

CHAPTER 3.0 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

3.1 PROJECT OVERVIEW

The Rocklin Commons project (proposed project) includes the construction of a regional shopping center on approximately 39.13 acres at the northwest quadrant of Interstate-80 and Sierra College Boulevard. A variety of retail uses are proposed for the center, including major tenants, grocery stores, smaller retail tenants, and restaurants.

3.2 PROJECT LOCATION

The project site is located in the City of Rocklin, north of Interstate 80 and west of Sierra College Boulevard (Figure 3.2-1 and Figure 3.2-2). The City of Rocklin is located within the western portion of Placer County and is approximately 25 miles northeast of the City of Sacramento. The project site is comprised of the following Assessor's Parcel Numbers (APN) 045-041-010, 045-041-012, 045-051-001 and 045-051-002. Figure 3.2-3 identifies the site plan for the proposed project.

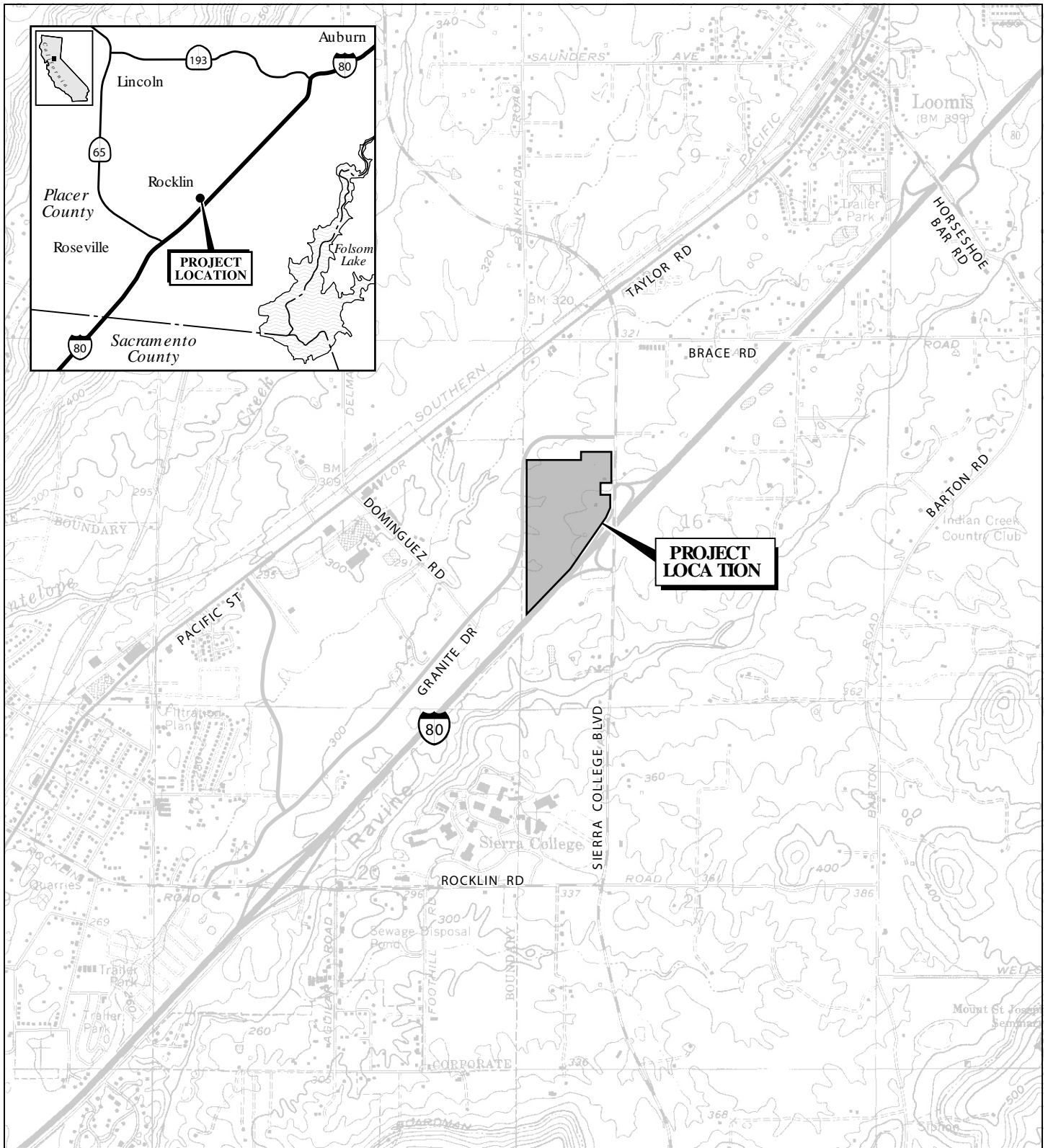
The project site is designated for Retail-Commercial (RC) on the General Plan land use map and is zoned Planned Development Commercial.

