, vegetation planting and/or removal, and water use. Emissions are expressed in annual metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent units of measure (i.e., MTCO<sub>2</sub>e), based on the global warming potential of the individual pollutants.

As noted above, short-term emissions of GHG associated with construction of the proposed project are estimated to be 799.76 MTCO<sub>2</sub>e. Construction GHG emissions are a one-time release and are, therefore, not typically expected to generate a significant contribution to global climate change. Due to the size of the proposed project, the project’s estimated

construction-related GHG contribution to global climate change would be considered negligible on the overall global emissions scale.

The long-term operational GHG emissions estimate for the proposed project incorporates the project's potential area source and vehicle emissions, emissions associated with utility and water usage, and the generation of wastewater and solid waste. In addition, as stated above, the one-time release of construction GHG emissions have been included in the annual operational GHG emissions estimate in order to provide a worst-case scenario. As noted above, the annual GHG emissions associated with the proposed project by year 2020 would be 2,071.38 MTCO<sub>2</sub>e. Because the level of emissions is greater than the 1,100 MTCO<sub>2</sub>e significance threshold, additional analysis is required to determine whether the proposed project would be consistent with AB 32 reduction goals, which the City, as lead agency, considers to be a minimum percent reduction from BAU levels by 2020 of 15 percent based on the CARB's 2008 Scoping Plan's recommendations for local governments. If the project does not show a 15 percent reduction of project-related GHG emissions between BAU levels and estimated 2020 levels, the project would be considered to result in a cumulatively considerable contribution to global climate change.

Estimated emissions at full buildout of the proposed project in the year 2020 were compared to the BAU scenario, which, for this analysis would be development of the project site per the former land use and zoning designation of Retail Commercial that existed in the year 2010 (i.e., without accounting for any project-specific sustainability or design features or any required GHG reductions per regulations). Annual GHG emissions associated with full buildout of a retail commercial project (per the project site's land use and zoning designations that existed in 2010) under BAU conditions were estimated using CalEEMod and were calculated to be approximately 17,752.00 MTCO<sub>2</sub>e.

Consequently, the proposed project would result in approximately an 88 percent reduction in annual GHG emissions from BAU conditions ( $[(17,752.00 - 2,071.38)/17,752.00 \times 100\% = 88.33\%]$ ), which is well over the required 15 percent reduction. The reduction in GHG emissions would primarily be attributable to change in land use (i.e., a multi-family residential facility, rather than retail commercial land uses), as well as advancement of vehicle and equipment efficiency as a result of federal and State regulations, more stringent building energy efficiency and green building standards, Renewable Portfolio Standard reductions, and other regulations related to climate change as time progresses. It should be noted that although a reduction related to such attributes would occur for every development project, CalEEMod takes into consideration how much of each attribute is applied for each specific project based on the size of the project and associated land uses.

As stated previously, short-term construction emissions are a one-time release of GHGs and are not expected to significantly contribute to global climate change over the lifetime of the proposed project. Although the 1,100 MTCO<sub>2</sub>e/year threshold of significance would be

exceeded during project operations, the proposed project would be capable of meeting the City’s minimum reduction goal of 15 percent from BAU levels by 2020. Therefore, the proposed project would not hinder the State’s ability to reach the GHG reduction targets nor conflict with any applicable plan, policy, or regulation related to GHG reduction and the impact of the Sierra Gateway Apartments project on GHG emissions and global climate change would be less than cumulatively considerable.

This Initial Study evaluates a “subsequent activity” that was already evaluated by the General Plan EIR, and the proposed project is actually a less intense use than which was evaluated by that EIR. The General Plan EIR identified the generation of greenhouse gas emissions as a significant and unavoidable impact, and the City of Rocklin adopted Findings of Fact and a Statement of Overriding Considerations in recognition of this impact. The project does not result in a change to this finding because the development and operation of the proposed project will generate greenhouse gas emissions. It should be noted that the project site is being developed with a land use that is less intense (from a trip generation and associated emissions standpoint) than the Retail Commercial land use that was anticipated by and analyzed within the General Plan EIR. The project-specific GHG study confirms that a project of this type falls within the prior General Plan EIR analysis. While the proposed project would cumulatively contribute to the significant and unavoidable impact of the generation of greenhouse gas emissions as recognized in the General Plan EIR, the proposed project itself will not generate enough greenhouse gas emissions to measurably influence global climate change; project-specific impacts related to GHG emission and global climate change would be less than significant as a result of meeting the 15 percent local government reduction threshold and through the application of General Plan policies and mitigation measures that encourage the use of alternative modes of transportation and promote mixed use and infill development.

**Significance:**

Compliance with the mitigation measures incorporated into the General Plan goals and policies would reduce impacts related to GHG emissions to a less-than-significant level; therefore this issue will not be discussed in the EIR.

<b>VIII.</b> <u>HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS</u> <b>Would the project:</b>	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact	Impact for which General Plan EIR is Sufficient
a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?					<b>X</b>
b) Create 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.			<b>X</b>		
c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?			<b>X</b>		
d) Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?				<b>X</b>	
e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?				<b>X</b>	
f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?				<b>X</b>	
g) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?			<b>X</b>		
h) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wildlands?					<b>X</b>

**DISCUSSION OF DETERMINATION:**

**Project Impacts:**

Construction and operation of a multi-family residential project is not anticipated to involve the transportation, use and disposal of large amounts of hazardous materials. Construction activities would involve the transportation, use and disposal of small amounts of hazardous materials.

**Prior Environmental Analysis:**

The General Plan EIR analyzed the anticipated human health and hazards impacts that would occur as a result of the future urban development that was contemplated by the General Plan. These impacts included wildland fire hazards, transportation, use and disposal of hazardous materials, and emergency response and evacuation plans (City of Rocklin General Plan Update Draft EIR, 2011 pages 4.7-1 through 4.7-30). The analysis found that while development and buildout of the Rocklin General Plan can introduce a variety of human health and hazards impacts, these impacts would be reduced to a less than significant level through the application of development standards in the Rocklin Municipal Code, the application of General Plan goals and policies that would assist in minimizing or avoiding hazardous conditions, and compliance with local, state and federal standards related to hazards and hazardous materials.

These goals, policies and standards include, but are not limited to, Chapter 2.32 of the Rocklin Municipal Code which requires the preparation and maintenance of an emergency operations plan, preventative measures in the City’s Improvement Standards and Standard Specifications, compliance with local, state and federal standards related to hazards and hazardous materials and goals and policies in the General Plan Community Safety and Open Space, Conservation and Recreation Elements requiring coordination with emergency management agencies, annexation into fee districts for fire prevention/suppression and medical response, incorporation of fuel modification/fire hazard reduction planning, and requirements for site-specific hazard investigations and risk analysis.

**Mitigation Measures from Uniformly Applied Development Policies and Standards:**

All applicable mitigation measures from the General Plan EIR, including the mitigation measures for human health and hazards impacts incorporated as goals and policies in the General Plan and the City’s Improvement Standards, will be applied to the project. These serve as uniformly applied development policies and standards and/or as conditions of approval for this project to ensure consistency with the General Plan and compliance with the Rocklin Municipal Code and other City rules and regulations.

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In addition, Chapter 2.32 of the Rocklin Municipal Code requires the development of emergency procedures in the City through the Emergency Operations Plan. The Emergency Operations Plan provides a framework to guide the City's efforts to mitigate and prepare for, respond to, and recover from major emergencies or disasters. To implement the Emergency Operations Plan, the City has established a Disaster Council, which is responsible for reviewing and recommending emergency operations plans for adoption by the City Council. The Disaster Council plans for the protection of persons and property in the event of fires, floods, storms, epidemic, riot, earthquake and other disasters.

**Project Level Environmental Analysis:**

The firm of Dudek, a southern California and Sacramento area consulting firm with recognized expertise in hazardous materials, prepared a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment report for the Sierra Gateway Apartments project. The report, dated December 2015, is available for review during normal business hours at the City of Rocklin Planning Department, 3970 Rocklin Road, Rocklin, CA and is incorporated into this Initial Study by this reference. City staff has reviewed the documentation and is also aware that Dudek has a professional reputation that makes its conclusions presumptively credible and prepared in good faith. Based on its review of the analysis and these other considerations, City staff accepts the conclusions in the Dudek report, which is summarized below.

