

**THE CITY OF ELK GROVE FINDINGS REQUIRED UNDER
THE CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT
(Public Resources Code Section 21000 et seq.)**

I. Introduction

The City of Elk Grove (City) prepared a Final Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the proposed City of Elk Grove General Plan Update Project (Project).

The EIR addresses the potential environmental effects associated with implementation of the City's General Plan Update. The EIR focuses on impacts from changes to land use associated with buildout of the proposed land use maps (Draft EIR Figure 2.0-3) and impacts from the resultant population and employment growth in the City's current Planning Area and the four Study Areas. The General Plan Update's buildout would allow for a total population in the City of approximately 329,238 with up to 101,931 dwelling units and 122,802 jobs on 34,956 acres. In addition to the General Plan Update, which includes updates to the land use diagram, the General Plan Update Project includes the following related components: Climate Action Plan Update; Specific Plan Amendments; Zoning Code Amendments; and Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update.

The Findings and Statement of Overriding Considerations set forth below (Findings) are presented for adoption by the City Council, as the City's findings under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (Public Resources Code Section 21000 et seq.) and the CEQA Guidelines (California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Section 15000 et seq.) relating to the Project. The Findings provide the written analysis and conclusions of this Council regarding the Project's environmental impacts, mitigation measures, alternatives to the Project, and the overriding considerations, which in this Council's view justify approval of the City of Elk Grove General Plan Update Project, despite environmental effects.

II. General Findings and Overview

A. Procedural Background

In accordance with Section 15082 of the CEQA Guidelines, the City prepared a Notice of Preparation (NOP) of an EIR for the Project on June 23, 2017. This notice was circulated to the public, local, State, and federal agencies, and other interested parties to solicit comments on the Project. After initial review of the Project, the City determined that an EIR should be prepared and therefore no initial study was prepared and is not required, pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15063(a). The City held an EIR scoping meeting on July 11, 2017, pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21083.9 and CEQA Guidelines Section 15083. The 60-day review period for the Draft EIR (State Clearinghouse Number 2017062058) began on July 27, 2018 and ended on September 26, 2018.

The City prepared written responses to the comments received during the comment period and included these responses in a separate volume entitled City of Elk Grove General Plan Update Project Final Environmental Impact Report. The Final EIR provides a list of those who commented on the DEIR, copies of written comments (coded for reference), and written responses to comments regarding the environmental review. The Final EIR was made available for public review on **January 4, 2019**.

B. Record of Proceedings and Custodian of Record

For purposes of CEQA and the findings set forth herein, the record of proceedings for the City's findings and determinations consists of the following documents and testimony, at a minimum:

- The NOP, comments received on the NOP, and all other public notices issued by the City in relation to the City of Elk Grove General Plan Update Project EIR (e.g., Notice of Availability).
- The City of Elk Grove General Plan Update Project Draft EIR, associated appendices to the Draft EIR, and technical materials cited in the Draft EIR.
- The City of Elk Grove General Plan Update Project Final EIR, including comment letters, and technical materials cited in the Final EIR.
- All non-draft and/or non-confidential reports and memoranda prepared by the City and consultants related to the Project or any of the above associated environmental documents.
- Minutes and/or transcripts of the discussions regarding the Project and/or Project components at public hearings held by the City of Elk Grove Planning Commission and City Council.
- Staff reports associated with Planning Commission and City Council meetings on the Project.
- Those categories of materials identified in Public Resources Code Section 21167.6.

The City Clerk is the custodian of the administrative record. The documents and materials that constitute the administrative record are available for review at the City of Elk Grove offices located at 8401 Laguna Palms Way, Elk Grove, California, 95758.

C. Consideration of the Environmental Impact Report

In adopting these Findings, the City Council finds that the Final EIR was presented to this Council, the decision-making body of the lead agency, which reviewed and considered the information in the Final EIR prior to approving the City of Elk Grove General Plan Update Project. By these findings, the Council ratifies, adopts, and incorporates the analysis, explanations, findings, responses to comments, and conclusions of the Final EIR. The City Council finds that the Final EIR was completed in compliance with CEQA. The Final EIR represents the independent judgment of the City.

D. Severability

If any term, provision, or portion of these Findings or the application of these Findings to a particular situation is held by a court to be invalid, void, or unenforceable, the remaining provisions of these Findings, or their application to other actions related to the City of Elk Grove General Plan Update Project, shall continue in full force and effect unless amended or modified by the City.

E. Summary of Environmental Findings

The City Council has determined that based on all of the evidence presented, including, but not limited to, the EIR, written and oral testimony given at meetings and hearings, and submission of comments from the public, organizations, and regulatory agencies, and the responses prepared to the public comments, the following environmental impacts associated with the Project are:

1. Potentially Significant and Cannot be Avoided or Reduced to a Less Than Significant Level

Project-Specific

- Changes in visual character; and additional new sources of light and glare
- Conversion of Important Farmlands and/or lands under Williamson Act contracts to urban uses
- Short-term increases in criteria air pollutants due to construction activities
- Long-term increase in criteria air pollutant and ozone precursor emissions; and inconsistency with applicable air quality attainment plans
- Increased exposure of existing or planned sensitive receptors to stationary or mobile-source toxic air contaminant emissions
- Increased exposure of sensitive receptors to odorous emissions
- Direct and/or indirect effects on species listed as endangered, threatened, rare, proposed and candidate plants and wildlife
- Direct and/or indirect effects on species non-listed special-status species (Species of Special Concern, fully protected, and locally important)
- Generation of greenhouse gas emissions that cannot be reduced sufficiently with implementation of policies and programs included in the General Plan and Climate Action Plan (CAP) Update to meet the State's longer-term 2050 goal
- Increased demand on groundwater supplies, which could affect aquifer characteristics
- Increases in transportation noise, including traffic noise levels along many existing roadways in the City
- Increases in school-age children, resulting in the construction of new public-school facilities, the construction of which could result in environmental impacts
- Increased demand for domestic water supply, which may result in the need for additional water supplies; and construction of new and expanded water supply infrastructure, the construction of which could result in environmental impacts
- Addition of traffic to existing unacceptable conditions along State Route (SR) 99