3.3 EXISTING SETTING

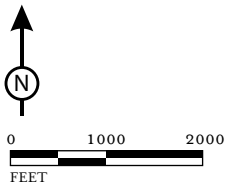
In accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15125(a), the environmental baseline, as analyzed in this EIR, is normally the environmental setting as it existed at the time of the Notice of Preparation was published, August 29, 2008. Therefore, the following discussion describes the site's existing setting as it was on August 29, 2008.

The undeveloped project site is characterized by gently rolling terrain with elevations ranging from about 310 to 340 feet above mean sea level and sloping gently toward the west. The site is characterized by oak woodlands, annual grassland dotted with rock outcroppings, boulders, and several seasonal wetland features. The project site and vicinity are predominately large undeveloped areas historically used for orchard production.

Oak trees are scattered throughout the site with annual grassland habitat dominating the understory and treeless areas. The on-site woodland has been fragmented from other natural habitats in the vicinity by the I-80 corridor, local roadways, and other surrounding developments.



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SOURCE USGS 7.5' Quad - Rocklin, Ca.

FIGURE 3.2-1

Rocklin Commons
Project Location Map



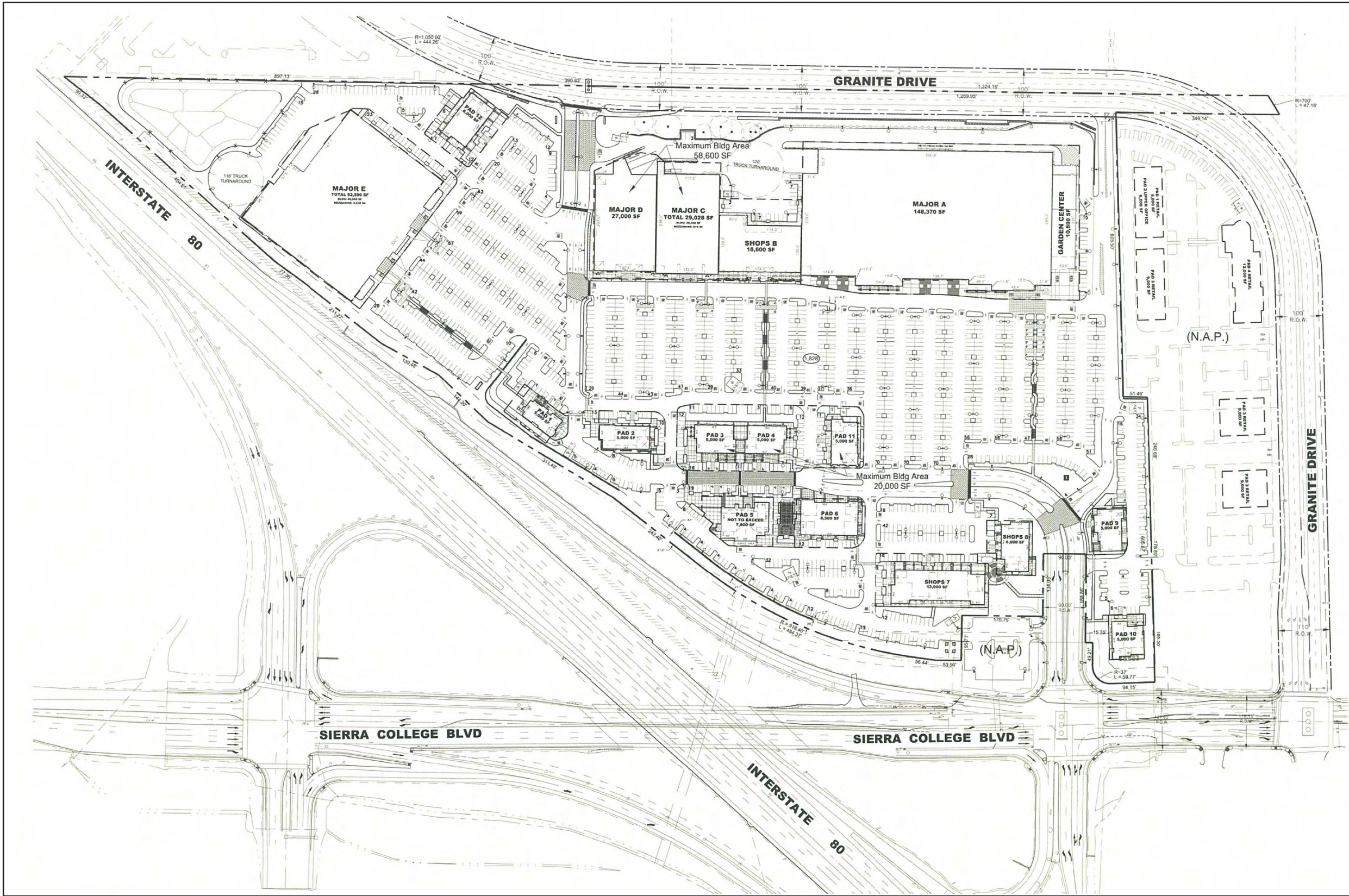
FIGURE 3.2-2

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SOURCE: Donah Schriber (2008)

Rocklin Commons
Simulated Aerial View



LEGEND

LAND USE SUMMARY

SITE ACREAGE
 GROSS = 40.86 AC.
 NET = 39.14 AC. (± 1,704,893 S.F.)
 LOT COVERAGE - GROSS SITE S.F.=22%
 LOT COVERAGE - NET SITE S.F.=23%

I. Retail Promenade	
Major A	148,370 SF
Garden Center	10,800 SF
Major C	29,300 SF
Mezzanine	696 SF
Major D	29,300 SF
Major E	86,960 SF
Mezzanine	5,636 SF
II. Pad buildings	
Pad 1	5,000 SF
Pad 2	5,000 SF
Pad 3	6,000 SF
Pad 4	6,000 SF
Pad 5	7,800 SF
Pad 6	8,500 SF
Pad 9	5,000 SF
Pad 10	5,000 SF
Pad 11	8,000 SF
Pad 12	6,000 SF
III. Shops	
Shops B	18,600 SF
Shops 7	13,000 SF
Shops 8	6,000 SF

Building footprints and actual square footage may vary from those depicted. In all cases actual footprints and square footages will be consistent with the approved Development Plan Guidelines and project approvals.

