



DEVELOPMENT SERVICES – PLANNING

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**NOTICE OF PREPARATION
Bilby Ridge Specific Plan
Draft Environmental Impact Report**

Date: January 13, 2023
To: Public Agencies and Interested Parties
From: City of Elk Grove
Subject: Notice of Preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Report for the Bilby Ridge Specific Plan

The City of Elk Grove (City) will prepare a Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR), compliant with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), for the Bilby Ridge Specific Plan (also known as “Specific Plan” and “the Project”). Because the City has determined that an EIR will be prepared for the proposed Project, an Initial Study will not be prepared (CEQA Guidelines Section 15063[a]). In accordance with Section 15082 of the CEQA Guidelines, this Notice of Preparation (NOP) provides a Project description, location, and the probable environmental effects of construction and implementation of the proposed Specific Plan. The NOP is circulated for a public review and comment period that begins on **Friday, January 13, 2023, and ends on Monday, February 13, 2023.**

The City is soliciting comments regarding the scope and content of the EIR as they relate to other agencies’ statutory responsibilities in connection with the proposed Project, as well as comments from interested members of the public. The City will rely on responsible and trustee agencies to provide information relevant to the analysis of resources falling within the jurisdiction of such agencies. Specifically, input is required on:

- (1) **Scope of Environmental Analysis** – guidance on the scope of analysis for this EIR, including identification of specific issues that will require closer study due to the location, scale, and character of the Project;
- (2) **Mitigation Measures** – ideas for feasible mitigation, including mitigation that would avoid, offset, eliminate, or reduce potentially significant or significant impacts; and
- (3) **Alternatives** – suggestions for alternatives to the proposed Project that could reduce or avoid potentially significant or significant impacts.

The City welcomes input during the review and comment period. If the City has not received a response (or a well-justified request for additional time) from a responsible or trustee agency by the end of the review period, the City may presume that the responsible or trustee agency has no response (CEQA Guidelines Section 15082[b][2]). Please provide any written comments that you would like the City to consider, along with the name of the appropriate

contact person in your agency and their contact information, to the address shown below by **5pm on February 13, 2023**.

City of Elk Grove Development Services Department
c/o Kyra Killingsworth
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Elk Grove, CA 95758
Email: kkillingsworth@elkgrovecity.org

SCOPING MEETING

CEQA provides for a lead agency to facilitate one or more scoping meetings, which provide additional opportunity for informing the scope and content of an EIR. The City will host a scoping meeting on **Thursday, February 9, 2023**, from 5:30 P.M. to 7:30 P.M. at City of Elk Grove, Council Chambers, 8400 Laguna Palms Way, Elk Grove, CA 95758. Information related to the proposed Project, including how to access Project documents and how to participate in the public review process will be provided at the scoping meeting.

PROJECT LOCATION AND SETTING

The Specific Plan is located approximately 1.7 miles east of Interstate 5, immediately south of Bilby Road (Exhibit 1). The Specific Plan encompasses approximately 490 acres bounded by Bruceville Road on the east, Willard Parkway on the west, Bilby Road on the north, and the future Kammerer Road extension on the south. The Specific Plan is within the Bilby Ridge Sphere of Influence Area (SOIA), which was approved by the Sacramento Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo) in August of 2018. The assessor's parcels within the Project site are APN 132-0132-006, a portion of APN 132-0132-007, APNs 132-0300-001 through -005, and 132-2240-007. The Specific Plan is surrounded by agricultural operations to the south and single-family residential and related uses to the east, west, and north.