**Conclusion:**

**a and b)** Construction, operation and maintenance activities would use hazardous materials, including fuels (gasoline and diesel), oils and lubricants; paints and paint thinners; glues; cleaners (which could include solvents and corrosives in addition to soaps and detergents), and fertilizers, pesticides, herbicides and yard/landscaping equipment. While these products noted above may contain known hazardous materials, the volume of material would not create a significant hazard to the public through routine transport, use, or disposal and would not result in a reasonably foreseeable upset and accident condition involving the release of hazardous materials. Compliance with various Federal, State, and local laws and regulations (including but not limited to Titles 8 and 22 of the Code of California Regulations, Uniform Fire Code, and Chapter 6.95 of the California Health and Safety Code) addressing hazardous materials management and environmental protection would be required to ensure that there is not a significant hazardous materials impact associated with the construction, operation and maintenance of the proposed project. Therefore, the General Plan EIR sufficiently covers any impacts associated with hazards to the public or the environment through transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials. Additionally, hazards to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment would be considered less than significant, due to required compliance with various federal, State, and local laws and regulations.

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c) The proposed project is located within ¼ mile of an existing school (Sierra Community College). Although multi-family residential projects of this nature would not typically emit any significant amounts of hazardous materials, substances, or waste or be involved in the transportation of hazardous materials, substances, or waste, there are existing rules and regulations, as indicated above, that address hazardous materials management and environmental protection. Therefore, a less than significant hazardous materials emission or handling impact would be anticipated.

d) The Phase I Environmental Site Assessment conducted for the property by Dudek concluded that there was no evidence of recognized environmental conditions (RECs) in connection with the subject property. The project site is not on the list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5. Government Code 65962.5 is known as the Cortese List. The Cortese database identifies public drinking water wells with detectable levels of contamination, hazardous substance sites selected for remedial action, sites with known toxic material identified through the abandoned site assessment program, sites with Underground Storage Tanks (USTs) having a reportable release and all solid waste disposal facilities from which there is known migration. The Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) EnviroStor database and State Water Resources Control Board GeoTracker database were searched on March 15, 2016 and no hazardous sites were identified on the proposed project site. There would be no significant hazard to the public or to the environment associated with nearby known hazardous waste sites; therefore there would be no impact in this regard.

e) The proposed project site is not located within an airport land use plan or within the vicinity of a private airstrip, therefore the project would result in a less than significant safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area.

f) The City's existing street system, particularly arterial and collector streets, function as emergency evacuation routes. The project's design and layout will not impair or physically interfere with the street system emergency evacuation route or impede an emergency evacuation plan, therefore a less than significant impact on emergency routes/plans would be anticipated.

g) The proposed project has been reviewed by the Rocklin Fire Department and has been designed with adequate emergency access for use by the Rocklin Fire Department to reduce the risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires to a less than significant level.

**Significance:**

Compliance with the mitigation measures incorporated into the General Plan goals and policies and applicable City Code and compliance with applicable Federal, State and local laws and

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regulations would reduce impacts related to hazards and hazardous materials to a less-than-significant level; therefore these issues will not be discussed in the EIR.

IX. <u>HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY</u> <b>Would the project:</b>	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact	Impact for which General Plan EIR is Sufficient
a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements?			<b>X</b>		
b) Substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level (e.g., the production rate of pre-existing nearby wells would drop to a level which would not support existing land uses or planned uses for which permits have been granted)?			<b>X</b>		
c) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, in a manner which would result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site?			<b>X</b>		
d) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site?			<b>X</b>		
e) Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff?			<b>X</b>		
f) Otherwise substantially degrade water quality?			<b>X</b>		
g) Place housing within a 100-year flood hazard area as mapped on a federal Flood Hazard Boundary of Flood Insurance Rate Map or other flood hazard delineation map?				<b>X</b>	
h) Place within a 100-year flood hazard area structures which would impede or redirect flood flows?				<b>X</b>	



IX. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY (cont'd.) Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact	Impact for which General Plan EIR is Sufficient
i) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving flooding, including flooding as a result of the failure of a levee or dam?				<b>X</b>	
j) Inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow?				<b>X</b>	

**DISCUSSION OF DETERMINATION:**

**Project Impacts:**

The proposed project would involve grading activities that would remove vegetation and expose soil to wind and water erosion and potentially impact water quality, and additional impervious surfaces would be created with the development of the proposed project. Waterways in the Rocklin area have the potential to flood and expose people or structures to flooding.

**Prior Environmental Analysis:**

The General Plan EIR analyzed the anticipated hydrology and water quality impacts that would occur as a result of the future urban development that was contemplated by the General Plan. These impacts included water quality, ground water quality and supply, drainage, flooding, risks of seiche, tsunami and mudflow (City of Rocklin General Plan Update Draft EIR, 2011, pages 4.9-1 through 4.9-37). The analysis found that while development and buildout of the General Plan can result in hydrology and water quality impacts, these impacts would be reduced to a less than significant level through the application of development standards contained in the City's Improvement Standards and Standard Specifications and in the Rocklin Municipal Code, the application of General Plan goals and policies related to hydrology, flooding and water quality, and compliance with local, state, and federal water quality standards and floodplain development requirements.

These goals, policies and standards include, but are not limited to, flood prevention and drainage requirements in the City's Improvement Standards and Standard Specifications, the City's Grading and Erosion and Sediment Control Ordinance, the Stormwater Runoff Pollution Control Ordinance, the State Water Resources Control Board General Construction Activity Storm Water Permit requirements, and goals and policies in the General Plan Open Space, Conservation and Recreation and Safety Elements requiring the protection of new and existing development from flood and drainage hazards, the prevention of storm drainage run-off in excess of pre-development levels, the development and application of erosion control plans

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and best management practices, the annexation of new development into existing drainage maintenance districts where warranted, and consultation with the Placer County Flood Control and Water Conservation District and other appropriate entities.

**Mitigation Measures from Uniformly Applied Development Policies and Standards:**

All applicable mitigation measures from the General Plan EIR as well as relevant standards from the City’s Improvement Standards for hydrology and water quality impacts, will be applied to the project. These serve as uniformly applied development policies and standards and/or as conditions of approval for this project to ensure consistency with the General Plan and compliance with the Rocklin Municipal Code and other City rules and regulations.

The proposed project would be subject to the provisions of the City’s Grading and Erosion and Sediment Control Ordinance. Chapter 15.28 of the Rocklin Municipal Code, Grading and Erosion Sediment Control, regulates grading activity on all property within the City of Rocklin to safeguard life, limb, health, property, and public welfare; to avoid pollution of watercourses with nutrients, sediments, or other earthen materials generated or caused by surface runoff on or across the permit area; to comply with the City’s National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit issued by the California Regional Water Quality Control Board; and to ensure that the intended use of a graded site is consistent with the City of Rocklin General Plan, provisions of the California Building Standards Code as adopted by the City relating to grading activities, City of Rocklin improvement standards, and any applicable specific plans or other land use entitlements. This chapter (15.28) also establishes rules and regulations to control grading and erosion control activities, including fills and embankments; establishes the administrative procedure for issuance of permits; and provides for approval of plans and inspection of grading construction and erosion control plans for all graded sites. Chapter 8.30 of the Rocklin Municipal Code, Stormwater Runoff Pollution Control Ordinance, prohibits the discharge of any materials or pollutants that cause or contribute to a violation of applicable water quality standards, other than stormwater, into the municipal storm drain system or watercourse. Discharges from specified activities that do not cause or contribute to the violation of plan standards, such as landscape irrigation, lawn watering, and flows from fire suppression activities, are exempt from this prohibition.

In addition, the project would be required to prepare an erosion and sediment control plan through the application of the City’s Improvement Standards and Standard Specifications that are a part of the City’s development review process.

**Conclusion:**

**a and f)** Storm water runoff from the project site will be collected in stormwater drainage pipes and then directed through water quality treatment areas as Best Management Practices (BMP) features and then into the City’s storm drain system. The purpose of the Best Management Practices features is to ensure that potential pollutants are filtered out before they enter the storm drain system. The City’s storm drain system maintains the necessary capacity to support development on the proposed project site. Therefore, violations of water quality standards or waste discharge requirements are not anticipated and the project’s impact is less than significant.

To address the potential for polluted water runoff during project construction, the project would be required to prepare an erosion and sediment control plan through the application of the City’s Improvement Standards and Standard Specifications as a part of the City’s development review process. The erosion and sediment control plan are reviewed against the Placer County Stormwater Management Manual and the Regional Water Quality Control Board’s Erosion and Sediment Control Field Manual. The erosion and sediment control plan includes the implementation of Best Management Practices/Best Available Technology (BMPs/BATs) to control construction site runoff. The project will also be required to comply with the City’s Grading and Erosion and Sedimentation Control Ordinance (Rocklin Municipal Code, Chapter 15.28), and the Stormwater Runoff Pollution Control Ordinance (Rocklin Municipal Code, Chapter 8.30), which includes the preparation of a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP). With the application of these development policies and standards, the project is not anticipated to degrade water quality and its impact is less than significant.

