



MEMORANDUM

DATE: August 15, 2017

TO: Planning Commission Members

FROM: David Mohlenbrok, Environmental Services Manager

RE: Blue Memo for Sierra Pine Project – Comments Received on Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration and Responses

The Sierra Pine Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) was circulated for a 30-day public review period from July 13, 2017 to August 11, 2017. The IS/MND was also submitted to the State Clearinghouse for the same time period to provide for a 30-day public review period for State agencies. The City received two comment letters as a result of the public review period from the State Clearinghouse and the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans). Copies of those letters are attached to this memo, and a summary of the letters and responses thereto are provided below.

SUMMARY OF STATE CLEARINGHOUSE COMMENT LETTER

The State Clearinghouse provided comments acknowledging that the Rocklin Station IS/MND was sent to state agencies for their review. The comments also identified the closing date of the IS/MND comment period and included an enclosure from one responding state agency (Caltrans).

RESPONSE TO STATE CLEARINGHOUSE LETTER

The State Clearinghouse comment does not affect the analysis or conclusions reached in the IS/MND and is considered to be noted. Additional response or revisions to the IS/MND are not necessary. Please refer below for a summary of and responses to the Caltrans letter.

SUMMARY OF DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION (CALTRANS) LETTER

- 1) Caltrans recommends that the project's transportation impact study be revised to include the Sierra College Boulevard/I-80 westbound and eastbound ramp intersections and the mainline I-80, and if exceedances of available storage are identified, improvements to mitigate should be proposed. Caltrans also questions if the signals along Sierra College Boulevard are coordinated with the ramp intersections.
- 2) Caltrans notes the transportation impact study identifies that the Granite Drive/Sierra College Boulevard intersection is expected to operate at LOS F for both a.m. and p.m. peak hours in the cumulative no project and cumulative with project conditions due to queue spillback from the nearby I-80/Sierra College Boulevard westbound ramps intersection as well as the heavy northbound and eastbound left turn volumes. Caltrans further notes that the proposed mitigation includes removal of the Class II bike lane to provide an additional lane on Sierra College Boulevard, expresses concern that this may cause an increase in Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) within the project vicinity as well as deter bicycle use along Sierra College Boulevard, and recommends widening Sierra College Boulevard either to the east or west and maintain [sic] the bicycle facility.
- 3) Caltrans notes that a six-foot bike lane is proposed along Dominguez Road which may improve VMT, suggests identification of further possible mitigation to reduce VMT and provide active transportation improvements, and suggests that the displaced street parking along Dominguez Road would need to be provided in an off-street facility.
- 4) Caltrans notes that the project proponent should be conditioned to provide fair share contribution toward fee programs such as a citywide Traffic Impact Mitigation (TIM) fee, the Highway 65 Joint Powers Authority (JPA) fee and the South Placer Regional Transportation Agency (SPRTA) fee, requests that construction cost estimates and completion timelines be provided for any traffic mitigation proposed, and requests that if the project is paying into an impact fee to identify what amount will be set aside for highway improvements.

RESPONSES

- 1) The determination of which intersections to include in a traffic study is made by the professional traffic engineer in consultation with City staff and it is based upon factors including, but not limited to, the amount of trips generated by a project, the likely distribution of those trips, nearby land uses, and known or anticipated high traffic areas. Based upon that consultation, it was determined that it was not necessary to study the I-80/Sierra College Boulevard interchange for the Sierra Pine Subdivision because the project would add relatively few vehicles to it (35 AM peak hour trips and 46 PM peak hour trips), which represents a 1.3 percent increase in current traffic conditions at the westbound ramps intersection during each peak hour (as explained further below, the eastbound ramps would experience even fewer peak hour trips). Furthermore, operations at the I-80/Sierra College Boulevard interchange are currently at an acceptable LOS C or better based on results of other recent studies. Lastly, the Sierra College Boulevard/I-80 interchange was designed to accommodate 20-years of planned

traffic growth (including development of the subject property). According to Table 9 of the Final Transportation Impact Study, the proposed residential project would generate fewer AM and PM peak hour trips than the project site's former heavy industrial land use, which implies it would contribute fewer trips under design year conditions to the interchange than the former heavy industrial land use, which was assumed in place for the purposes of interchange design (interchange designs are based on peak hour traffic conditions).