Cumulative

- Contribution to cumulative changes in visual character and increases in nighttime lighting and glare
 - Contribution to cumulative loss of farmland in the region
 - Contribution to cumulative criteria air pollutant and ozone precursor emissions in the region
 - Contribution to cumulative impacts on biological resources in the region
 - Contribution to increased demand for groundwater, which could interfere with aquifer characteristics
 - Contribution to noise levels along many roadway segments in the Planning Area due to cumulative traffic volumes
 - Contribution to cumulative demand for new public schools, the construction of which could result in environmental impacts
 - Contribution to increased demand for domestic water supply
 - Contribution to increased demand for wastewater treatment, which could result in the need for facility improvements, the construction of which could result in environmental impacts
 - Contribution of traffic, resulting in unacceptable levels of service (LOS) at some intersections and some roadway segment
 - Contribution of traffic to existing unacceptable LOS F conditions along State Route 99 and Interstate 5 (I-5)
 - Increased vehicle miles traveled (VMT)
- 2. Potentially Significant Impacts That Can be Avoided or Reduced to a Less Than Significant Level Through Implementation of Mitigation Measures Identified in the General Plan Update Project EIR**

Project-Specific

- Potential impacts on cultural resources (historical resources, archaeological resources, tribal cultural resources, and human remains)
- Potential impacts on undiscovered unique paleontological resources in paleontologically sensitive rock formations
- Potential for inadvertent release of hazardous materials during ground disturbance and demolition activities if contaminants present and not properly managed

Cumulative

- Contribution to potential impacts on cultural resources (historical resources, archaeological resources, tribal cultural resources, and human remains)
- Contribution to potential impacts on undiscovered unique paleontological resources in paleontologically sensitive rock formations

3. Impacts That Are Less Than Significant and Less Than Cumulatively Considerable As Identified In the General Plan Project EIR

Project-Specific

- No impacts to designated scenic vistas or highways within view of the Planning Area.
- Less than significant impact from urban land activity types adjacent to primarily agricultural land activity types that would impair agricultural production and result in land use compatibility conflicts.
- Less than significant impacts from localized concentrations of mobile-source carbon monoxide.
- Less than significant impact from loss of riparian vegetation, sensitive natural communities, and/or state or federally protected wetlands.
- Less than significant impact to wildlife movement.
- Would not conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources.
- Would not conflict with the provisions of an adopted habitat conservation plan.
- Less than significant impacts associated with seismic ground failure, including surface rupture, ground shaking, liquefaction, or landslides.
- Less than significant impacts from grading and excavation activities that could result in the potential for topsoil erosion.
- Less than significant impacts as a result of underlying expansive or unstable soil properties.
- Less than significant impacts from conditions where soils would not be capable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems.
- Future development that would occur under the proposed Project would result in GHG emissions reductions sufficient to meet GHG reduction targets and goals, which are consistent and aligned with the goals identified in the 2017 Scoping Plan to meet the statewide GHG emission reduction targets for 2020 and 2030, as established by AB 32 and SB 32.

- The Project would not result in a wasteful or inefficient use of transportation-related energy, nor would it conflict with State or local plans for renewable energy or energy efficiency.
- Less than significant impact from increases in hazardous materials used, stored, and transported in the Planning Area.
- Less than significant impact from hazardous materials emissions within one-quarter mile of existing schools.
- Would not impair or hinder emergency response or evacuation in the Planning Area.
- The proposed Project would not include development that could be subject to wildland fire hazard risk.
- Implementation of the proposed Project would not result in future development that would involve construction-related activities that could expose soil to erosion during storm events, causing degradation of water quality. Urban runoff from new projects in the Planning Area post construction would also not contribute pollutants that could affect surface water or groundwater quality.
- The proposed Project would not expose new development to flood hazard risk or cause new flooding or exacerbate flood hazards due to future development in 100- and/or 200-year flood zones.
- Less than significant impacts as a result of noise impacts due to construction activities.
- Less than significant impact from future non-transportation or stationary noise increases.
- Less than significant impact from construction activities that could expose receptors to excessive groundborne vibration, and new industrial and commercial land uses that could expose receptors to excessive groundborne vibration from long-term operations.
- Less than significant impact from an increased demand for fire protection and emergency medical services.
- Less than significant impact from an increased demand for law enforcement service.
- Less than significant impact from an increased need for park and recreation facilities and trails.
- Less than significant impact from increased wastewater generation and demand for wastewater treatment services.
- Less than significant impact from increased solid waste generation.
- Less than significant impact from increased demand for electric, natural gas, and telephone services.

- Changes in land use patterns would not negatively affect existing air traffic patterns.
- Less than significant impact from increases in hazards due to design features of transportation facilities.
- Less than significant impact as a result of increased travel demand on the transportation network.
- Less than significant impact as a result of increased travel demand on the transportation network and its effect on emergency access.
- Less than significant impact from conflicts with adopted policies, plans, or programs regarding public transit, bicycle, or pedestrian facilities.

Cumulative

- The proposed Project would not contribute to cumulative geologic and soil impacts.
- The proposed Project would not substantially contribute to a substantial increase in risks as a result of the increase in use, storage, disposal, or transport of hazardous materials.
- Cumulative development would not result in construction activities that could temporarily affect roadways and increase the number of people who may need to evacuate the region in the event of an emergency.
- Cumulative development would not be subject to wildland fire hazard risk.
- Future projects that could be constructed in the Planning Area under the proposed Project would not create or contribute runoff that would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems, or contribute additional sources of polluted runoff.
- The proposed Project would not substantially contribute to flood hazard risk, new flooding, or exacerbate flood hazards due to future development in 100- and/or 200-year flood zones.
- Implementation of the Project would not result in a substantial contribution to cumulative construction vibration and noise levels in the Project area.
- Less than cumulatively considerable impact from an increased demand for fire protection and emergency medical services.
- Less than cumulatively considerable impact from an increased demand for law enforcement service.
- Less than cumulatively considerable impact from an increased need for park and recreation facilities and trails.
- Less than cumulatively considerable impact from increased demand for hauling and disposal services for solid waste.

- Less than cumulatively considerable impact from increased demand for electric, natural gas, and telephone services.

III. Findings and Recommendations Regarding Significant and Unavoidable and Cumulatively Considerable Impacts

A. Aesthetics

1. Change in Visual Character (EIR Impact 5.1.2)

(a) **Potential Impact.** Buildout of the Planning Area would result in new development in currently undeveloped and rural areas, particularly in the Study Areas, and an increase in density in urbanized areas through infill development on currently vacant parcels. Such development would convert the visual character of these areas from agricultural fields, natural habitat, and vacant parcels to an urban/suburban developed character. Views of these undeveloped areas would be replaced by views of houses, office and commercial buildings, light industrial complexes, public facilities, and associated improvements including roads, parking lots, fencing, utilities, and ornamental landscaping. The conversion from the current rural/natural character to a more urbanized character would be substantial and permanent and is a potentially significant impact. See DEIR pages 5.1-8 and 5.1-9.