**b)** The proposed project is located within the Placer County Water Agency (PCWA) service area and is anticipated to be served by that agency for its water needs. The PCWA has a Master Plan, which is periodically updated, to provide water to projects located within their service boundary. PCWA has planned for growth in the City of Rocklin and sized the water supply infrastructure to meet this growth (PCWA 2006). PCWA has provided a letter regarding the proposed project indicating that the project is within their service area and eligible for service upon execution of a facilities agreement and payment of all required fees and charges. The proposed project is therefore not anticipated to substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge, and its impact is less than significant. For further discussion of the project’s water service, please refer to Section XVII., Utilities and Service Systems.

**c, d and e)** The proposed project would not alter the course of a stream or a river. The proposed project would not substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area because the City’s policies of requiring new developments to detain on-site drainage such that the rate of runoff flow is maintained at pre-development levels (unless the Placer County Flood Control and Water Conservation District’s Flood Control Manual requires otherwise) and to

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coordinate with other projects' master plans to ensure no adverse cumulative effects will be applied. Per the Placer County Flood Control and Water Conservation District Dry Creek Watershed Flood Control Plan, onsite stormwater detention is generally not recommended anywhere in the Dry Creek watershed because it has been determined that on-site detention would be detrimental to the overall watershed, unless existing downstream drainage facilities cannot handle post-construction runoff from the project site. A drainage study prepared for the proposed project (Omni-Means, August 2015) determined that the use of detention would increase the peak runoff due to the location of the project in the lower portion of the drainage shed and therefore the use of detention is not recommended on this site. Substantial erosion, siltation or flooding, on- or off-site, and exceedance of the capacity of existing or planned drainage systems would not be anticipated to occur and the project's impact would be less than significant.

**g) through j)** According to FEMA flood maps (Map Panel 06061CO481G, effective date November 21, 2001) the project site is located in flood zone X, which indicates that the project is not located within a 100-year flood hazard area and outside of the 500-year flood hazard area. The project site is not located within the potential inundation area of any dam or levee failure, nor is the project site located sufficiently near any significant bodies of water or steep hillsides to be at risk from inundation by a seiche, tsunami, or mudflow. Therefore, the proposed project will not expose people or structures to a significant risk or loss, injury, or death as a result of flooding and no flood exposure impact would be anticipated.

**Significance:**

Compliance with the mitigation measures incorporated into Rocklin General Plan goals and policies, the City's Grading and Erosion and Sedimentation Control Ordinance (Rocklin Municipal Code, Chapter 15.28), the Stormwater Runoff Pollution Control Ordinance (Rocklin Municipal Code, Chapter 8.30) and the City's Improvement Standards would reduce impacts to hydrology and water quality to a less-than-significant level; therefore these issues will not be discussed in the EIR.

X. <u>LAND USE AND PLANNING</u> <b>Would the project:</b>	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact	Impact for which General Plan EIR is Sufficient
a) Physically divide an established community?				<b>X</b>	
b) Conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to the general plan, specific plan, local coastal program, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?				<b>X</b>	
c) Conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan?				<b>X</b>	

**DISCUSSION OF DETERMINATION:**

**Project Impacts:**

Approval of the project would allow the development of a 195-unit apartment complex on a 10.2 +/- acre site. The project site is designated High Density Residential on the General Plan land use map and is zoned Planned Development Residential, 20 dwelling units per acre (PD-20), which allow for a project such as the one being proposed. The project requires Design Review and Oak Tree Preservation Plan entitlements to allow for a multi-family residential project such as the one being proposed. As discussed below, land use impacts are not anticipated.

**Prior Environmental Analysis:**

The General Plan EIR analyzed the anticipated impacts on land use as a result of the future urban development that was contemplated by the General Plan. These impacts included dividing an established community and potential conflicts with established land uses within and adjacent to the City (City of Rocklin General Plan Update Draft EIR, 2011, pages 4.1-1 through 4.1-38). The analysis found that while development and buildout of the General Plan can result in land use impacts, these impacts would be reduced to a less than significant level through the application of General Plan goals and policies that would assist in minimizing or avoiding land use impacts.

These goals and policies include, but are not limited to goals and policies in the General Plan Land Use Element requiring buffering of land uses, reviewing development proposals for compatibility issues, establishing and maintaining development standards and encouraging communication between adjacent jurisdictions.

**Mitigation Measures from Uniformly Applied Development Policies and Standards:**

All applicable mitigation measures from the General Plan EIR, including the mitigation measures for impacts to land use incorporated as goals and policies in the Rocklin General Plan, will be applied to the project. These serve as uniformly applied development policies and standards and/or as conditions of approval for this project to ensure consistency with the General Plan and compliance with City rules and regulations.

**Conclusion:**

**a)** The proposed project site is undeveloped, with the exception of an existing driveway access to the adjacent Rocklin Manor apartment project that will become a shared driveway with the proposed project, and the entire project is within the City of Rocklin. The proposed project would construct 195 apartment units at this location, which would not physically divide an established community.

**b)** The project site is currently designated on the City’s General Plan land use map as High Density Residential (HDR) and is currently zoned Planned Development Residential, 20 dwelling units per acre (PD-20). The purpose of the High Density Residential land use designation is “To provide areas for single-family and multi-family homes, including duplexes, triplexes, apartments, townhouses and condominiums.” Therefore, the PD-20 zoning designation is consistent with the High Density Residential land use designation and the development of the project pursuant to this zoning designation would not conflict with land use designations and would not be anticipated to have an impact on land use and planning.

The development of multi-family residences at the density being proposed by the project is considered to be compatible with the adjacent properties designated for and developed with Medium-High and Medium Density Residential uses and the adjacent Retail Commercial, Public/Quasi-Public and Mixed Use land uses.

As noted in the Biological Resources discussion above, the City of Rocklin Oak Tree Preservation Ordinance will be discussed in the EIR.

**c)** The proposed project is not located within the area of a habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan; therefore no impact has been identified.

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**Significance:**

Compliance with the mitigation measures incorporated into the General Plan goals and policies would ensure that development of the infill site would not result in significant impacts to land use and planning; therefore these issues will not be discussed in the EIR.

<b>XI.</b> <u>MINERAL RESOURCES</u> <b>Would the project:</b>	<b>Potentially Significant Impact</b>	<b>Less Than Significant With Mitigation</b>	<b>Less Than Significant Impact</b>	<b>No Impact</b>	<b>Impact for which General Plan EIR is Sufficient</b>
a) 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?					<b>X</b>
b) 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?					<b>X</b>

**DISCUSSION OF DETERMINATION:**

**Project Impacts:**

As discussed below, no impact is anticipated because the project site does not contain known mineral resources.

**Conclusion:**

**a and b)** The Rocklin General Plan and associated EIR analyzed the potential for “productive resources” such as, but not limited to, granite and gravel (City of Rocklin General Plan Update Draft EIR, 2011, pages 4.6-4 through 4.6-5 and 4.6-17). The City of Rocklin planning area has no mineral resources as classified by the State Geologist. The Planning Area has no known or suspected mineral resources that would be of value to the region and to residents of the state. The project site is not delineated in the Rocklin General Plan or any other plans as a mineral resource recovery site. Mineral resources of the project site have not changed with the passage of time since the General Plan EIR was adopted. Based on this discussion, the project is not anticipated to have a mineral resources impact.

**Significance:**

No impact is anticipated; therefore this issue will not be discussed in the EIR.

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XII. <u>NOISE</u> Would the project result in:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact	Impact for which General Plan EIR is Sufficient
a) Exposure of persons to or generation of noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?		<b>X</b>			
b) Exposure of persons to or generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?			<b>X</b>		
c) A substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?			<b>X</b>		
d) A substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?			<b>X</b>		
e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?				<b>X</b>	
f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?				<b>X</b>	

**DISCUSSION OF DETERMINATION:**

**Project Impacts:**

Development of the proposed project will result in an increase in short-term noise impacts from construction activities. As discussed below, the development and occupation of a 195-unit apartment complex is not anticipated to have significant long-term operational noise impacts.



**Prior Environmental Analysis:**

The General Plan EIR analyzed the anticipated impacts of noise associated with the future urban development that was contemplated by the General Plan. These impacts included construction noise, traffic noise, operational noise, groundborne vibration, and overall increased in noise resulting from implementation of the General Plan Update (City of Rocklin General Plan Update Draft EIR, 2011, pages 4.5-1 through 4.5-48).

Mitigation measures to address these impacts are incorporated into the General Plan in the Noise Element, which includes policies that require acoustical analyses to determine noise compatibility between land uses, application of stationary and mobile noise source sound limits/design standards, restriction of development of noise-sensitive land uses unless effective noise mitigations are incorporated into projects, and mitigation of noise levels to ensure that the noise level design standards of the Noise Element are not exceeded.