With respect to vehicular queuing at the off-ramps of the I-80/Sierra College Boulevard interchange, the project would add a modest amount of traffic to the I-80 westbound off-ramp (less than 10 vehicles during the AM peak hour and less than 20 vehicles during the PM peak hour). To access the Sierra Pine Subdivision site, these vehicles would intuitively turn right onto northbound Sierra College Boulevard (rather than turn left onto southbound Sierra College Boulevard and double-back to Rocklin Road and either Granite Drive or Pacific Street). The I-80 westbound off-ramp is designed as a high-capacity ramp consisting of an auxiliary/deceleration lane on I-80, which becomes a single lane off-ramp. The off-ramp then widens to provide left-turn and shared through/right lanes. Further widening occurs approaching the intersection, in which dual left-turn lanes, a shared through/right lane and a dedicated right-turn lane are provided. Given the westbound off-ramp's design and storage capacity and the modest amount of project trips that would use it, project trips would not cause traffic on the westbound off-ramp to queue back to I-80. Project-related increases in queuing at the I-80/Sierra College Boulevard EB off-ramp would be negligible because travel time runs show it is quicker to access the project from the Rocklin Road interchange for origins from the west.

When compared to existing conditions, project added trips would cause a negligible increase in traffic on I-80 east of Sierra College Boulevard and in traffic on I-80 west of Sierra College Boulevard. The increase in traffic caused by the project would be substantially less than the daily fluctuation in traffic on the facility, and not noticeable to drivers. For these reasons, it was not necessary to study the I-80 mainline.

With respect to signal coordination along Sierra College Boulevard, traffic signals along Sierra College Boulevard in the vicinity of the Sierra College Boulevard/I-80 interchange are currently not coordinated. However, the City recently conditioned a new land development project located at Sierra College Boulevard and the eastbound I-80 off-ramp to assist in upgrading infrastructure along the corridor to enable coordinated signal operations in the vicinity of the Sierra College Boulevard/I-80 interchange. Further, the City has proactively engaged Caltrans to work together to facilitate coordinated operations at the I-80/Rocklin Road interchange. Signal coordination is now operational in that corridor and operations have improved. As traffic volumes increase on Sierra College Boulevard, the City will proactively engage Caltrans to implement signal coordination to improve corridor operations.

The comment does not affect the analysis or conclusions reached in the IS/MND and additional response or revisions to the IS/MND are not necessary.

2) It is important to note, as acknowledged in the Caltrans comment, that the Granite Drive/Sierra College Boulevard intersection is projected to operate at LOS F in the cumulative

year condition, both with and without the Sierra Pine Subdivision project, and it is also important to note that the project's transportation impact analysis showed that the project would not cause any cumulatively considerable impacts at the intersection. As such, there were no project-specific mitigation measures identified for the Sierra Pine Subdivision. The removal of Class II bike lanes and/or widening of Sierra College Boulevard were discussed as potential measures that would be needed to improve operations at the intersection should future projections for poor LOS at the intersection be realized. There is no project mitigation responsibility or other proposal to remove Class II bike lanes on Sierra College Boulevard; therefore, any discussions regarding the effects of removing the bike lane on VMT are moot.

The comment does not affect the analysis or conclusions reached in the IS/MND and additional response or revisions to the IS/MND are not necessary.

3) The proposed project takes advantage of infill opportunities in the City of Rocklin by re-developing a former industrial use with residential uses. The proposed residential uses would be in close proximity to retail commercial uses and other existing and newly developing residential areas. As noted in the Caltrans comment, Dominguez Road is being contemplated to include new bike lanes as part of a future roadway improvement project. As new properties such as the proposed project get developed sidewalks and planned bike lanes are provided if they do not currently exist as a way to encourage alternative modes of transportation. The IS/MND noted that in the vicinity of the project there are existing Class II bike lane facilities along portions of Granite Drive and Pacific Street, and transit service in the project vicinity exists along Pacific Street, Rocklin Road, Sierra College Boulevard, Sierra Meadows Drive and Granite Drive, with the nearest bus stops to the project site being 0.5 miles away at Sierra Meadows Drive/Pacific Street and 0.7 miles away at Granite Drive/Rocklin Commons. Finally, should the project be approved it will generate property tax revenue and its residents will generate sales tax revenue for the City that can be used to support the City's efforts in building and maintaining infrastructure such as sidewalks and bikeways which encourage alternative modes of transportation.

Senate Bill 743 (SB743), which was signed by Governor Brown on September 27, 2013, created a process to change the way that transportation impacts are analyzed under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) by shifting the focus of traffic analysis away from using vehicle delay as a metric and placing an emphasis on the measurement of vehicle miles traveled (VMT). The State Office of Planning and Research (OPR) has been charged with drafting guidelines to implement SB743 and in January of 2016 released a draft of those guidelines for public review; however the final guidelines have yet to be published. For the interim period, the City of Rocklin has been identifying in our CEQA documents the VMT that a project generates for informational purposes and not for purposes of impact identification. As such, mitigation measures to potentially reduce VMT are not identified. However, it is noted that the project would include bicycle and pedestrian connections within it, as well as connections to existing public streets.