(b) **Mitigation Measures.** Development within the City is subject to discretionary Design Review pursuant to Municipal Code Section 23.16.080 (Design Review). All new development in the Planning Area would be required to comply with the City's Design Guidelines. General Plan goals and policies, including but not limited to Goal LU 5 (Consistent, High Quality Urban Design) and Policies LU-5-1 through LU-5-12 would ensure the compatibility of adjacent land uses, protection of residential neighborhoods from incompatible activities, and buffering of incompatible uses to retain the existing community character. Policies LU-1-5, NR-1-8, and NR-2-3 encourage development clustering where possible to protect scenic resources. In addition, the East, South, and West Study Areas are proposed to have agricultural buffers to provide a visual separation between future growth areas and the active agricultural uses outside the Planning Area. Additional policies (e.g., NR-1-4 and NR-1-8) require the protection of stream corridors, wetland features, native trees, and other natural resources. However, there is no additional feasible mitigation beyond compliance with the City's Design Guidelines, supplemental guidelines, and General Plan Update policies that would further lessen impacts or reduce them to less than significant. Therefore, mitigation is considered infeasible.

(c) **Findings.** Based on the EIR and the entire record before this City Council, this City Council finds that:

(1) **No further mitigation.** No additional feasible mitigation available beyond compliance with the City's Design Guidelines, supplemental guidelines, and proposed General Plan policies.

(2) **Remaining Impacts.** Development of the Project site, particularly in the Study Areas, would permanently alter the existing visual character of the

Project area from undeveloped land with open views to urban and developed. Any development of the site would permanently alter the undeveloped nature of the site, there are no additional feasible mitigation measures that would meet the objectives of the Project while maintaining the existing visual character of the site. This impact would remain significant and unavoidable.

- (3) **Overriding Considerations.** The environmental, economic, social, and other benefits of the Project override any remaining significant adverse impact of the Project resulting from the change in existing visual character, as more fully stated in the Statement of Overriding Considerations in Section VIII of this document.

2. Light and Glare (EIR Impact 5.1.3)

(a) **Potential Impact.** Development would introduce new sources of nighttime lighting and illumination into the undeveloped or underutilized portions of the Planning Area. Additional nighttime lighting associated with future development in the Planning Area, particularly in the Study Areas where there is little nighttime lighting, would also contribute to skyglow conditions. Skyglow could be visible to residents in existing rural areas east of SR 99 with unobstructed views of the Planning Area (i.e., areas that currently appear "dark" to those observers would no longer appear dark). Skyglow effects may also be subjectively perceived as more prominent in communities such as Galt to the south because the source of nighttime lighting would be closer to the community. Increased skyglow resulting from new sources of nighttime lighting in the Planning Area could further diminish visibility of stars and other astronomical features within the Planning Area as well as in the region. Thus, the effects of skyglow could extend beyond the Planning Area, affecting rural areas and other jurisdictions, and is a potentially significant impact. See DEIR pages 5.1-9 through 5.1-11.

(b) **Mitigation Measures.** Municipal Code Chapter 23.56 addresses standards for lighting as part of new development. The City's Design Guidelines require that exterior building and site lighting be designed so that light is not directed off site and the light source is shielded downward from direct off-site viewing. General Plan Update Policy LU-5-4 require that nonglare glass be used in all nonresidential buildings to reduce impacts from glare. However, there is no additional feasible mitigation beyond compliance with the City's Design Guidelines, supplemental guidelines, and General Plan Update policies that would further lessen impacts or reduce them to less than significant. Therefore, mitigation is considered infeasible.

(c) **Findings.** Based on the EIR and the entire record before this City Council, this City Council finds that:

(1) **No further mitigation.** No additional feasible mitigation available beyond compliance with the City's Design Guidelines, supplemental guidelines, and proposed General Plan policies.

(2) **Remaining Impacts.** Compliance with the City's Design Guidelines, supplemental guidelines, and General Plan Update policies would reduce localized effects of light and glare, such as spillover light, associated with

development of individual projects within the Planning Area. There is no additional feasible mitigation that would reduce the Project's contribution of light and glare from future development throughout the City and its effects on skyglow and the impact would remain significant and unavoidable.

(3) Overriding Considerations. The environmental, economic, social, and other benefits of the Project override any remaining significant adverse impact of the Project resulting from increases in light and glare in the Project area, as more fully stated in the Statement of Overriding Considerations in Section VIII of this document.

3. Cumulative Visual Quality Impacts (EIR Impact 5.1.4)

(a) Potential Impact. Continued urbanization of the region in accordance with approved plans, together with cumulative development projects, would convert agricultural and open space land to urban uses with residential and nonresidential buildings and associated roadways and other infrastructure. Although individual development projects would be responsible for incorporating mitigation to minimize their visual impacts, the net result would be a general conversion of areas with an open, rural character to a more urban and developed character. The change in character associated with this development would be a significant cumulative impact. The Project would be a continuation of the overall urbanization of the City and would extend the City's developed area along the urban edge. While it is the City's intention to develop these areas, development under the Project, in combination with other development in the region, would permanently alter the character of lands with rural and agricultural visual character to urban developed uses. Therefore, the Project's contribution to the change in character is cumulatively considerable. See DEIR pages 5.1-12 and 5.1-13.

(b) Mitigation Measures. Compliance with the City's Design Guidelines, supplemental guidelines, and proposed General Plan policies would guide future projects to provide a quality visual character of future development. However, even with implementation of these guidelines and policies, future development would substantially change the visual character of the Planning Area and the Project's contribution to the urbanization of the region. However, there is no additional feasible mitigation beyond compliance with the City's Design Guidelines, supplemental guidelines, and General Plan Update policies that would further lessen the Project's contribution to cumulative visual resources impacts or reduce them to less than significant. Therefore, mitigation is considered infeasible.

(c) Findings. Based on the EIR and the entire record before this City Council, this City Council finds that:

(1) No further mitigation. Compliance with the City's Design Guidelines, supplemental guidelines, and proposed General Plan policies would guide future projects to provide a quality visual character of future development. However, even with implementation of these guidelines and policies, future development would substantially change the visual character of the Planning Area and the Project's contribution to the

urbanization of the region. No further feasible mitigation is available to reduce the Project's contribution to the regional change in visual character.

(2) Remaining Impacts. Compliance with the City's Design Guidelines, supplemental guidelines, and General Plan Update policies would guide future projects to provide a quality visual character of future development. However, even with implementation of these guidelines and policies, future development would substantially change the visual character of the Planning Area and the Project's contribution to the urbanization of the region. No further mitigation is available to reduce the Project's contribution to the regional change in visual character, and the cumulative impact would remain significant and unavoidable.

(3) Overriding Considerations. The environmental, economic, social, and other benefits of the Project override any remaining significant adverse cumulative impact of the Project resulting from changes in visual quality in the Project area, as more fully stated in the Statement of Overriding Considerations in Section VIII of this document.