The General Plan EIR concluded that, despite these goals and policies, significant noise impacts will occur as a result of development under the General Plan and further, that these impacts cannot be reduced to a less than significant level. Specifically, the General Plan EIR found that buildout of the Rocklin General Plan will result in exposure of persons to, or generation of, noise levels in excess of applicable noise standards, will result in exposure to surface transportation noise sources and stationary noise sources in excess of applicable noise standards and will contribute to cumulative transportation noise impacts within the Planning Area. Findings of fact and a statement of overriding consideration were adopted by the Rocklin City Council in regard to these impacts, which were found to be significant and unavoidable.

**Mitigation Measures from Uniformly Applied Development Policies and Standards:**

All applicable mitigation measures from the General Plan EIR, including the mitigation measures for impacts associated with noise incorporated as goals and policies in the Rocklin General Plan, will be applied to the project. These serve as uniformly applied development policies and standards and/or as conditions of approval for this project to ensure consistency with the General Plan and compliance with City rules and regulations.

**Project-Level Environmental Analysis:**

The firm of JC Brennan & Associates, Inc., a Sacramento area consulting firm with recognized expertise in noise, prepared an environmental noise assessment of the proposed Sierra Gateway Apartments project. Their report, dated October 23, 2015 is available for review during normal business hours at the City of Rocklin Planning Department, 3970 Rocklin Road, Rocklin, CA, and is incorporated into this Initial Study by this reference. City staff has reviewed the documentation and is also aware that JC Brennan & Associates, Inc. has a professional reputation that makes its conclusions presumptively credible and prepared in good faith. Based

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on its review of the analysis and these other considerations, City staff accepts the conclusions in the JC Brennan & Associates, Inc. report, which is summarized below.

Background Information on Noise

Noise is a subjective reaction to different types of sounds. Noise is typically defined as (airborne) sound that is loud, unpleasant, unexpected or undesired, and may therefore be classified as a more specific group of sounds. Perceptions of sounds and noise are highly subjective from person to person. The perceived loudness of sounds is dependent upon many factors, including sound pressure level and frequency content. However, within the usual range of environmental noise levels, perception of loudness is relatively predictable, and can be approximated by A-weighted sound levels. There is a strong correlation between A-weighted sound levels (expressed as dBA) and the way the human ear perceives sound and for this reason, the A-weighted sound level has become the standard tool of environmental noise assessment.

Measuring sound directly would require a very large and awkward range of numbers, so to avoid this, the decibel (dB) scale was devised. The decibel scale is logarithmic, not linear. In other words, two sound levels 10 dB apart differ in acoustic energy by a factor of 10. When the standard logarithmic scale is A-weighted, an increase of 10 dBA is generally perceived as a doubling in loudness. For example, a 70 dBA sound is half as loud as an 80 dBA sound, and twice as loud as a 60 dBA sound.

Community noise is commonly described in terms of the ambient noise level, which is defined as the all-encompassing noise level associated with a given environment. A common statistical tool is the average, or equivalent, sound level ( $L_{eq}$ ). The  $L_{eq}$  is the foundation of the composite noise descriptor,  $L_{dn}$ , and shows very good correlation with community response to noise. The day/night average level ( $L_{dn}$ ) is based upon the average noise level over a 24-hour day, with a +10 dB weighting applied to noise occurring during nighttime (10:00 p.m. – 7:00 a.m.) hours. The nighttime penalty is based upon the assumption that people react to nighttime noise exposures as though they were twice as loud as daytime exposures. Because  $L_{dn}$  represents a 24-hour average, it tends to disguise short-term variations in the noise environment.

The Noise Element of the City of Rocklin General Plan includes criteria for stationary (non-transportation) and transportation noise sources. Because the proposed project is located in close proximity to Sierra College Boulevard and Rocklin Road, this analysis focuses on whether roadway noise levels would exceed City of Rocklin exterior or interior noise levels standards for residential uses. For transportation noise sources, the maximum allowable exterior noise level standard for outdoor activity areas is 65 dB Ldn and the maximum allowable interior noise level standard is 45 dB Ldn. The exterior noise level standard can be applied at the patios of each condominium or at the common outdoor activity area. The proposed project does not include any stationary noise sources.

Noise Sources

As noted above, the primary noise source concerns associated with the Sierra Gateway Apartments include Sierra College Boulevard and Rocklin Road. Noise impacts associated with these noise sources were evaluated, and were compared to noise level performance criteria for transportation noise sources contained within the City of Rocklin General Plan Noise Element. To quantify the noise emissions from these traffic sources, JC Brennan & Associates staff conducted short-term noise level measurements on the project site on October 31, 2013. To determine the future traffic noise levels on the project site, the Cumulative Plus Project traffic predictions prepared for the project by Omni-Means transportation consultants were utilized.

Traffic Noise

The City of Rocklin 60 dB Ldn exterior noise level standard applies specifically to outdoor use areas or “outdoor activity” areas. In addition to outdoor activity areas, noise levels are predicted at the project building facades located closest to each of the project-area roadways. These building façade noise levels are used for predicting interior noise levels and are not subject to the City’s exterior noise level standard. The table below shows the predicted future traffic noise levels at the proposed residential uses located closest to Sierra College Boulevard and Rocklin Road.

<b>PREDICTED FUTURE AND FUTURE PLUS PROJECT TRAFFIC NOISE LEVELS</b>				
<b>Roadway</b>	<b>Traffic Noise Level, Ldn</b>		<b>Distance to Noise Contours</b>	
	<i>At Nearest Building Façade</i>	<i>At Common Outdoor Activity Area</i>	<i>60 dB Ldn</i>	<i>65 dB Ldn</i>
<b>Future Traffic Noise Levels</b>				
Sierra College Boulevard	69 dB	60 dB	442 feet	205 feet
Rocklin Road	65 dB	57 dB	153 feet	71 feet
<b>Future Plus Project Traffic Noise Levels</b>				
Sierra College Boulevard	69 dB	60 dB	446 feet	207 feet
Rocklin Road	65 dB	57 dB	157 feet	73 feet
Sources: JC Brennan & Associates, Omni-Means, and FHWA RD-77-108				

Interior Traffic Noise Levels

Standard construction practices, consistent with the Uniform Building Code typically provides an exterior-to-interior noise level reduction of approximately 25 dB, assuming that air conditioning is included for each unit, which allows residents to close windows for the required acoustical isolation. Therefore, as long as exterior noise levels at the building facades do not exceed 70 dB Ldn, the interior noise levels will typically comply with the interior noise level standard of 45 dB Ldn.

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The predicted future plus project noise level for 1<sup>st</sup> floor residential facades facing Sierra College Boulevard and Rocklin Road are 69 dB Ldn and 65 dB Ldn, respectively. Therefore, the interior noise levels are expected to comply with the interior noise level standard of 45 dB Ldn. However, due to the loss of ground attenuation a +3 dB offset is generally applied to 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> floor building facades. The predicted exterior traffic noise levels for 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> floor building facades of the first row of buildings facing Sierra College Boulevard and Rocklin Road are 72 dB Ldn and 68 dB Ldn, respectively. Therefore, it is expected that 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> floor units of the first row of buildings facing Sierra College Boulevard could exceed the 45 dB Ldn interior noise level standard.

**Conclusion:**

The primary goal for the City of Rocklin General Plan with respect to noise is: “To protect City residents from the harmful and annoying effects of exposure to excessive noise”. To implement that goal, the City has adopted Noise Compatibility Guidelines prepared by the State Office of Noise Control. The objective of the Noise Compatibility Guidelines is to assure that consideration is given to the sensitivity to noise of a proposed land use in relation to the noise environment in which it is proposed to be located.

a) Table 2-2 of the General Plan Noise Element contains maximum allowable noise exposure levels from transportation noise sources, and for the outdoor activity areas of residential uses 60 dB Ldn is the maximum allowable noise level. This noise level standard can be applied at the patios of each condominium or at the common outdoor activity area. Although noise barriers are a means of reducing traffic noise levels at first floor patios, they would not be practical to reduce traffic noise levels at 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> floor patios. Therefore, the maximum allowable noise level of 60 dB Ldn is being applied at the common outdoor activity area of the project which is the clubhouse/pool area. The noise analysis concluded that the distances to the cumulative plus project 60 dB Ldn noise contours are 446-feet and 157-feet for Sierra College Boulevard and Rocklin Road, respectively. The clubhouse/pool area is located approximately 450-feet and 280-feet from Sierra College Boulevard and Rocklin Road, respectively, which are beyond the 60 dB noise contour (these predicted noise levels do not account for any shielding of traffic noise from proposed building facades). Therefore, traffic noise levels will comply with the City’s exterior noise level standard of 60 dB Ldn at the common outdoor activity area (clubhouse/pool area).