Although an analysis of whether the project reduced or increased VMT was not conducted, the placement of this project at this location allows great potential for reducing VMT by placing

residential uses in close proximity to other existing and newly developing residential uses and complimentary retail commercial uses and by being located near existing transit routes and stops.

Page 36 of the Final Transportation Impact Study discusses the loss of on-street parking that would be associated with the recommended configuration of Dominguez Road. That evaluation concluded that vehicles who occasionally parked on-street would need to instead parking off-street in the businesses located on the east side of the street.

The comment does not affect the analysis or conclusions reached in the IS/MND and additional response or revisions to the IS/MND are not necessary.

4) The project would not cause any significant transportation impacts that require mitigation. Accordingly, the Final Transportation Impact Study and the IS/MND do not provide any cost estimates or construction schedule for such improvements. As noted in the IS/MND, the project is subject to payment of traffic impact mitigation fees on a fair-share basis into the City's Traffic Impact Mitigation (TIM) fee program, as well as various regional fee programs such as the Highway 65 Interchange Improvement Fee and the South Placer Regional Transportation Authority (SPRTA) fee. These fees amounts are determined through a number of factors relating to the project location and type and size of development.

The comment does not affect the analysis or conclusions reached in the MND and additional response or revisions to the MND are not necessary.

ATTACHMENT 1 – COMMENT LETTERS
(STATE CLEARING HOUSE AND DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION)



Edmund G. Brown Jr.
Governor

STATE OF CALIFORNIA
Governor's Office of Planning and Research
State Clearinghouse and Planning Unit



Ken Alex
Director

August 14, 2017

David Mohlenbrok
City of Rocklin
4081 Alvis Court
Rocklin, CA 95677

Subject: Sierra Pine Subdivision
SCH#: 2017072024

Dear David Mohlenbrok:

The State Clearinghouse submitted the above named Mitigated Negative Declaration to selected state agencies for review. On the enclosed Document Details Report please note that the Clearinghouse has listed the state agencies that reviewed your document. The review period closed on August 11, 2017, and the comments from the responding agency (ies) is (are) enclosed. If this comment package is not in order, please notify the State Clearinghouse immediately. Please refer to the project's ten-digit State Clearinghouse number in future correspondence so that we may respond promptly.

Please note that Section 21104(c) of the California Public Resources Code states that:

"A responsible or other public agency shall only make substantive comments regarding those activities involved in a project which are within an area of expertise of the agency or which are required to be carried out or approved by the agency. Those comments shall be supported by specific documentation."

These comments are forwarded for use in preparing your final environmental document. Should you need more information or clarification of the enclosed comments, we recommend that you contact the commenting agency directly.

This letter acknowledges that you have complied with the State Clearinghouse review requirements for draft environmental documents, pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act. Please contact the State Clearinghouse at (916) 445-0613 if you have any questions regarding the environmental review process.

Sincerely,

Scott Morgan
Director, State Clearinghouse

Enclosures
cc: Resources Agency



**Document Details Report
State Clearinghouse Data Base**

SCH# 2017072024
Project Title Sierra Pine Subdivision
Lead Agency Rocklin, City of

Type **MND** Mitigated Negative Declaration
Description The Sierra Pine Subdivision project proposes the construction of a medium density residential development consisting of 199 single family units, landscape lots and a detention basin/park lot on a 28.2+/- acre site in the city of Rocklin. This project will require the following entitlements from the city of Rocklin: a GPA; a General development plan; a rezone; a tentative subdivision map; a design review and an Oak Tree Preservation Plan. Access to the site would be from two access points on Dominguez Rd.

Lead Agency Contact

Name David Mohlenbrok
Agency City of Rocklin
Phone 916/625-5162 **Fax**
email
Address 4081 Alvis Court
City Rocklin **State** CA **Zip** 95677

Project Location

County Placer
City Rocklin
Region
Lat / Long 38° N / 121° 21' W
Cross Streets Pacific St/Dominguez Rd
Parcel No. 045-021-011
Township **Range** **Section** **Base**

Proximity to:

Highways I-80
Airports
Railways UPRR
Waterways Sucker Ravine
Schools Sierra College
Land Use vacant/heavy industrial/mixed use and high density residential

Project Issues Aesthetic/Visual; Agricultural Land; Air Quality; Archaeologic-Historic; Biological Resources; Drainage/Absorption; Flood Plain/Flooding; Geologic/Seismic; Landuse; Minerals; Noise; Other Issues; Population/Housing Balance; Public Services; Recreation/Parks; Schools/Universities; Sewer Capacity; Soil Erosion/Compaction/Grading; Solid Waste; Toxic/Hazardous; Traffic/Circulation; Vegetation; Water Quality; Water Supply; Wetland/Riparian