5. Cumulative Light and Glare Impacts (EIR Impact 5.1.5)

(a) Potential Impact. Continued urbanization of the region in accordance with applicable land use plans, together with cumulative development projects, would introduce sources of light and glare to areas that currently contain few light sources. Development of the Capital SouthEast Connector project, as well as development in Rancho Cordova, the Delta Shores area of the City of Sacramento, and Folsom Ranch, would add substantial sources of light and glare. Overall, this development would increase skyglow and other nighttime illumination within the region into areas that currently experience little to no skyglow. The change in amount of light and glare associated with this development would be a significant cumulative impact. Implementation of the Project, in addition to other reasonably foreseeable projects in the region, would introduce new development into undeveloped agricultural and rural areas, increasing nighttime lighting and daytime glare and contributing to regional skyglow. Therefore, the Project's contribution to the change in character is cumulatively considerable. See DEIR page 5.1-13.

(b) Mitigation Measures. Municipal Code Chapter 23.56 addresses standards for lighting as part of new development. The City's Design Guidelines require that exterior building and site lighting be designed so that light is not directed off site and the light source is shielded downward from direct off-site viewing. General Plan Update Policy LU-5-4 require that nonglare glass be used in all nonresidential buildings to reduce impacts from glare. However, there is no additional feasible mitigation beyond compliance with the City's Design Guidelines, supplemental guidelines, and General Plan Update policies that would further lessen impacts or reduce them to less than significant. Therefore, mitigation is considered infeasible.

(c) Findings. Based on the EIR and the entire record before this City Council, this City Council finds that:

- (1) **No further mitigation.** All new development in the Planning Area would be required to comply with existing code requirements regulating lighting and glare and proposed General Plan Standard LU-5-4.a would further reduce the potential for glare. While implementation of existing codes and the proposed standard would likely reduce impacts of individual development projects to less than significant, the effect of light and glare from new development Citywide would substantially increase. No further feasible mitigation is available to reduce the Project's contribution to increased light and glare in the region.
- (2) **Remaining Impacts.** All new development in the Planning Area would be required to comply with existing code requirements regulating lighting and glare and General Plan standards would further reduce the potential for glare. While implementation of existing codes and the proposed standard would likely reduce impacts of individual development projects to less than significant, the effect of light and glare from new development Citywide would substantially increase. No further mitigation is available to reduce the Project's contribution to the regional change in visual character, and the cumulative impact would remain significant and unavoidable.
- (3) **Overriding Considerations.** The environmental, economic, social, and other benefits of the Project override any remaining significant adverse cumulative impact of the Project resulting from increases in light and glare in the region, as more fully stated in the Statement of Overriding Considerations in Section VIII of this document.

B. Agricultural Resources

1. Conversion of Agricultural Land/Loss of Important Farmland/Conflicts with Williamson Act Contracts (EIR Impact 5.2.1)

(a) **Potential Impact.** The Project would allow for development to occur on lands classified as Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, and Unique Farmland, which could result in the conversion and permanent loss of up to 5,633.4 acres of Important Farmlands. The conversion of this land would reduce the amount of Important Farmland in Sacramento County by approximately 3.8 percent. There are approximately 2,892 acres within the Planning Area subject to Williamson Act contracts, with approximately 272 acres located within the current City limits and the remaining 2,620 acres spread throughout the East, South, and West Study Areas. The Project would allow for development to occur in these areas, requiring nonrenewal or cancellation of the associated Williamson Act contracts. This urban development may impede the ability for the landowners to farm their land according to the Williamson Act contract and, therefore, be in violation of that contract. This is a potentially significant impact. See DEIR pages 5.2-18 and 5.2-19.

(b) **Mitigation Measures.** General Plan Update policies discourage the premature conversion of farmland and require mitigation of the loss of qualified agricultural lands at a 1:1 ratio. The City would be required to make findings pursuant to Section 51282 of the California Government Code by determining whether a Williamson Act Contract cancellation is consistent with the California Land

Conservation Act or in the public interest. However, there is no additional feasible mitigation beyond compliance with existing laws and procedures and General Plan Update policies that would further lessen impacts or reduce them to less than significant. Therefore, mitigation is considered infeasible.

(c) **Findings.** Based on the EIR and the entire record before this City Council, this City Council finds that:

(1) **No further mitigation.** No additional feasible mitigation available beyond compliance with existing laws and procedures and proposed General Plan policies.

(2) **Remaining Impacts.** General Plan Update policies and compliance with Williamson Act Contract cancellation statutory requirements would not prevent conversion of Important Farmland and per Policy AG-1-5 would not provide CEQA-compliant mitigation and would still result in the overall loss of farmland from current levels. This impact would remain significant and unavoidable.

(3) **Overriding Considerations.** The environmental, economic, social, and other benefits of the Project override any remaining significant adverse impact of the Project resulting from conversion of agricultural land, loss of Important Farmland, and/or conflicts with Williamson Act Contracts, as more fully stated in the Statement of Overriding Considerations in Section VIII of this document.

2. Cumulative Agriculture Resources (EIR Impact 5.2.3)

(a) **Potential Impact.** Cumulative development in the County would continue the trend of conversion of agricultural land to nonagricultural use, despite required mitigation for the loss of farmland and future development in the Planning Area associated with Project buildout would contribute to the ongoing conversion of farmland in Sacramento County to urban uses by converting up to 5,633 acres of Important Farmland to nonagricultural uses. The Project, in combination with the adopted land use plans of Sacramento County and other neighboring jurisdictions, would result in the conversion of Important Farmland, including land under Williamson Act contract, to urban uses. The loss of such farmland resulting from implementation of the Project would contribute to a significant cumulative impact and would be cumulatively considerable. See DEIR pages 5.2-20 and 5.2-21.

(b) **Mitigation Measures.** General Plan Update Policy AG-1-5, which requires mitigation for the loss of qualified agricultural lands at a 1:1 ratio, would ensure the protection of an amount of agricultural land equal to that converted. However, because the mitigation only requires protection of farmland and as a way to limit future development and does not prevent the direct loss of farmland as a result of a specific development project nor does it create new farmland, General Plan Update policies would not prevent such conversion from occurring. There is no additional feasible mitigation beyond compliance with existing laws and procedures and General Plan Update policies that would further lessen impacts or reduce them to less than significant. Therefore, mitigation is considered infeasible.

(c) **Findings.** Based on the EIR and the entire record before this City Council, this City Council finds that:

(1) **No further mitigation.** No additional feasible mitigation available beyond compliance with proposed General Plan policies and applicable Municipal Code sections.