As noted above, the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> floor building facades of the first row of buildings facing Sierra College Boulevard are predicted to be exposed to interior traffic noise levels in excess of the City of Rocklin 45 dB Ldn residential interior transportation noise source standard.

To address the potential exceedance of this noise level standard, the following mitigation measure, agreed to by the applicant, is being applied to the project:

*XII.-1 (NOISE) The 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> floor windows of the first row of buildings facing Sierra College Boulevard shall include windows with a minimum STC rating of 32 (this only applies to the building facades which are parallel to Sierra College Boulevard). As an alternative, the applicant can have a professional acoustical engineer calculate interior noise levels when construction plans, floor plans and building elevations are available.*

The applicant is agreeable to the above mitigation measure; implementation of the above measure will reduce impacts related to the project's exposure to excessive interior roadway noise levels to a less than significant level.

**b)** Construction activities for the proposed project would consist of using earthmoving equipment, which can produce detectable levels of vibration at nearby sensitive land uses, primarily depending on the distance between the source and the nearby sensitive land use. Generally, physical damage is only an issue when construction requires the use of equipment with high vibration levels (i.e., compactors, large dozers, etc.) and occurs within 25 feet of an existing structure. The nearest sensitive receptors are approximately 50 feet from where construction activities would occur; therefore, vibration from construction of the proposed project would result in a less-than-significant impact to nearby structures and sensitive receptors. Additionally, the proposed project does not include any source or operations that would generate excessive vibration levels following construction activities and upon occupation of the buildings.

**c)** Based upon the data presented in the Predicted Future and Future Plus Project Traffic Noise Levels table above wherein traffic noise levels at the nearest building façade and at the common outdoor activity area remained the same between the future traffic noise levels and future plus project traffic noise levels (69 dB at the nearest building façade and 60 dB at the common outdoor activity area from Sierra College Boulevard roadway noise, and 65 dB at the nearest building façade and 57 dB at the common outdoor activity area from Rocklin Road roadway noise), the proposed project will not result in a significant increase in traffic noise levels along Sierra College Boulevard or Rocklin Road.

**d)** Potential noise impacts can be categorized into short-term construction noise impacts and long-term or permanent noise impacts. The City has adopted standard conditions for project approvals which address short-term impacts. These include limiting traffic speeds to 25 mph and keeping equipment in clean and tuned condition. The proposed project would be subject to these standard conditions. The proposed project would also be subject to the City of Rocklin Construction Noise Guidelines, including restricting construction-related noise generating activities within or near residential areas to between 7:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. on weekdays, and between 8:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. on weekends to the satisfaction of the City Engineer or

Building Official. Therefore, impacts associated with the ambient noise environment during construction would be less than significant.

**e and f)** The City of Rocklin, including the project site, is not located within an airport land use plan, within two miles of an airport, or in the vicinity of a private airstrip and is therefore not subject to obtrusive aircraft noise related to airport operations. Therefore, there is no airport related noise impact.

**Significance:**

Compliance with the mitigation measures incorporated into the General Plan goals and policies, the City of Rocklin Construction Noise Guidelines and the project-specific mitigation measure described above would reduce noise related impacts to a less-than-significant level. The project-specific mitigation measure will be included in the EIR’s Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Plan, but otherwise noise impacts will not be discussed further in the EIR.

<b>XIII.</b> <u>POPULATION AND HOUSING</u> <b>Would the project:</b>	<b>Potentially Significant Impact</b>	<b>Less Than Significant With Mitigation</b>	<b>Less Than Significant Impact</b>	<b>No Impact</b>	<b>Impact for which General Plan EIR is Sufficient</b>
a) Induce substantial population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure.)			<b>X</b>		
b) Displace substantial numbers of existing housing necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?				<b>X</b>	
c) Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?				<b>X</b>	

**DISCUSSION OF DETERMINATION:**

**Project Impacts:**

The proposed project will result in the development of a 195-unit apartment complex on a 10.2 +/- acre site, which will primarily provide housing opportunities. The proposed project would not induce substantial population growth or displace substantial numbers of people.

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**Prior Environmental Analysis:**

The General Plan EIR analyzed the anticipated population and housing impacts that would occur as a result of the future urban development that was contemplated by the General Plan. These impacts included population growth and availability of housing opportunities (City of Rocklin General Plan Update Draft EIR, 2011, pages 4.11-1 through 4.11-13). The analysis found that while development and buildout of the General Plan can result in population and housing impacts, implementation of the General Plan would not contribute to a significant generation of growth that would substantially exceed any established growth projections nor would it displace substantial numbers of housing units or people. Moreover, the project will not construct off-site infrastructure that would induce substantial development, unplanned or otherwise. As such, population and housing impacts were determined to be less than significant.

**Conclusion:**

**a)** The project site is currently designated on the City’s General Plan land use map as High Density Residential (HDR) and is currently zoned Planned Development Residential, 20 dwelling units per acre (PD-20). Although the project site was analyzed for Retail Commercial uses in the General Plan EIR, the addition of 195 apartment units is not considered to induce substantial population growth because it is located in an area that has already been planned for urban uses; the addition of 195 apartment units into a City that is projected to have approximately 29,283 dwelling units at the buildout of the General Plan does not represent a significant addition. Moreover, the project will not construct off-site infrastructure that would induce substantial development, unplanned or otherwise.

**b and c)** The proposed project site is vacant and the proposed project would not displace existing residents or existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere.

**Significance:**

The proposed project would have a less than significant impact on population and housing; therefore these issues will not be discussed in the EIR.

XIV. <u>PUBLIC SERVICES</u>	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact	Impact for which General Plan EIR is Sufficient
Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, 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 public services:					
1. Fire protection?			X		
2. Police protection?			X		
3. Schools?			X		
4. Other public facilities?			X		

**DISCUSSION OF DETERMINATION:**

**Project Impact:**

The proposed project would create a need for the provision of new and/or expanded public services or facilities since an undeveloped site would become developed.

**Prior Environmental Analysis:**

The General Plan EIR analyzed the anticipated impacts on the demand for fire and police protection and school and recreation facilities as a result of the future urban development that was contemplated by the General Plan. These impacts included increased demand for fire, police and school services, provision of adequate fire flow, and increased demand for parks and recreation (City of Rocklin General Plan Update Draft EIR, 2011, pages 4.12-1 through 4.12-45). The analysis found that while development and buildout of the General Plan can result in public services and facilities impacts, these impacts would be reduced to a less than significant level through compliance with state and local standards related to the provision of public services and facilities and through the application of General Plan goals and policies that would assist in minimizing or avoiding impacts to public services and facilities.

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These goals, policies and standards include, but are not limited to the California Fire Code, the California Health and Safety Code, Chapters 8.12 and 8.20 of the Rocklin Municipal Code, and goals and policies in the General Plan Community Safety and Public Services and Facilities Elements requiring studies of infrastructure and public facility needs, proportional share participation in the financial costs of public services and facilities, coordination of private development projects with public facilities and services needed to serve the project, maintaining inter-jurisdictional cooperation and coordination and requiring certain types of development that may generate higher demand or special needs to mitigate the demands/needs.

**Mitigation Measures from Uniformly Applied Development Policies and Standards:**

All applicable mitigation measures from the General Plan EIR, including the mitigation measures for impacts to public services incorporated as goals and policies in the Rocklin General Plan, will be applied to the project. These serve as uniformly applied development policies and standards and/or as conditions of approval for the project to ensure consistency with the General Plan and compliance with City rules and regulations.

**Conclusion:**

**a)** Development of the proposed project could increase the need for fire protection services. The City collects construction taxes for use in acquiring capital facilities such as fire suppression equipment. Operation and maintenance funding for fire suppression is provided through financing districts and from general fund sources. The proposed project would pay construction taxes, participate in any applicable financing districts and contribute to the general fund through property and sales taxes. Participation in these funding mechanisms would ensure fire protection service to the site. In addition, the City intends to address the project’s potential for excessive calls for service to the Fire Department through a contractual agreement between the operators of the facility and the Fire Department; therefore fire protection impacts would be anticipated to be less than significant.

**b)** Development of the proposed project could increase the need for police patrol and police services to the site. Funding for police services is primarily from the general fund, and is provided for as part of the City’s budget process. The proposed project would pay construction taxes, participate in any applicable financing districts and contribute to the general fund through property and sales taxes. Participation in these funding mechanisms would ensure police protection services to the site; therefore police protection impacts would be anticipated to be less than significant.