Total Commercial Gross Building Area:	393,830 SF
Total Mezzanine Area:	6,332 SF
Total Outdoor Garden Center Area:	10,800 SF
TOTAL:	410,942 SF
Land to Building Ratio:	3.16 / 1

PARKING SUMMARY

Parking Requirements		Req.	Provided
Major Retail	(4 / 1,000 SF)	941 Stalls	968 Stalls
Tenants	(5 / 1,000 SF)	793 Stalls	819 Stalls
Mezzanine	(4 / 1,000 SF)	25 Stalls	25 Stalls
Garden Center	(2 / 5,000 SF and 1 / 1,000 SF for the rest)	16 Stalls	16 Stalls
Total Stalls		1,775	1,828
Parking Provided			
Standard Spaces			1,431 Stalls
Compact Spaces			343 Stalls
Accessible Spaces			54 Stalls
Total Stalls			1,828 Stalls

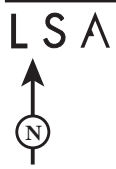


FIGURE 3.2-3

SOURCE: Donnahue Schriber (2008)

The project site is located between Secret Ravine, about 3,000 feet east of the site, and an unnamed tributary to Secret Ravine, about 500 feet west of the site. Significant oak forest and woodland are associated with both Secret Ravine and the unnamed tributary. Small seasonal drainages flow from the site toward the west, under Granite Drive, and join the unnamed tributary approximately 500 to 1,000 feet downstream of the project site. Many of the oak trees on the project site are associated with these seasonal drainages.

Interstate 80 borders the project site directly to the south as a 6-lane highway. Southeast of the project site (across Interstate 80) is the site of the Rocklin Crossings development which was approved by City Council in November 2008 and is scheduled to be built by 2011. The Sierra College Boulevard/Interstate 80 interchange, which in August 2008 was in the process of being reconstructed to accommodate long-range traffic forecasts estimated for the City of Rocklin and the region, is located along the site's eastern border. Areas east of Sierra College Boulevard consist of undeveloped land designated for retail/commercial uses and then Granite Drive, and beyond Granite Drive is more undeveloped land designated for retail/commercial uses (with the exception of a small office building), and then Brace Road and the Town of Loomis.