(2) **Remaining Impacts.** General Plan Update policies require mitigation for loss of qualified agricultural lands at a 1:1 ratio, but it would not prevent such conversion from occurring. The Project would still contribute to the loss of Important Farmland in the County. Therefore, the cumulative impact would remain significant and unavoidable.

(3) **Overriding Considerations.** The environmental, economic, social, and other benefits of the Project override any remaining significant adverse cumulative impact of the Project resulting from conversion of agricultural land, loss of Important Farmland, and/or conflicts with Williamson Act Contracts, as more fully stated in the Statement of Overriding Considerations in Section VIII of this document.

C. Air Quality

1. Construction-Related Criteria Air Pollutant Emissions (EIR Impact 5.3.1)

(a) **Potential Impact.** Construction-related activities would result in Project-generated emissions of ROG, NOX, PM2.5, and PM10. Predicted maximum average daily construction-generated emissions for the Project would exceed the Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District (SMAQMD) significance criteria of 85 pounds for NOX and 80 pounds per day for PM10. This is a potentially significant impact. See DEIR pages 5.3-17 through 5.3-19.

(b) **Mitigation Measures.** General Plan Update policies and standards require implementation of SMAQMD-recommended standard construction mitigation. All projects that will involve construction activities, regardless of the significance determination, are required to implement the SMAQMD Basic Construction Emission Control Practices (Basic Practices) for controlling fugitive dust at construction sites. For projects where emissions still exceed the SMAQMD daily emissions threshold for NOX and PM after application of the above measures, the SMAQMD requires the project applicant to pay into the SMAQMD's construction mitigation fund to offset construction-generated emissions of NOX and/or PM. However, there is no additional feasible mitigation beyond compliance with existing regulations and General Plan Update policies that would further lessen impacts or reduce them to less than significant. Therefore, mitigation is considered infeasible.

(c) **Findings.** Based on the DEIR and the entire record before this City Council, this City Council finds that:

(1) **No further mitigation.** No additional feasible mitigation available beyond compliance with existing regulations and proposed General Plan policies.

(2) **Remaining Impacts.** All feasible construction emission reduction measures have been incorporated into the Project. However, these measures may

not be sufficient to fully reduce construction emissions below the applicable SMAQMD thresholds, especially since a component includes payment of a mitigation fee. Because multiple projects could be constructed simultaneously, which would collectively generate emissions, and project-specific details are unknown for individual projects at this time, it cannot be known with certainty that implementation of policies and standards and SMAQMD measure would reduce aggregated emissions to below the applicable SMAQMD thresholds. There is no additional feasible mitigation to reduce impacts to less than significant. Therefore, impacts associated with short-term construction emissions under the Project would remain significant and unavoidable.

(3) Overriding Considerations. The environmental, economic, social, and other benefits of the Project override any remaining significant adverse impact of the Project resulting from construction-related air emissions, as more fully stated in the Statement of Overriding Considerations in Section VIII of this document.

2. Long-Term Criteria Air Pollutant Emissions (EIR Impact 5.3.2)

(a) Potential Impact. Implementation of the Project would result in long-term increases in operational emissions of criteria air pollutants and ozone precursors (i.e., ROG and NOX). Project-generated increases in emissions would be predominantly associated with motor vehicle use. Implementation of General Plan Update Policy NR-4-1 could help reduce emissions of ROG, NOX, PM10, and PM2.5 to levels below the baseline conditions. However, there is inherent uncertainty as to size, intensity, and timing of future development that could occur over the Project's assumed buildout, and not all future development would be subject to the requirements of General Plan Update Policy NR-4-1: some smaller development projects could generate emissions at levels below the SMAQMD thresholds of significance and, thus, would not be subject to the 15 percent reduction requirement under General Plan Update Policy NR-4-1. In addition, because the thresholds are based on daily emissions, some larger projects could generate project-level emissions that exceed the SMAQMD thresholds, even with a 15 percent reduction after application of General Plan Update Policy NR-4-1. This is a potentially significant impact. See DEIR pages 5.3-19 through 5.3-21.

(b) Mitigation Measures. General Plan Update Policy NR-4-1 requires that all new development projects in the City with the potential to result in substantial air quality impacts incorporate features to reduce emissions equal to 15 percent compared to an "unmitigated baseline" project. Policy MOB-1-1 requires that new land use plans, amendments to such plans, and other discretionary development proposals demonstrate 15 percent reduction in VMT from existing conditions. Policy NR-4-3 promotes programs that would reduce mobile-source emissions of criteria air pollutants (i.e., VMT). Policies NR-4-4, NR-4-5, NR-4-6 would reduce single-occupant vehicle use through emphasis on demand management strategies and development of attractive alternative public transit options, which would serve to improve ambient air quality in the Planning Area to meet and/or maintain the national or state ambient air quality standards. However, there is no additional feasible mitigation that would further lessen long-term criteria air pollutant emissions impacts or

reduce them to less than significant. Therefore, mitigation is considered infeasible.

(c) **Findings.** Based on the DEIR and the entire record before this City Council, this City Council finds that:

(1) **No further mitigation.** No additional feasible mitigation available beyond compliance with proposed General Plan policies.

(2) **Remaining Impacts.** General Plan Update policies would reduce emissions of criteria air pollutants in the Planning Area, but it cannot be assumed to be sufficient to reduce operational emissions to meet the SMAQMD thresholds. All feasible operational emissions reduction measures have been incorporated into the Project through the inclusion of the General Plan Update policies. There are no additional plan-level measures available that would reduce impacts from long-term operational-related emissions. There could be additional project-specific mitigation measures to reduce long-term operational-generated emissions of air pollutants to levels below the SMAQMD's thresholds of significance. However, the nature, feasibility, and effectiveness of such project-specific mitigation cannot be determined at this time. As such, the City cannot assume that mitigation would be available and implemented such that all future operational-related emissions of air pollutants would be reduced to less than significant levels. Therefore, this impact would remain significant and unavoidable.

(3) **Overriding Considerations.** The environmental, economic, social, and other benefits of the Project override any remaining significant adverse impact of the Project resulting from long-term criteria air pollutant and ozone precursor emissions, as more fully stated in the Statement of Overriding Considerations in Section VIII of this document.

3. Toxic Air Contaminant Emissions (EIR Impact 5.3.4)

(a) **Potential Impact.** Construction of future projects in the Planning Area could result in short-term emissions of toxic air contaminants (TAC). Diesel-powered construction equipment is a primary potential source of TAC and associated with the release of diesel particulate matter (PM). Long-term emissions of TAC would be primarily associated with mobile emissions and, to a lesser extent, from new stationary sources. New TAC stationary sources could be developed but would be subject to specific siting requirements. Locating sensitive land uses such as residences, schools, or parks near SR 99 and I-5, which accommodate more than 100,000 daily vehicle trips, could result in negative health effects. With the addition of the Project, 2035 traffic volumes on the roadway segments would increase substantially such that volumes would contribute additional trips to these roadways. This is a potentially significant impact. See DEIR pages 5.3-24 through 5.3-28.