**c and d)** The proposed project will be required to pay applicable school impact fees in effect at the time of building permit issuance to finance school facilities. Participation in these funding mechanisms, as applicable, will reduce school impacts to a less than significant level as a matter

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of state law. The need for other public facilities would not be created by this project and the impact is anticipated to be less than significant.

**Significance:**

The proposed project may increase the need for public services, but compliance with General Plan goals and policies and payment of necessary fees, including participation in any applicable financing district, would reduce the impact to a less than significant level; therefore these issues will not be discussed in the EIR.

<b>XV.</b> <u>RECREATION</u>	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact	Impact for which General Plan EIR is Sufficient
a) Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?			<b>X</b>		
b) Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?			<b>X</b>		

**DISCUSSION OF DETERMINATION:**

**Project Impacts:**

The proposed project, the development of a 195-unit apartment complex on a 10.2 +/- acre site, would not be anticipated to increase the use of, and demand for, recreational facilities in a way that results in a significant impact.

**Prior Environmental Analysis:**

The General Plan EIR analyzed the anticipated impacts on the demand for recreation facilities as a result of the future urban development that was contemplated by the General Plan. These impacts included increased demand for parks and recreation (City of Rocklin General Plan Update Draft EIR, 2011, pages 4.12-30 through 4.12-45). The analysis found that while development and buildout of the General Plan can result in recreation facilities impacts, these impacts would be reduced to a less than significant level through the application of General Plan goals and policies that would assist in minimizing or avoiding impacts to recreation

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facilities. The General Plan has established a parkland standard of five acres per 1,000 population, and has adopted goals and policies to insure that this standard is met. These goals and policies call for the provision of new park and recreational facilities as needed by new development through parkland dedication and the payment of park and recreation fees. These programs and practices are recognized in the General Plan Open Space, Conservation and Recreation Element, which mitigates these impacts to a less than significant level.

**Mitigation Measures from Uniformly Applied Development Policies and Standards:**

All applicable mitigation measures from the General Plan EIR, including the mitigation measures for impacts to recreation incorporated as goals and policies in the Rocklin General Plan, will be applied to the project. These serve as uniformly applied development policies and standards and/or as conditions of approval for this project to ensure consistency with the General Plan and compliance with City rules and regulations.

**Conclusion:**

**a and b)** The proposed project, a residential project, is anticipated to create a demand for recreational facilities. The City of Rocklin provides parkland dedication and/or collection of park fees to mitigate for the increased recreational impacts of new residential developments at the time that building permits are issued. Additionally, the proposed project includes a pool/clubhouse area and there are several City parks that exist in the project area, including Monte Verde Park on El Don Drive, Sasaki Park on Southside Ranch Road, and Corral-Alva Park on Brookshire Drive that can be utilized by the project’s future residents.

The General Plan parkland standard is 5 acres per 1,000 population. The City’s subdivision ordinance provides for the collection of park and recreation fees and/or parkland dedication for new residential developments at the time properties are subdivided. The fees are used to fund the acquisition and development of park and recreation facilities commensurate with the established parkland standard. Fees are also collected through an annual tax on each dwelling unit to fund park maintenance. The proposed project would impact recreation by contributing to the need for additional recreational facilities in the City of Rocklin. However, this impact was anticipated and provided for through implementation of the City’s park standards and funding mechanisms. The project applicant would pay park and recreation fees as required by City ordinance, and therefore the project would have less-than-significant impacts caused by the need to expand recreational facilities.

Although use of City parks would be anticipated by the proposed project’s future residents, the project would not be anticipated to significantly increase the use of existing recreational facilities such that substantial deterioration of these facilities would occur or be accelerated. The project will not require the construction of any other new, or expansion of an existing,

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public recreational facility; therefore, the project would have less than significant impacts regarding the increase in use of recreational facilities.

**Significance:**

Compliance with General Plan goals and policies and payment of necessary fees, including park and recreation fees, would ensure the impacts to recreational facilities are less than significant; therefore these issues will not be discussed in the EIR.

XVI. <u>TRANSPORTATION/TRAFFIC</u> <b>Would the project:</b>	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact	Impact for which General Plan EIR is Sufficient
a) Conflict with an applicable plan, ordinance or policy establishing measures of effectiveness for the performance of the circulation system, taking into account all modes of transportation including mass transit and non-motorized travel and relevant components of the circulation system, including but not limited to intersections, streets, highways, freeways, pedestrian and bicycle paths, and mass transit?	<b>X</b>				
b) Conflict with an applicable congestion management program, including, but not limited to level of service standards and travel demand measures, or other standards established by the county congestion management agency for designated roads or highways?	<b>X</b>				
c) Result in a change in air traffic patterns, including either an increase in traffic levels or a change in location that results in substantial safety risks?	<b>X</b>				
d) Substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?	<b>X</b>				
e) Result in inadequate emergency access?	<b>X</b>				
f) Conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs regarding public transit, bicycle, or pedestrian facilities, or otherwise decrease the performance or safety of such facilities?	<b>X</b>				

**DISCUSSION OF DETERMINATION:**

**Project Impacts:**

As discussed below, the proposed project is anticipated to cause increases in traffic because an undeveloped site will become developed with a 195-unit apartment complex whose residents will generate automobile trips.

**Prior Environmental Review:**

The General Plan EIR analyzed the anticipated impacts on transportation that would occur as a result of the future urban development that was contemplated by the General Plan. These impacts included signalized intersections in Rocklin, Loomis, Roseville, Lincoln and Placer County, state/interstate highway segments and intersections, transit service, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and conflicts with at-grade railways (City of Rocklin General Plan Update Draft EIR, 2011, pages 4.4-1 through 4.4-98).

Mitigation measures to address these impacts are incorporated into the General Plan in the Circulation Element, and include policies that require the monitoring of traffic on City streets to determine improvements needed to maintain an acceptable level of service, updating the City’s Capital Improvement Program (CIP) and traffic impact fees, providing for inflationary adjustments to the City’s traffic impact fees, maintaining a minimum level of service (LOS) of “C” for all signalized intersections during the PM peak period on an average weekday, maintaining street design standards, and interconnecting traffic signals and consideration of the use of roundabouts where financially feasible and warranted to provide flexibility in controlling traffic movements at intersections.

The General Plan EIR concluded that, despite these goals and policies, significant transportation impacts will occur as a result of development under the General Plan and further, that these impacts cannot be reduced to a less than significant level. Specifically, the General Plan EIR found that buildout of the Rocklin General Plan will result in increased traffic volumes at state/interstate highway intersections and impacts to state/interstate highway segments. Findings of fact and a statement of overriding consideration were adopted by the Rocklin City Council in regard to these impacts, which were found to be significant and unavoidable.

**Mitigation Measures from Uniformly Applied Development Policies and Standards:**

All applicable policies and standards, including the mitigation measures addressing impacts of urban development under the General Plan on utility and service systems incorporated as goals and policies in the General Plan, will be applied to the project. These serve as uniformly applied development policies and standards and/or as conditions of approval for the project to ensure consistency with the General Plan and compliance with City rules and regulations.

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**Conclusion:**

**a)** The proposed project’s potential of conflicting with an applicable plan, ordinance or policy establishing measures of effectiveness for the performance of the circulation system, taking into account all modes of transportation including mass transit and non-motorized travel and relevant components of the circulation system, including but not limited to intersections, streets, highways, freeways, pedestrian and bicycle paths, and mass transit will be discussed in the EIR.

**b)** The proposed project’s potential of conflicting with an applicable congestion management program, including, but not limited to level of service standards and travel demand measures, or other standards established by the county congestion management agency for designated roads or highways will be discussed in the EIR.

‘transportation/traffic impact of conflicting with an applicable plan, ordinance or policy establishing measures of effectiveness for the performance of the circulation system and the potential conflict with level of service standards will be discussed in the EIR.

**c)** The proposed project’s potential for resulting in a change in air traffic patterns, including either an increase in traffic levels or a change in location that results in substantial safety risks will be discussed in the EIR.

**d)** The proposed project’s potential for substantially increasing hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment) will be discussed in the EIR.

**e)** The proposed project’s potential for resulting in inadequate emergency access will be discussed in the EIR.

**f)** The proposed projects’ potential for conflicting with adopted policies, plans, or programs regarding public transit, bicycle, or pedestrian facilities, or otherwise decreasing the performance or safety of such facilities will be discussed in the EIR.

**Significance:**

The proposed project’s potential transportation/traffic impacts will be discussed in the EIR.