The Laguna Ridge Specific Plan and the Southeast Policy Area border the site. Properties within the Southeast Policy Area on the east side of Bruceville are planned for multi-family residential development, single-family residential development, resource management and conservation, and parks and open space. Properties south of the Project site are designated Agricultural Cropland by the Sacramento County General Plan. The Specific Plan is within the City's West Study Area, as established in the 2019 Elk Grove General Plan. The planning objective for the West Study Area is to create a diverse, walkable residential neighborhood featuring parks, public services, and lower-intensity employment opportunities. The West Study Area is divided into three districts: the Activity District in the northeast, the Open Space District, which bisects the study area from east to west, and the Residential Neighborhood District along the southern edge. The Specific Plan contains sections of each of these districts, and the City will require that planned uses in the Specific Plan are consistent with guidance outlined for these districts in the General Plan.



Exhibit 1 - Project Location

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Project Objectives

The Bilby Ridge Specific Plan proposes low-, medium-, and high-density residential development; community commercial uses; employment center uses; parks and open space; resource management and conservation; and public services (see Exhibit 2). The Project objectives include:

- Provide a framework that is consistent with the City of Elk Grove General Plan goals and policies.
- Create a land use plan with a strong community focus and identifiable sense of place.
- Organize schools, parks, open space and landscape corridors into a cohesive interconnected system.
- Establish a transportation network with a wide variety of options.
- Provide a diverse mix of housing densities and styles and encourage energy efficiency.
- Include complementary retail and service commercial.
- Define an implementation strategy that is flexible and able to respond to future economic and social changes.

Proposed Land Uses

The proposed Bilby Ridge land use plan (see Exhibit 2) includes parks and open space, commercial uses, a mix of residential densities, a proposed 10-acre elementary school site, a fire station, and flood control and water quality facilities. Overall, the Specific Plan proposes a total of 2,714 residential units and 27.7 acres of commercial and employment-generating development, along with public facilities and open space on approximately 490 acres.

Community Commercial and Employment Center uses are planned for development on 16.6 acres and 11.1 acres of land area, respectively, in the southern and eastern portions of the Specific Plan. These land use designations are intended to provide space for retail, commercial services, and professional offices.

Four High-Density Residential areas, totaling 31.3 acres are planned for development, primarily in the southeastern portion of the Specific Plan, with additional land in the southern central and western portions of the Plan Area. High-Density Residential areas would allow for development of up to 40 units per acre. Medium-Density Residential areas are planned for 102.3 acres at densities between 7 and 15 units per acre. Low-Density Residential development is proposed for 165.1 acres, anticipated to accommodate between 4 and 7 units per acre.

Five parks, ranging in size from 2.4 to 23 acres would be distributed throughout the Specific Plan and are divided into three categories: community park, neighborhood park, and local park. A Community Park is proposed in the center of Bilby Ridge Specific Plan and would provide for large, active recreation fields alongside areas contemplated for more passive activities. The Neighborhood Parks are proposed for the eastern and western sides of the Specific Plan. Local Parks within the Specific Plan would be designed to provide access to amenities such as playgrounds and small group picnic areas.

Resource Management and Conservation lands will occupy 40.8 acres adjacent to Kammerer Road and are proposed for flood control, water quality, and will run parallel to a trail system providing residents access to parks and other community amenities. The Specific Plan proposes an Elementary School adjacent to the Community Park and a proposed Fire Station site located near Bruceville Road.



LAND USE KEY					
	MDR	High Density Residential		CC	Employment Center
	MDR	Medium Density Residential		P/O'S	Parks & Open Space
	LDR	Low Density Residential		PS	Public Services
	CC	Community Commercial		RMC	Resource Management & Conservation

NOT TO SCALE
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Source: Black Oak Design 2022; adapted by AECOM 2022

Exhibit 2 – Conceptual Land Use Plan

Infrastructure

The following infrastructure and improvements required to serve development proposed under the Specific Plan. The Specific Plan will detail the proposed timing and phasing of these improvements.

Circulation

The Specific Plan is surrounded on all sides by major or principal arterials. The interior streets connect residents to the school site, parks, commercial sites, and employment. These internal streets will be shorter, more focused on community use, have closer intersection spacing, and would accommodate relatively slower speeds. The Specific Plan has three intersections on Bilby Road, two intersections on Bruceville Road, one intersection on Willard Parkway, and one intersection on the planned Kammerer Road alignment (see Exhibit 2).