(b) **Mitigation Measures.** General Plan Update Policy NR-4-8 requires that development projects incorporate the applicable SMAQMD construction mitigation measures, which would help reduce construction diesel PM emissions. Under General Plan Update Policy NR-4-9, future sensitive land uses proposed within 500 feet of SR 99 and I-5 would be compared to the

SMAQMD screening table to assess whether TAC exposure would exceed the evaluation. In cases where the evaluation criterion is exceeded, project applicants would be required to conduct site-specific air dispersion modeling and a health risk assessment. Policies NR-4-9, NR-4-10, MOB-3-1, MOB-3-2, MOB-3-5, MOB-3-6, MOB-3-7, MOB-3-13, and MOB-7-5 would serve to lower exposure of sensitive receptors to sources of TAC throughout the Planning Area. If a new stationary source of TAC is proposed to be sited in or near the Planning Area, it would be subject to the rules under the SMAQMD Regulation 2, Permits, and emissions controls would be implemented if required. Construction and stationary source TAC would be reduced through adherence to existing regulations. However, there is no additional feasible mitigation beyond compliance with existing regulations and General Plan Update policies that would further lessen impacts or reduce them to less than significant. Therefore, mitigation is considered infeasible.

(c) **Findings.** Based on the DEIR and the entire record before this City Council, this City Council finds that:

(1) **No further mitigation.** No additional feasible mitigation available beyond compliance with existing regulations and proposed General Plan policies

(2) **Remaining Impacts.** Increased traffic on roadways resulting from the Project could exacerbate existing concentrations of TAC, resulting in a health risk for existing or new sensitive receptors. Implementation of General Plan Policies would serve to lower exposure of sensitive receptors to sources of TAC throughout the Planning Area. All feasible mobile source TAC health risk reduction measures have been incorporated into the Project through the inclusion of the General Plan Update policies. There could be additional project-specific mitigation measures to reduce the health risks of mobile-source TAC to levels below the SMAQMD's thresholds of significance. However, the nature, feasibility, and effectiveness of such project-specific mitigation cannot be determined at this time. As such, the City cannot assume that mitigation would be available and implemented such that all future health risk increases from exposure to TAC would be reduced to less than significant levels. No additional feasible mitigation is available. Therefore, this impact would remain significant and unavoidable.

(3) **Overriding Considerations.** The environmental, economic, social, and other benefits of the Project override any remaining significant adverse impact of the Project resulting from mobile-source TAC emissions, as more fully stated in the Statement of Overriding Considerations in Section VIII of this document.

4. Odorous Emissions (EIR Impact 5.3.5)

(a) **Potential Impact.** A major source of odor within the Planning Area originates from agricultural activity, primarily related to dairy farm operations. The Sacramento Regional Sanitation District (Regional San) wastewater treatment plant (WWTP) is located 1 mile north of northern boundary of the Planning Area and is an odor source. The Project could result in the development of industrial land uses that could be a source of odors. However, the actual uses

that would be developed are not known at this time, as no specific development projects are currently proposed or have been identified. As such, the degree of impact with respect to potential odors associated with future projects and their effects on adjacent receptors is uncertain. Implementation of the Project could result in increased exposure of sensitive receptors to odorous emissions as compared to baseline conditions. The potential exposure of sensitive receptors to odors would be considered potentially significant. See DEIR pages 5.3-28 through 5.3-30.

(b) Mitigation Measures. Agricultural activities are protected pursuant to Chapter 14.05 of the Municipal Code, provided farming activities are properly conducted in accordance with City standards. General Plan Update Policy AG-1-6 limits the siting of projects with sensitive land uses within existing agricultural sites to mitigate odor impacts. Policy AG-1-3 allows for buffers or feathering of lot sizes between farmland and urban uses and property title disclosures, pursuant to Municipal Code Chapter 14.05, to reduce potential impacts. There are no additional feasible mitigation measures to mitigate this impact. General Plan Update Policy NR-4-13 and associated standards would prohibit siting of new sources of odors or siting of new sensitive land uses near existing sources of odor if the SMAQMD CEQA Guide minimum screening distance is not met, or evidence is provided that a significant number of people would not be exposed to substantial odors. However, there is no additional feasible mitigation beyond compliance with existing regulations and General Plan Update policies that would further lessen impacts or reduce them to less than significant. Therefore, mitigation is considered infeasible.

(c) Findings. Based on the DEIR and the entire record before this City Council, this City Council finds that:

(1) No further mitigation. No additional feasible mitigation available beyond compliance with existing regulations and proposed General Plan policies

(2) Remaining Impacts. General Plan Update policies would help reduce the possibility of odor exposure in the Planning Area, but it cannot be assumed to be sufficient to reduce odors to less than significant levels. There are no additional plan-level measures available that would reduce impacts from short-term and long-term odors. All feasible odor reduction measures have been incorporated into the Project through the inclusion of the General Plan Update policies discussed above. There could be additional project-specific mitigation measures to reduce odors to less than significant levels. However, the nature, feasibility, and effectiveness of such project-specific mitigation cannot be determined at this time. As such, the City cannot assume that mitigation would be available and implemented such that all future odors would be reduced to less than significant levels. No additional feasible mitigation is available. Therefore, this impact would remain significant and unavoidable.

(3) Overriding Considerations. The environmental, economic, social, and other benefits of the Project override any remaining significant adverse impact of the Project resulting from odorous emissions, as more fully stated in the Statement of Overriding Considerations in Section VIII of this document.

5. **Consistency with Air Quality Attainment Plan (EIR Impact 5.3.6)**

(a) **Potential Impact.** Implementation of the Project would result in potentially significant and unavoidable impacts related to short-term construction and long-term criteria air pollutant and ozone precursor emissions after the application of all feasible mitigation (see subsections C.1 and C.2, above). Therefore, the Project would not be considered fully consistent with the primary goal of the Sacramento Regional NAAQS 8-Hour Ozone Attainment and Further Progress Plan (Attainment Plan). This is a potentially significant impact. See DEIR pages 5.3-30 through 5.3-31.

(b) **Mitigation Measures.** As explained in subsections III.C.1 and III.C.2, above, there are no additional feasible mitigation measures that would further lessen the criteria air pollutant and ozone precursor impacts or reduce them to less than significant. Therefore, mitigation is considered infeasible.