Southeast of the project site are Sierra College Boulevard and Interstate 80, undeveloped land designated for retail/commercial uses (the Rocklin Crossings project site), undeveloped land designated for residential uses (the Rocklin 60 project site) and then the Town of Loomis, which in this area includes rural-scale residential areas and large expanses of relatively undeveloped land. Granite Drive borders the project site to the west. Areas west of Granite Drive consist of grasslands and oak woodlands and, beyond that, office park and industrial uses. Granite Drive also borders the project site to the north. The area north of Granite Drive consists of grasslands and oak woodlands and beyond that office park and commercial uses.

Regionally, the project setting is a mosaic of commercial development, high density and rural residential development, transportation corridors, and natural open space. While relatively large tracts of undeveloped land remain in the area, particularly east of the I-80 corridor, most of the natural setting is fragmented to some degree by encroaching development.

3.4 PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The proposed development includes the following project objectives:

- To develop regional shopping facilities on commercially-designated land within the City consistent with City of Rocklin General Plan policy and the property's current zoning;
- To create a high-quality commercial development near a major transportation corridor within the City of Rocklin serving western Placer County;
- To develop facilities with architectural and landscaping features designed to create a pleasant, attractive appearance that integrate with the surrounding area;
- To provide commercial retail facilities that serve the City of Rocklin and the surrounding areas in order to meet the growing regional demand for such services;

- To enhance the City's position to better serve the regional and community retail needs of the western Placer County community;
- To provide a shopping facility that maximizes visibility from Interstate 80 for all buildings and tenants;
- To construct a facility near a major freeway interchange in order to minimize traffic generation on local streets;
- To develop a property of sufficient size to accommodate two major anchor tenants and sufficient to support smaller tenants to create a regional shopping destination;
- To provide regional commercial retail activities that will complement existing local retail activities located in the region;
- To construct a facility with access to adequate existing or anticipated utility infrastructure to support planned operations;
- To create a new net public fiscal benefit for the City of Rocklin;
- To generate sales tax and property tax revenues to accrue to the various agencies within the project area;
- To maximize the economic benefit to the City of Rocklin by attracting patronage from both within and outside of the City; and
- To provide new employment opportunities to the residents of the City of Rocklin and the surrounding areas.

3.5 PROJECT CHARACTERISTICS

The proposed project includes the construction of a regional shopping center on approximately 39.16 acres. The property is currently divided into four legal parcels. A variety of retail uses are proposed for the center, including major tenants, grocery stores, smaller retail tenants, and restaurants. Preliminary plans call for approximately 17 buildings totaling a maximum of 415,000 square feet with approximately 1,828 parking stalls. Some tenants may require drive-thrus, outside storage, outside display, outdoor vendor sales, and/or outside seasonal sales. These uses and structures would be permitted and controlled through a set of development guidelines that would be subject to City approval and would be applicable to the entire shopping center. The project incorporates a detention basin as part of its drainage and water quality infrastructure. The detention basin will limit post project flow rates to pre project conditions. In addition, approximately three quarters of an acre foot of detention basin volume is set aside as stormwater quality treatment volume for the largest of the five project sub watersheds. A continuous deflection system (CDS) unit will also be utilized for this sub watershed as part of its treatment train. For the other four watersheds, the water quality treatment is proposed to consist of charcoal drain inlet inserts and CDS units for their treatment trains. Figure 3.5-1 shows a view of typical shopping center signage, architecture, parking, and landscaping. Parking and signage would be governed by project-specific program guidelines and criteria. Signage is proposed in multiple locations adjacent to Interstate 80 (I-80) and Sierra College Boulevard.



FIGURE 3.5-1

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SOURCE: Donah Schriber (2008)

Rocklin Commons
Typical Shopping Center View

3.6 REQUIRED DISCRETIONARY ACTIONS/PROCESSES

Project approval requires the City of Rocklin, as lead agency, and responsible agencies to approve the project or project components, issue required permits, or affirm compliance with agency requirements. Per Section 15367 of the State CEQA Guidelines, the lead agency is “the public agency that has the principal responsibility for carrying out or approving a project.” Described below is the environmental review process for the project and the discretionary actions sought by the project applicant for the Rocklin Commons project that the City will consider during its review.