These intersection improvements will require off-site construction of traffic signals, curb returns and sidewalks, and lane striping, especially along Bilby Road, Bruceville Road and Willard Parkway. The collector street connection to the west of Willard Parkway right-of-way requires an approximate 40-foot off-site connection between the Specific Plan and the right-of-way.

The Specific Plan will also provide a pedestrian and bikeway system, including a 10-foot Class 1 separated trail located within the greenway that bisects the Specific Plan.

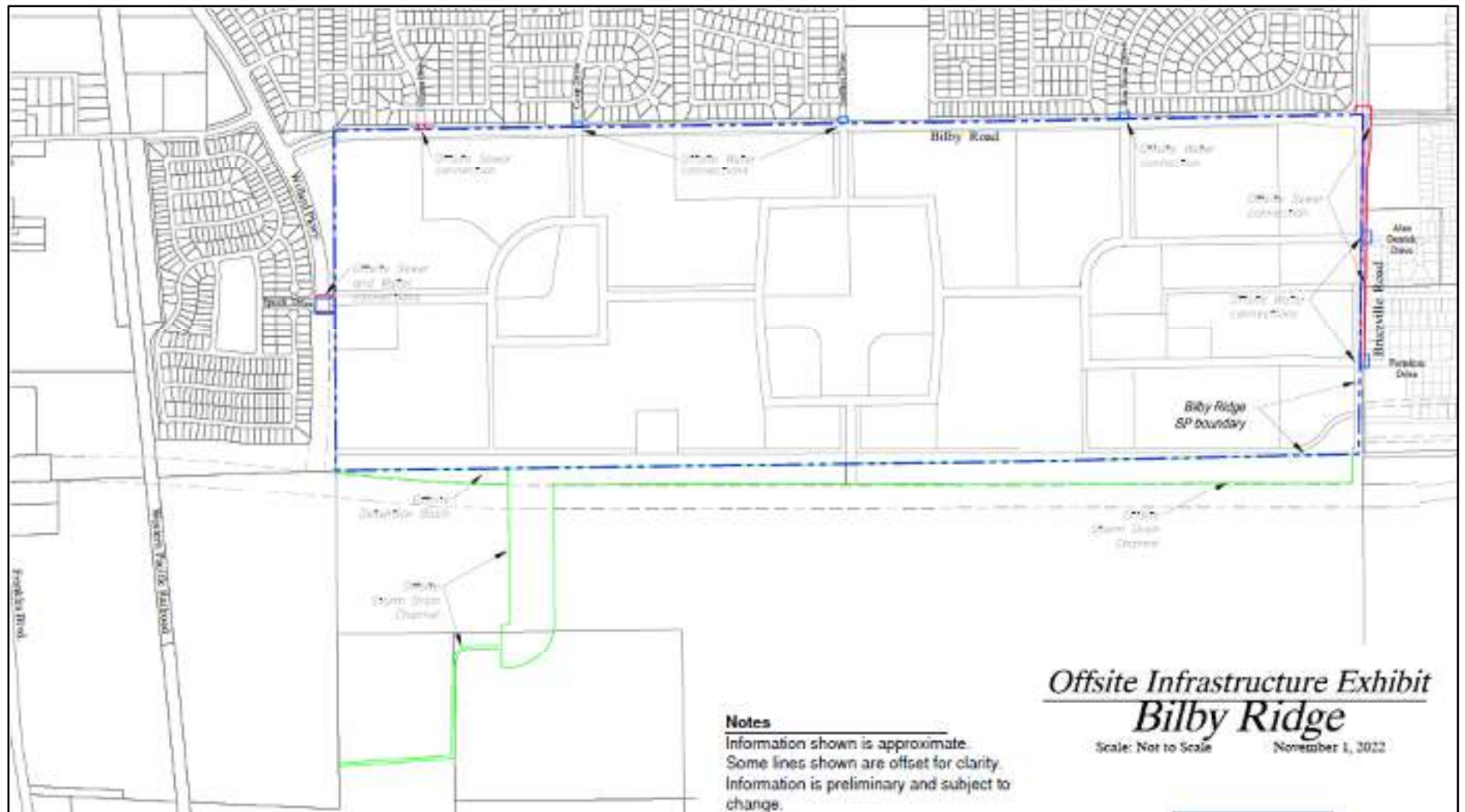
Public transit services will be provided by the Sacramento Regional Transit District. The local route E11 provides regular bus service between Laguna Town Hall and the Civic Center with the route running along Bilby Road. The Specific Plan will also provide bus turnouts, benches, and shelters consistent with the requirements found in the improvement standards or as determined by the City of Elk Grove.