Reviewing Agencies Resources Agency; Department of Conservation; Department of Fish and Wildlife, Region 2; Cal Fire; Department of Parks and Recreation; Department of Water Resources; California Highway Patrol; Caltrans, District 3 N; Department of Housing and Community Development; Regional Water Quality Control Bd., Region 5 (Sacramento); Delta Protection Commission; Delta Stewardship Council; Native American Heritage Commission; Public Utilities Commission

Date Received 07/13/2017 **Start of Review** 07/13/2017 **End of Review** 08/11/2017

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

DISTRICT 3

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August 11, 2017

GTS# 03-PLA-2017-00074

03-PLA-80 PM 6.744

SCH# 2017072024

David Mohlenbrok
City of Rocklin
4081 Alvis Court
Rocklin, CA 95677

Governor's Office of Planning & Research

AUG 11 2017

STATE CLEARINGHOUSE

Sierra Pine Subdivision

Dear David Mohlenbrok:

Thank you for including the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in the environmental/application review process for the project referenced above. The mission of Caltrans is to provide a safe, sustainable, integrated and efficient transportation system to enhance California's economy and livability. The Local Development-Intergovernmental Review (LD-IGR) Program reviews land use projects and plans through the lenses of our mission and state planning priorities of infill, conservation, and travel-efficient development. To ensure a safe and efficient transportation system, we encourage early consultation and coordination with local jurisdictions and project proponents on all development projects that utilize the multimodal transportation network.

The Sierra Pine Subdivision project proposes to construct a medium density residential development consisting of 199 single family units, landscape lots, and a detention basin/park lot on a 28.2 acre site in the City of Rocklin. The project will require the following entitlements from the City of Rocklin: a General Plan Amendment; a General Development Plan; a Rezone; a Tentative Subdivision Map; a Design Review and an Oak Tree Preservation Plan. Access to the site would be from two access points on Dominguez Road. The project site is located along Dominguez Road between Pacific Street and Granite Drive in the City of Rocklin. The following comments are based on the Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) received.

Traffic Operations

A review of the Final Transportation Impact Study (TIS), prepared by Fehr and Peers, July 12, 2017, has been completed. As per the TIS, page 16, the project is expected to generate 149 a.m. and 199 p.m. peak hour trips.

Mr. David Mohlenbrok, City of Rocklin
August 11, 2017
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- The TIS does not include an analysis of the nearby Sierra College Blvd./I-80 ramp intersections. It is recommended to revise the TIS to include a cumulative “with-project” SYNCHRO queuing and LOS analysis for the I-80/Sierra College Blvd. WB and EB ramp intersections, to include the off-ramp queues, as well as mainline I-80 within the project vicinity. If any of the movements exceed available storage, please provide proposed improvements to mitigate these impacts. Are signals along Sierra College Blvd. coordinated with the ramp intersections?
- The Granite Drive/Sierra College Blvd. intersection is expected to operate at LOS F for both a.m. and p.m. peak hours in the cumulative “no project” and “with/project” conditions due to queue spillback from the nearby I-80/Sierra College Blvd. WB ramps intersection as well as the heavy NB and EB left turn volumes. Proposed mitigation includes removal of the Class II bike lanes (page 34) to provide an additional lane on Sierra College Blvd. This would may cause an increase in VMT within the project vicinity as well as deter bicycle use along Sierra College Blvd. It is recommended to widen Sierra College Blvd. either to the east or the west as per the TIS suggestion, on page 34, and mainline the bicycle facility.
- A six-foot Class II bike lane is proposed along Dominguez Road (page 2). This may be a good effort to improve VMT. Please identify further possible mitigation to reduce VMT and provide active transportation improvements. The displaced street parking along Dominguez Road, from the restripe for the bike lane, would need to be provided in an off-street facility, elsewhere.
- The project proponent should be conditioned to provide fair share contribution toward the following fee programs, such as, a citywide TIM fee, the Highway SR65 JPA (Joint Powers Authority) Fee and the South Placer Regional Transportation Agency (SPRTA) fee. For any traffic mitigation proposed, please provide construction cost estimates and a timeline for completion. If the project will be paying into an impact fee, please provide what amount will be set aside for highway improvements.

Mr. David Mohlenbrok, City of Rocklin

August 11, 2017

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Please provide our office with copies of any further actions regarding this project. We would appreciate the opportunity to review and comment on any changes related to this development.

If you have any question regarding these comments or require additional information, please contact David Smith, Intergovernmental Review Coordinator for Placer County, by phone (530) 634-7799 or via email to david.j.smith@dot.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kevin Yount', with a horizontal line extending to the right.

KEVIN YOUNT, Branch Chief
Office of Transportation Planning
Regional Planning Branch—North