(c) **Findings.** Based on the DEIR and the entire record before this City Council, this City Council finds that:

(1) **No further mitigation.** No additional feasible mitigation available beyond compliance with existing regulations and proposed General Plan policies.

(2) **Remaining Impacts.** All feasible operational emission reduction measures have been incorporated into the Project through the inclusion of the General Plan Update policies. There are no additional plan-level measures available that would reduce impacts from short-term construction or long-term operational-related emissions to ensure consistency with the Attainment Plan. There could be additional project-specific mitigation measures to reduce emissions of air pollutants to levels below the SMAQMD's thresholds of significance. However, the nature, feasibility and effectiveness of such project-specific mitigation cannot be determined at this time. As such, the City cannot assume that mitigation would be available and implemented such that all future emissions of air pollutants would be reduced to less than significant levels. No additional feasible mitigation is available. Therefore, this impact would remain significant and unavoidable.

(3) **Overriding Considerations.** The environmental, economic, social, and other benefits of the Project override any remaining significant adverse impact of the Project resulting from inconsistency with the Attainment Plan, as more fully stated in the Statement of Overriding Considerations in Section VIII of this document.

5. **Cumulative Air Quality Impacts (EIR Impact 5.3.7)**

(a) **Potential Impact.** The Sacramento region is nonattainment for ozone and PM. Implementation of the Project would result in long-term increases in operational emissions of criteria air pollutants and ozone precursors (i.e., ROG and NOX), which would be predominantly associated with motor vehicle use. Project would result in an increase in VMT not accounted for in regional air quality control plans. The Project proposes changes in land uses as compared to baseline conditions and predicted long-term operational emissions attributable to the Project would exceed the SMAQMD significance

thresholds. As such, development constructed and operated under the Project could result in a cumulatively considerable contribution to regional problems with criteria air pollutants and ozone precursors. See DEIR pages 5.3-31 and 5.3-32.

(b) Mitigation Measures. General Plan Update Policy NR-4-1 requires that all new development projects in the City with the potential to result in substantial air quality impacts incorporate features to reduce emissions equal to 15 percent compared to an “unmitigated baseline” project. General Plan Policies MOB-1-1 and MOB-1-2 target reductions in VMT within the Planning Area. Policy NR-4-3 promotes programs that would reduce mobile-source emissions of criteria air pollutants (i.e., VMT). Policies NR-4-4, NR-4-5, NR-4-6 would reduce single-occupant vehicle use through emphasis on demand management strategies and development of attractive alternative public transit options, which would serve to improve ambient air quality in the Planning Area to meet and/or maintain the national or state ambient air quality standards. However, there is no additional feasible mitigation beyond compliance with General Plan Update policies that would further lessen impacts or reduce them to less than significant. Therefore, mitigation is considered infeasible.

(c) Findings. Based on the DEIR and the entire record before this City Council, this City Council finds that:

(1) No further mitigation. No additional feasible mitigation available beyond compliance with proposed General Plan policies.

(2) Remaining Impacts. General Plan Update policies would reduce emissions of criteria air pollutants in the Planning Area, but it cannot be assumed to be sufficient to reduce operational emissions to meet the SMAQMD thresholds. All feasible operational emissions reduction measures have been incorporated into the Project through the inclusion of the General Plan Update policies. There are no additional plan-level measures available that would reduce impacts from long-term operational-related emissions. No additional feasible mitigation is available. Therefore, this impact would remain significant and unavoidable.

(3) Overriding Considerations. The environmental, economic, social, and other benefits of the Project override any remaining significant adverse cumulative impact of the Project resulting from criteria air pollutant and ozone precursor emissions, as more fully stated in the Statement of Overriding Considerations in Section VIII of this document.

D. Biological Resources

1. Endangered, Threatened, Candidate or Rare Species (EIR Impact 5.4.1)

(a) Potential Impact. The Planning Area contains suitable habitat for plant and wildlife species listed as endangered, threatened, rare, or proposed, or candidates for listing (listed species). Implementation of the Project could result in adverse effects, either directly or indirectly, on species listed as endangered, threatened, rare, proposed, and candidate plants and wildlife. Most direct impacts would occur from development of nonnative annual grassland, vernal

pools, wetlands, and other waters of the U.S. (WoUS), waters of the State, riparian communities, and oak woodlands in the Study Areas because the land cover is largely undeveloped and provides large, contiguous areas of habitat for special-status species. Redevelopment of parcels and associated structures in the Planning Area could also result in disturbance and habitat loss for special-status bat and bird species. Indirect impacts may also occur, such as habitat modification, increased human/wildlife interactions, habitat fragmentation, encroachment by exotic weeds, and area-wide changes in surface water flows and general hydrology due to development of previously undeveloped areas. This impact would be potentially significant. See DEIR pages 5.4-53 through 5.4-57.

(b) Mitigation Measures. Future development in the Planning Area would be subject to regulations protecting biological resources at the federal, State, regional, and local levels. Pursuant to the requirements of the California Endangered Species Act and applicable California Fish and Game Code regulations, individual projects would be required to obtain necessary permits, which would include consultation with appropriate agencies and implementation of mitigation measures to address direct and indirect impacts on listed species and associated habitat. The City's Tree Preservation and Protection Code (Municipal Code Chapter 19.12) and Swainson's Hawk Code (Municipal Code Chapter 16.130) provide further protection of special-status species and habitat. The General Plan includes numerous goals, policies, and standards that would further minimize direct and indirect impacts on special-status species. However, there is no additional feasible mitigation beyond compliance with existing regulations and General Plan Update policies and standards that would further lessen these impacts or reduce them to less than significant. Therefore, mitigation is considered infeasible.

(c) Findings. Based on the DEIR and the entire record before this City Council, this City Council finds that:

(1) No further mitigation. No additional feasible mitigation available beyond compliance with existing regulations and proposed General Plan policies and standards.

(2) Remaining Impacts. Future development, particularly in the Study Areas, which are largely undeveloped, could result in direct and indirect impacts on species or habitat. Though application of existing regulations and General Plan Update policies and standards would reduce impacts on listed species, individual species populations would experience habitat losses where creation and enhancement of habitat is not feasible, thereby causing an overall reduction in available habitat. No additional feasible mitigation is available. Therefore, this impact would remain significant and unavoidable.

(3) Overriding Considerations. The environmental, economic, social, and other benefits of the Project override any remaining significant adverse impact of the Project related listed species, as more fully stated in the Statement of Overriding Considerations in Section VIII of this document.