Utilities and Service Systems

WATER

The Specific Plan is located within the Sacramento County Water Agency (SCWA) Zone 40. Existing water supply infrastructure exists in close proximity to the Specific Plan. To provide potable water service, amendments and updates must be made to the Zone 40 Water Supply Master Plan and the Urban Water Management Plan. Exhibit 3 shows existing off-site water supply infrastructure. Additional infrastructure, including a groundwater treatment plant and storage facilities, water wells, and transmission and distribution mains may be required.

Water trunk mains exist in all three perimeter roads and off-site water extensions will consist of short connections, all within the existing road right-of-way. This includes one connection west to Willard Parkway, three connections north to Bilby Road, and two connections east to Bruceville Road.



Source: Walters Land Planning, 2022; adopted by AECOM, 2022.

Exhibit 3 – Proposed Off-Site Infrastructure Connections

SEWER

The Specific Plan will be served by the Sacramento Area Sewer District (SASD) for local sewer connection and conveyance and the Sacramento Regional County Sanitation District (Regional San) for regional wastewater treatment. The Specific Plan is outside of the service boundaries of these service districts. Development of the Specific Plan will require annexation into SASD and Regional San service boundaries.

One off-site sewer connection to the west of the Specific Plan will follow the collector street connection west to Willard Parkway, and another off-site connection will be located near the northwestern corner of the Specific Plan. These off-site connections will be to existing sewer trunk mains within Willard Parkway and Bilby Road. A third sewer connection will extend along the east side of Bruceville Road (just outside the Specific Plan) and will run from the south collector street connection north to Bilby Road. This extension will be within the existing Bruceville Road right-of-way.

DRAINAGE

Storm drainage and flood control infrastructure and facilities will be constructed to serve the Specific Plan, which has been divided into six independent drainage sheds. Each of these drainage sheds would be served by a drainage basin. These basins would discharge into the Shed C Channel, an existing man-made agricultural channel that crosses through the project area and that would be improved to provide a multi-functional storm drainage and flood control corridor. The off-site portion would be located between the Specific Plan and the right-of-way for the future Kammerer Road extension (Exhibit 3). An interim off-site section of the Shed C drainage channel is planned to be expanded to continue south from the Specific Plan.

ELECTRICITY, NATURAL GAS, AND COMMUNICATIONS

The Specific Plan will require coordination with electricity, natural gas, and communications utility providers to ensure adequate capacity, appropriate connections, and other improvements necessary to serve planned development. Solid waste disposal and recycling services for the City of Elk Grove are currently provided by a private organization under contract with the City. The Specific Plan will utilize this service for its solid waste and recycling needs.

PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES

An elementary school is proposed near the center of the Specific Plan, and a fire station would be located on the eastern portion of the Specific Plan to accommodate increased demand for such services. Law enforcement services would be provided by the Elk Grove Police Department, and fire protection and emergency medical response services would be provided by the Cosumnes Community Services District (CCSD).