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<b>XVII.</b> <u>UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS</u> <b>Would the project:</b>	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact	Impact for which General Plan EIR is Sufficient
a) Exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board?			<b>X</b>		
b) Require or result in the construction of new water or wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?				<b>X</b>	
c) Require or result in the construction of new storm water drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?				<b>X</b>	
d) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources, or are new or expanded entitlements needed?			<b>X</b>		
e) Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?			<b>X</b>		
f) Be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs?			<b>X</b>		
g) Comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste?			<b>X</b>		



**DISCUSSION OF DETERMINATION:**

**Project Impacts:**

The project site is currently not developed. The proposed development of 195 apartment units will increase the need for utility and service systems, but not to an extent that will impact the ability of the utility and service providers to adequately provide such services.

**Prior Environmental Review:**

The General Plan EIR analyzed the anticipated impacts on utilities and service systems that would occur as a result of the future urban development that was contemplated by the General Plan. These impacts included increased generation of wastewater flow, provision of adequate wastewater treatment, increased demand for solid waste disposal, and increased demand for energy and communication services (City of Rocklin General Plan Update Draft EIR, 2011, pages 4.13-1 through 4.13-34). The analysis found that while development and buildout of the General Plan can result in utilities and service system impacts, these impacts would be reduced to a less than significant level through the application of General Plan goals and policies that would assist in minimizing or avoiding impacts to utilities and service systems.

These goals and policies include, but are not limited to, requiring studies of infrastructure needs, proportional share participation in the financial costs of public services and facilities, coordination of private development projects with public facilities and services needed to serve the project and encouraging energy conservation in new developments.

**Mitigation Measures from Uniformly Applied Development Policies and Standards:**

All applicable policies and standards, including the mitigation measures addressing impacts of urban development under the General Plan on utility and service systems incorporated as goals and policies in the General Plan, will be applied to the project. These serve as uniformly applied development policies and standards and/or as conditions of approval for this project to ensure consistency with the General Plan and compliance with City rules and regulations.

**Conclusion:**

**a, b and e)** The proposed project site is located within the South Placer Municipal Utility District (SPMUD) service area for sewer. SPMUD has provided a letter regarding the proposed project indicating that the project is within their service area and eligible for service, provided that their condition requirements and standard specifications are met. SPMUD has a Master Plan, which is periodically updated, to provide sewer to projects located within their service boundary. The plan includes future expansion as necessary, and includes the option of constructing additional treatment plants. SPMUD collects connection fees to finance the

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maintenance and expansion of its facilities. The proposed project is responsible for complying with all requirements of SPMUD, including compliance with wastewater treatment standards established by the Central Valley Water Quality Control Board. The South Placer Wastewater Authority (SPWA) was created by the City of Roseville, Placer County and SPMUD to provide regional wastewater and recycled water facilities in southwestern Placer County. The regional facilities overseen by the SPWA include the Dry Creek and Pleasant Grove Wastewater Treatment Plants, both of which receive flows from SPMUD (and likewise from Rocklin). To project future regional wastewater needs, the SPWA prepared the *South Placer Regional Wastewater and Recycled Water Systems Evaluation* (Evaluation) in June 2007. The Evaluation indicates that as of June 2004, flows to both the wastewater treatment plants were below design flows. Specifically, the Dry Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) had an average dry weather flow of 10 million gallons/day (mgd) and an average dry weather capacity of 18 mgd, while the Pleasant Grove Wastewater Treatment Plant had an average dry weather flow of 7 mgd, and an average dry weather capacity of 12 mgd. According to SPMUD, in 2009 the Dry Creek WWTP had an inflow of 10.3 mgd, with Rocklin's portion being 2.4 mgd, and the Pleasant Grove WWTP had an inflow of 7.0 mgd, with Rocklin's portion being 2.0 mgd. Consequently, both plants are well within their operating capacities and there remains adequate capacity to accommodate the projected wastewater flows from this project. A less than significant wastewater treatment impact is thus anticipated.

**c)** The proposed project would be conditioned to require connection into the City's storm drain system, with Best Management Practices features located within the project's drainage system at a point prior to where the project site runoff will enter the City's storm drain system. Other than on-site improvements including improvements along the project's frontages and within existing roadways along Rocklin Road and along Sierra College Boulevard from Rocklin Road to El Don Drive, new drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities would not be required as a result of this project.

**d)** The proposed project is located within the Placer County Water Agency (PCWA) service area. The PCWA has a Master Plan, which is periodically updated, to provide water to projects located within their service boundary. The plan includes future expansion as necessary, and includes the option of constructing additional treatment plants. The PCWA collects hook-up fees to finance the maintenance and expansion of its facilities. A less than significant water supply impact would be anticipated.

The PCWA service area is divided into five zones that provide treated and raw water to Colfax, Auburn, Loomis, Rocklin, Lincoln, small portion of Roseville, unincorporated areas of western Placer County, and a small community in Martis Valley near Truckee. The proposed project is located in Zone 1, which is the largest of the five zones. Zone 1 provides water service to Auburn, Bowman, Ophir, Newcastle, Penryn, Loomis, Rocklin, Lincoln, and portions of Granite Bay.

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PCWA has planned for growth in the City of Rocklin and sized the water supply infrastructure to meet this growth (PCWA 2006). PCWA has provided a letter regarding the proposed project indicating that the project is within their service area and eligible for service upon execution of a facilities agreement and payment of all required fees and charges. The project site would be served by the Foothill WTP, which treats water diverted from the American River Pump Station near Auburn, and the proposed project's estimated maximum daily water treatment demands would not exceed the plant's permitted capacity. Because the proposed project would be served by a water treatment plant that has adequate capacity to meet the project's projected demand and would not require the construction of a new water treatment plant, the proposed project's water supply and treatment facility impacts would be considered less than significant.

f) The Western Regional landfill, which serves the Rocklin area, has a total capacity of 36 million cubic yards and a remaining capacity of 29 million cubic yards. The estimated closure date for the landfill is approximately 2036. Development of the project site with urban land uses was included in the lifespan and capacity calculations of the landfill, and a less than significant landfill capacity impact would be anticipated.

Federal and State regulations regarding solid waste consist of the Federal Environmental Protection Agency regulations and the California Integrated Waste Management Act regulating waste reduction. These regulations primarily affect local agencies and other agencies such as the Landfill Authority. The proposed project will comply with all Federal, State, and local regulations regarding trash and waste and other nuisance-related issues as may be applicable. Recology would provide garbage collection services to the project site, provided their access requirements are met.

The proposed project is not anticipated to interfere with existing operations or exceed the service capacity of utilities or service systems because the development of this site with urban uses was anticipated in the General Plan. Projects consistent with areas of development represented in the General Plan have been anticipated as part of the growth of the City of Rocklin, and as such, utilities and service system requirements have been anticipated and planned. The addition of a 195 unit apartment complex is not anticipated to have a significant impact on utilities and service.

**Significance:**

Compliance with General Plan goals and policies and payment of necessary fees would ensure the impacts to utilities and service systems are less than significant; therefore these issues will not be discussed in the EIR.

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XVIII. <u>MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE</u>	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact	Impact for which General Plan EIR is Sufficient
a) Does the project have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of an endangered, rare or threatened species or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?	<b>X</b>				
b) Does the project have impacts that are limited, but cumulatively considerable? (“Cumulatively considerable” means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probably future projects)?	<b>X</b>				
c) Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?			<b>X</b>		

**Conclusion:**

**a and b)** Development in the South Placer region as a whole will contribute to regional air pollutant emissions, thereby delaying attainment of Federal and State air quality standards, regardless of development activity in the City of Rocklin and application of mitigation measures. As a result of this potential degradation of the quality of the environment, the General Plan EIR, which assumed the development of the proposed project site, determined that there would be significant and unavoidable cumulative air quality impacts. Development of the proposed

project represents less vehicle trip generation and associated air quality impacts that that which was analyzed in the General Plan EIR.

Development in the City and the South Placer region as a whole will result in cumulative, long-term impacts on biological resources (vegetation and wildlife), due to the introduction of domestic landscaping, homes, paved surfaces, and the relatively constant presence of people and pets, all of which negatively impact vegetation and wildlife habitat. As a result, the General Plan EIR, which assumed the development of the proposed project site, determined that there would be cumulative significant and unavoidable biological resource impacts. Development of the proposed project represents conversion of the same vacant land area that was analyzed in the General Plan EIR.

Development in the City will substantially alter viewsheds and vistas as mixed urban development occurs on vacant land. In addition, new development will also generate new sources of light and glare; as a result, the General Plan EIR determined that there would be significant and unavoidable aesthetic impacts. Although the development of the proposed project represents conversion of the same vacant land area that was analyzed in the General Plan EIR, the proposed project could result in potentially significant aesthetic impacts that were not analyzed in the General Plan EIR.