- The DEIR will be circulated for public review and comment, as described in Chapter 1, “Introduction”.
- The City may hold a public hearing during the public review period at which time individuals and public agencies may comment on the adequacy of the DEIR.
- After the close of the public review period for the DEIR, the Final EIR, consisting of all comments received on the DEIR together with responses to those comments and necessary changes to the EIR text will be prepared.
- The City’s Planning Commission will hold a public hearing at which time it will consider the adequacy of the Final EIR, the project’s Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program, and the merits of the project. Individuals and representatives of public agencies and other organizations will have the chance to offer testimony on any and all of these items.
- If, after closing the public hearing, the Planning Commission is satisfied that the Final EIR is legally adequate and complete, it will recommend that the City Council certify the Final EIR as being adequate according to the CEQA requirements. The Planning Commission will also provide advice to the City Council with respect to the Commission’s views on the merits of the proposed project (i.e., whether the Council should approve, deny, or require modifications to the project).
- Entitlement actions under consideration by the Planning Commission during its review of the project merits will include whether to:
 - Recommend approval of the project’s General Development Plan;
 - Recommend approval of the project’s Tentative Parcel Map;
 - Recommend approval of the project’s Development Agreement;
 - Recommend approval of the project’s Design Review;
 - Recommend approval of the project’s Conditional Use Permit;
 - Recommend approval of the project’s Oak Tree Preservation Plan Permit;
- After the Planning Commission completes its process, the City Council would then hold a public hearing at which time it will hear testimony from individuals and representatives of public agencies and other organizations regarding whether the Council should certify the Final EIR, adopt the project’s Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program, CEQA Findings and a Statement of Overriding Considerations, and approve, conditionally approve, or deny the project (taking action with respect to the same list of specific entitlements identified above with respect to the Planning Commission’s role).

- After closing the public hearing, the Council will determine whether to certify the Final EIR, to adopt the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program, CEQA Findings, and a Statement of Overriding Considerations, and to approve, conditionally approve, or deny the Rocklin Commons project.
- If the City Council chooses to approve or conditionally approve the project or one of the alternatives addressed in this EIR, other responsible agencies would consider the project and associated entitlements when considering permitting or other related actions. Such other project approvals may include, but are not limited to:
 - A Section 401 Certification from the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB);
 - Approval from the Town of Loomis of an encroachment permit or similar approval to build various road improvements (see Chapter 4.8 – Traffic and Circulation);
 - Approval from the South Placer Municipal Utility District for sewer facility extensions; and
 - Approval from the Placer County Water Agency for a facilities agreement to provide water service.

Although this EIR takes account of the environmental consequences of the offsite water improvements that would serve the proposed project, which would be constructed, operated, and maintained by PCWA, these improvements are part of a separate PCWA infrastructure project serving an area much larger than the proposed Rocklin Commons project and therefore have already received independent project-level environmental review by PCWA. A Mitigated Negative Declaration for that project, called the Sierra Ridge Pipeline Extension Project, was released for a 30-day public comment period on March 5, 2009. As of early May 2009, the document could be accessed through the PCWA website: <http://www.pcwa.net/>. On May 7, 2009, the PCWA Board of Directors adopted the MND and approved the project.

The applicant has already obtained a Nationwide Permit from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers allowing them to fill the small amount of wetlands found on site, subject to approval of a grading permit by the City of Rocklin and a Section 401 certification from the RWQCB.

Notice Requirements

The SWRCB adopted the statewide NPDES General Construction Permit in August 1999. The State requires that projects disturbing one acre or more of land during construction file a Notice of Intent with the RWQCB to be covered under this permit. A Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) must be developed and implemented for each site covered by the permit. The SWPPP must include BMPs designed to prevent construction pollutants from contacting stormwater and keep products of erosion from moving off-site into receiving waters throughout the construction and life of the project. A Notice of Intent will be filed with the RWQCB for the project to be covered under the statewide NPDES General Construction Permit and a SWPPP will be prepared.

The SWRCB adopted an NPDES Phase II General Permit for the Discharge of Storm Water from small municipal separate storm sewer systems (MS4s) to provide NPDES permit coverage to municipalities that were not covered under the NPDES Phase I Rule for municipalities serving more than 100,000 people. The City of Rocklin is included within the NPDES Phase II General Permit. Under the Phase II General Permit, the City is required to develop, implement, and enforce a

stormwater management program. The details of the development, implementation, and enforcement of the Phase II General Permit requirements are provided in the City's stormwater management program, which was approved in 2003. A Notice of Intent will also be filed with the RWQCB for the project's reliance on this permit.