REQUIRED APPROVALS

In August of 2018, the Sacramento Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo) approved an amendment to the City of Elk Grove Sphere of Influence (SOI), the SASD SOI, and the Regional San SOI. This SOI amendment includes the entire proposed Specific Plan. Since the LAFCo approval of the SOI amendment, the City also adopted an updated General Plan, which included the proposed Specific Plan as a part of the West Study Area.

The Project includes a request for the approval of a Specific Plan and pre-zoning for annexation of the Project into the City limits. Approval and buildout of the Project (including subsequent developments proposed under the Specific Plan) is anticipated to require the following approvals and actions:

- City of Elk Grove certification of the EIR and adoption of the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program; adoption of the Bilby Ridge Specific Plan; rezoning and zoning; amendment to the City of Elk Grove General Plan; approval of a Tax Exchange Agreement; and a development agreement;
- Future projects within the Specific Plan may require additional entitlements from the City, including small-lot tentative subdivision maps, design review, and/or conditional use permits and will require issuance of grading and building permits;
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Section 404 permit;
- Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board and State Water Resources Control Board 401 certification or water discharge permit;
- Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District approval of authority to construct;
- Sacramento County Water Agency approval to include the Specific Plan within the Zone 40 service area and approval of proposed water supply improvements;
- Sacramento Area Sewer District approval of proposed wastewater improvements;
- Sacramento Metropolitan Utility District approval of electrical facilities; and
- Sacramento LAFCo approval of annexation of the Specific Plan.

Other local, State, or federal approvals or permits may be necessary for subsequent land use entitlements, pursuant to applicable laws and regulations.

APPROACH TO ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

As required by CEQA, the EIR will describe existing conditions and evaluate the potential environmental effects of the proposed Bilby Ridge Specific Plan and a reasonable range of alternatives, including the no-project alternative. It will address direct, indirect, cumulative, and growth inducing effects. The EIR will identify feasible mitigation measures, if available, to reduce significant and potentially significant impacts.

POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

The following environmental topic areas are preliminarily anticipated to be evaluated in the EIR:

- **Aesthetics**—The EIR will describe existing visual conditions and will evaluate the potential impacts on scenic vistas, scenic resources, and visual character that may result from development of the Specific Plan and off-site improvement areas, as well as impacts related to light and glare.

- **Agriculture and Forestry Resources**—The EIR will describe existing agricultural resources and evaluate potential direct and indirect impacts from conflicts with existing zoning or Williamson Act contracts, and from conversion to urban uses of lands designated as Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance and any lands within a Farmland Security Zone. This section will also document that no forest land resources are present.
- **Air Quality**—The EIR will discuss the regional and local air quality setting and quantify air pollutant emissions for construction and subsequent operation based on the proposed land use designations and assumptions related to off-site improvement areas. Emissions will use methods consistent with, and will be compared with the significance thresholds developed by the Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District (SMAQMD), and the EIR will explain how methods and thresholds are designed to assess potential human health effects.
- **Biological Resources**—The EIR will define the biological resources in the Project area and surrounding habitats and evaluate the Project’s potential effects on wetlands, other sensitive natural communities, and special-status species (e.g., raptors and other migratory birds). This section will also address the relationship between the proposed Specific Plan and the *South Sacramento Habitat Conservation Plan*.
- **Cultural and Tribal Cultural Resources**—The EIR will describe existing cultural and Tribal Cultural Resources and evaluate potential impacts on those resources, including the potential to affect undiscovered resources during excavation and grading. The EIR will also include consultation with California Native American tribes to assess potential impacts on Tribal Cultural Resources.
- **Energy**—The EIR will describe current electricity and natural gas utility providers and evaluate whether the Project would have any potentially significant effects related to energy demand, energy resources, transportation energy use, or compliance with energy standards.
- **Geology, Soils, Minerals, and Paleontology**—The EIR will describe the geological setting and potential environmental effects related to geologic and soils hazards, mineral resources, and unique paleontological (fossil) resources. This section will outline design measures and best management practices to minimize impacts on people or structures from seismic activity. The EIR will also identify any potential impacts from loss of mineral resources and on undiscovered fossils.
- **Greenhouse Gas Emissions**—The Specific Plan will be required to demonstrate consistency with the City’s Climate Action Plan, and rather than providing a quantified GHG emissions estimate for the proposed Project, the EIR will document this consistency for the purposes of evaluating GHG emissions effects consistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15183.5.
- **Hazards, Hazardous Materials, and Wildfire**—The EIR will identify potential impacts from the transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials; releases of hazardous materials; emissions of hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste near a school; location on a hazardous materials site; location within an airport land use plan or in the vicinity of a private airstrip; impairment of an adopted emergency response or evacuation plan; and exposure to wildland fires.