The proposed project site is mostly surrounded by developed land. Based on the project location and non-unique biological resources site characteristics and the General Plan EIR's programmatic evaluation of the development of the project site, the proposed project does not have the potential to: substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of an endangered, rare or threatened species, or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory. Therefore, the project would have less than significant biological resources impacts as related to the Mandatory Findings of Significance checklist questions. Nonetheless, the proposed project's potential biological resources impacts will be discussed in the EIR.

The proposed project could result in potentially significant transportation/traffic impacts that are limited, but cumulatively considerable, that were not already disclosed in the previously prepared environmental documents cited in this report. Therefore, the project could have potentially significant cumulative transportation/traffic impacts that will be discussed in the EIR. Otherwise, because the development of the proposed project represents conversion of the same vacant land area that was analyzed in the General Plan EIR, the proposed project is not anticipated to have impacts that are limited, but cumulatively considerable beyond those that were previously identified in the General Plan EIR.

c) Because the development of the proposed project represents conversion of the same vacant land area that was analyzed in the General Plan EIR, the proposed project would not have environmental effects that would cause substantial adverse effect on human beings, either directly or indirectly beyond those that were previously identified in the General Plan EIR. Therefore, the project would have less than significant impacts.

## **Section 5. References:**

City of Rocklin General Plan, October 2012  
City of Rocklin General Plan, Final Environmental Impact Report, August 2012  
City of Rocklin General Plan, Draft Environmental Impact Report, August 2011  
City of Rocklin Zoning Ordinance, Title 17 of the Rocklin Municipal Code  
City of Rocklin Design Review Guidelines  
De Novo Planning Group, Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Analysis for the Sierra Gateway Apartments Project, December 8, 2015  
Dudek, Phase I Environmental Site Assessment, Rocklin Road/Sierra College Boulevard, Rocklin, California, APNs 045-161-014, -015 and -016, December 2015  
JC Brennan & Associates, Environmental Noise Assessment, Sierra Gateway Apartments, October 23, 2015  
Omni-Means Ltd., Preliminary Site Lighting/Photometric Plan, Rocklin Manor Apartments, by the Ezralow Company, LLC, City of Rocklin, October 15, 2015  
Omni-Means Ltd., Sierra Gateway Apartments Drainage Report, August 2015  
Peak and Associates, Inc., Determination of Eligibility and Effect for the Rocklin Apartments Project Area, City of Rocklin, Placer County, California, August 2014

## **Attachments**

Attachment A – Project Vicinity Map  
Attachment B – Project Site Plan

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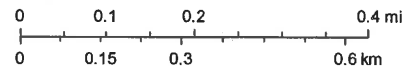
# ATTACHMENT A, PROJECT VICINITY MAP



March 17, 2016

City of Rocklin Boundary  
Parcels

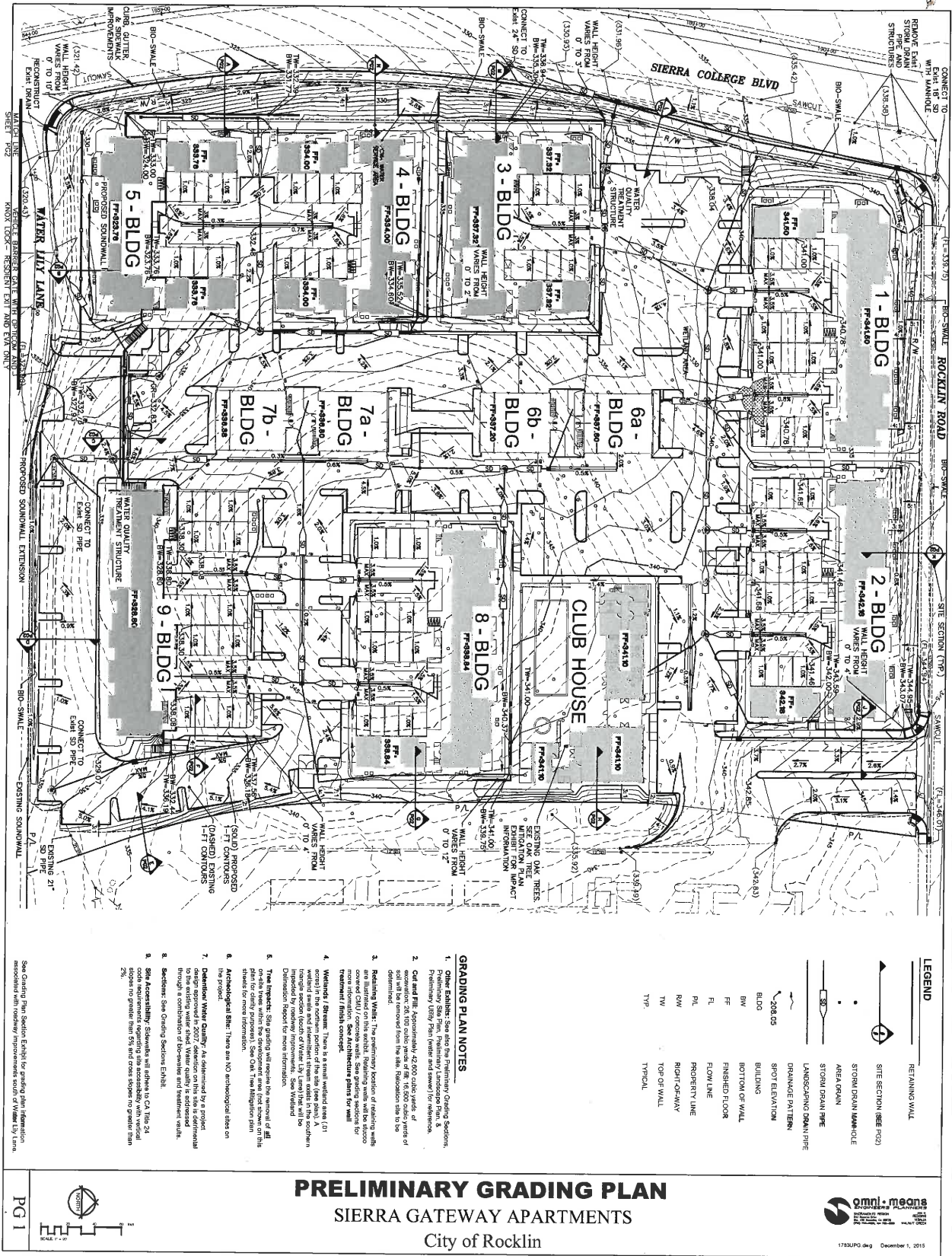
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Sources: Esri, HERE, DeLorme, USGS, Intermap, increment P Corp., NRCAN, Esri Japan, METI, Esri China (Hong Kong), Esri (Thailand), MapmyIndia, © OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community  
City of Rocklin



# ATTACHMENT B – PROJECT SITE PLAN



### LEGEND

- RETAINING WALL
- SITE SECTION (SEE NOTE)
- STORM DRAIN MANHOLE
- AREA ORIGIN
- STORM DRAIN PIPE
- LANDSCAPING DRAIN PIPE
- DRAINAGE PATTERN
- SPOT ELEVATION
- BUILDING
- BW BOTTOM OF WALL
- FF FINISHED FLOOR
- FL FLOW LINE
- PL PROPERTY LINE
- RW RIGHT-OF-WAY
- TW TYPICAL
- TOP-OF-WALL

### GRADING PLAN NOTES

1. **Other Exhibits:** See also the Preliminary Grading Section, Preliminary Site Plan, Preliminary Landscape Plan, & Preliminary Utility Plan (water and sewer) for reference.
2. **Cut and Fill:** Approximately 42,000 cubic yards of earth will be removed from the site. Retention walls are shown as determined.
3. **Retaining Walls:** The preliminary location of retaining walls are indicated on this exhibit. Retaining walls will be shown as determined. See Architectural plans for wall treatment/finish concept.
4. **Wetlands / Stream:** There is a small wetland area (11 acres) in the northern portion of the site (see plan). A larger section (south of Water Line Lane) that will be impacted by roadway improvements. See Wetland Delineation Report for more information.
5. **Tree Impacts:** Site grading will require the removal of all trees in the northern portion of the site (see plan). A tree inventory report will be prepared for the site. See City of Rocklin Tree Mitigation Plan for more information. See City of Rocklin Tree Mitigation Plan for more information.
6. **Archaeological Site:** There are NO archaeological sites on the project.
7. **Detention Water Quality:** As determined by a project engineer approved by 2007 Detention on this site is determined through a combination of detention and treatment walls.
8. **Sections:** See Grading Section Exhibit.
9. **Site Accessibility:** Slopes will adhere to CA Title 24 slopes no greater than 5% and cross slopes no greater than 2%.

## PRELIMINARY GRADING PLAN

### SIERRA GATEWAY APARTMENTS

City of Rocklin