- **Hydrology and Water Quality**—The EIR will evaluate hydrologic and water quality conditions and potential short-term construction-related effects on water quality from stormwater runoff, as well as longer term effects on stormwater drainage and maintenance effects on water quality. This section will also evaluate potential impacts on groundwater recharge and sustainability, and on surface water hydrology from the addition of impervious surfaces associated with future residential, institutional, commercial, and industrial development. This section will outline the design features and stormwater retention features required to minimize hydrology and water quality effects, as well as the proposed Project’s consistency with regional flood protection planning.
- **Land Use and Planning, Population, and Housing**—The EIR will describe existing land uses and evaluate the potential for the proposed Project to divide an existing community or conflict with existing, adopted land use and natural resource plans or regulations that were adopted with the purpose of reducing or avoiding environmental effects. The EIR will evaluate the potential of the proposed Project to induce substantial population growth or displace substantial numbers of housing units or people that could lead to potentially significant physical environmental effects.
- **Noise and Vibration**—The EIR will describe existing noise and vibration conditions and the potential impacts of construction of the proposed land uses and off-site improvements. Project noise levels from construction and operation of proposed uses will be estimated, accounting for intervening topography, noise barriers, and distance, and will be compared with existing ambient noise levels and applicable noise standards and local noise ordinances.
- **Public Services and Recreation**—The EIR will analyze existing public services and potential increases in demand, and will evaluate whether those demands would require new facilities (e.g., schools, fire protection, and law enforcement) that could result in potentially significant environmental impacts. The EIR will also evaluate impacts related to recreational facilities, including indirect effects on existing facilities.
- **Transportation**—The EIR will identify existing conditions, existing plus project conditions, cumulative no-project conditions, and cumulative plus project conditions. The EIR will present a level of traffic stress analysis for pedestrian and bicycle facilities in the vicinity of the Specific Plan to characterize the comfort associated with a roadway or intersection for pedestrians and the comfort associated with roadways, or the mental ease people experience riding on them. The EIR will summarize an analysis of vehicular travel demand (vehicle miles traveled or “VMT”) using the significance thresholds presented in the City’s General Plan. The EIR will evaluate hazards due to a design feature or incompatible use; inadequate emergency access; and conflicts with adopted plans, policies, or programs regarding public transit, bicycle, or pedestrian facilities.
- **Utilities**—The EIR will evaluate physical environmental impacts related to the on- and off-site expansion and extension of utility systems, such as those that are required for water supply, stormwater drainage, wastewater treatment, and solid waste disposal. As noted, infrastructure that will serve the Specific Plan will need to be provided consistent with relevant service agency standards and consistent with the City’s General Plan.

LOCAL AGENCY FORMATION COMMISSION

Analysis and documentation prepared to support the Specific Plan will also address topics that are the purview of the Sacramento Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo), including a Plan for Services that will identify service providers and whether they can provide service without adversely affecting existing service levels, provision of service without adverse impact to existing ratepayers, and whether the City would perform any services now being provided by another service provider, and whether substitution of the City for that provider would have adverse effects of the previous providers' ability to maintain services. The City anticipates that material to support the Specific Plan would also address environmental justice, consistent with City policy. Approval by Sacramento LAFCo would be required for various associated reorganizations (annexations/detachments) within the Project area.