2. Non-Listed Special-Status Species (EIR Impact 5.4.2)

(a) **Potential Impact.** The Planning Area contains suitable habitat for many non-listed special-status plant and wildlife species (Species of Special Concern, fully protected, and locally important). As with listed species, implementation of the Project could result in adverse effects, either directly or indirectly, on non-listed special-status species, particularly in the Study Areas where there are large, contiguous areas for habitat. Redevelopment of parcels within the Planning Area that contain structures could result in disturbance and habitat loss for special-status bat and bird species. This impact would be potentially significant. See DEIR pages 5.4-57 and 5.4-58.

(b) **Mitigation Measures.** Future development in the Planning Area would be subject to regulations protecting biological resources at the federal, State, regional, and local levels. Pursuant to the requirements of the California Endangered Species Act and applicable California Fish and Game Code regulations. Individual projects would be required to obtain necessary permits, which would include consultation with appropriate agencies and implementation of mitigation measures to address direct and indirect impacts on listed species and associated habitat. The City's Tree Preservation and Protection Code (Municipal Code Chapter 19.12) and Swainson's Hawk Code (Municipal Code Chapter 16.130) provide further protection of special-status species and habitat. The General Plan includes numerous goals, policies, and standards that would further minimize direct and indirect impacts on special-status species. However, there is no additional feasible mitigation beyond compliance with existing regulations and General Plan Update policies and standards that would further lessen these impacts or reduce them to less than significant. Therefore, mitigation is considered infeasible.

(c) **Findings.** Based on the DEIR and the entire record before this City Council, this City Council finds that:

(1) **No further mitigation.** No additional feasible mitigation available beyond compliance with existing regulations and proposed General Plan policies and standards.

(2) **Remaining Impacts.** Future development, particularly in the Study Areas, which are largely undeveloped, could result in direct and indirect impacts on non-listed species or habitat. Though application of existing regulations and General Plan Update policies and standards would reduce impacts, individual species populations would experience habitat losses where creation and enhancement of habitat is not feasible, thereby causing an overall reduction in available habitat. No additional feasible mitigation is available. Therefore, this impact would remain significant and unavoidable.

(3) **Overriding Considerations.** The environmental, economic, social, and other benefits of the Project override any remaining significant adverse impact of the Project resulting from potential loss of non-listed species, as more fully stated in the Statement of Overriding Considerations in Section VIII of this document.

3. Cumulative Biological Resources Impacts (EIR Impact 5.4.7)

(a) Potential Impact. The habitat within the region is highly developed with large areas of natural or agricultural lands. Developed areas have encroached into some natural habitat, particularly annual grasslands and aquatic features. The natural communities and some agricultural communities provide suitable habitat for special-status species. Because there has already been a large decline in available habitat for special-status species, there has been a significant cumulative impact on biological resources and the habitat that at present is particularly important. As development occurs in the Planning Area and vicinity, habitat for biological resources will continue to be converted to urban development. More mobile species may survive this development by moving to other areas, but less mobile species would not. Natural habitat conversion would reduce the availability of habitat for special-status species. The natural areas remaining would likely be isolated and not support biological resources beyond their current carrying capacity. The Project would result in the increase of urban buildout and contribute to the loss of habitat for special-status species, as well as common species. The Project's contribution to the cumulative loss of habitat would be cumulatively considerable. See DEIR pages 5.4-61 and 5.4-62.

(b) Mitigation Measures. Future development in the Planning Area would be subject to regulations protecting biological resources at the federal, State, regional, and local levels. Pursuant to the requirements of the California Endangered Species Act and applicable California Fish and Game Code regulations, individual projects would be required to obtain necessary permits, which would include consultation with appropriate agencies and implementation of mitigation measures to address direct and indirect impacts on listed species and associated habitat. The City's Tree Preservation and Protection Code (Municipal Code Chapter 19.12) and Swainson's Hawk Code (Municipal Code Chapter 16.130) provide further protection of special-status species and habitat. The General Plan includes numerous goals, policies, and standards that would further minimize direct and indirect impacts on special-status species. However, there is no additional feasible mitigation beyond compliance with existing regulations and General Plan Update policies and standards that would further lessen the Project's contribution to cumulative impacts or reduce them to less than significant. Therefore, mitigation is considered infeasible.

(c) Findings. Based on the DEIR and the entire record before this City Council, this City Council finds that:

(1) No further mitigation. No additional feasible mitigation available beyond compliance with existing regulations and proposed General Plan policies and standards.

(2) Remaining Impacts. Implementation of existing regulations and General Plan Update policies and standards would reduce the direct impacts of individual development projects on special-status plants and wildlife, native trees, and jurisdictional wetlands and/or waters to a less than significant level. However, aggregated impacts to listed species of all projects under the General Plan would remain significant and unavoidable. On a cumulative level, the Project's contribution to direct and indirect impacts would remain

cumulatively considerable. No additional feasible mitigation is available. Therefore, this impact would remain significant and unavoidable.

(3) Overriding Considerations. The environmental, economic, social, and other benefits of the Project override any remaining significant adverse cumulative biological resources impacts of the Project, as more fully stated in the Statement of Overriding Considerations in Section VIII of this document.

E. Greenhouse Gas Emissions

1. Potential to Conflict with Long-term Statewide GHG Emissions Reduction Goal for 2050 (Project-Level and Cumulative EIR Impact 5.7.2)

(a) Potential Impact. Adoption of the General Plan Update and CAP Update would result in emission reductions that are consistent with statewide reduction targets for 2020 and 2030. However, based on current emission estimates for the City projected for 2050, and considering the policies and programs included in the General Plan Update and CAP Update, the General Plan and CAP updates would likely not result in sufficient GHG reductions for the City to meet the longer-term goal for 2050 as stated in Executive Order (EO) S-3-05. This impact would be potentially significant. See DEIR pages 5.7-36 and 5.7-38.

(b) Mitigation Measures. General Plan Update Policy NR-5-1 requires the City to achieve GHG emissions reductions that are consistent with State targets. Additionally, as stated in the General Plan Update implementation programs under "CAP and GHG emissions inventory updates," the City would conduct an update of the community-wide GHG emissions inventory every five years to assess progress to date in meeting the adopted targets, and periodically update the CAP in response to post-2030 emissions reduction targets and associated updates to the Scoping Plan that could be approved by the State, in light of State's long-term 2050 emission reduction goal established by EO S-3-05 and guidance stated in the 2017 Scoping Plan. Additional technological advances across multiple sectors would be required to reduce emissions further, combined with additional regulatory actions at the State or federal levels that are currently unknown beyond the year 2030. The 2017 Scoping Plan only identifies known commitments and proposed actions that will be taken by the State to achieve the 2030 target. Furthermore, the State has not yet proposed a detailed update to the Scoping Plan for future targets that may be adopted beyond 2030 on the path to meeting the 2050 goal. There is no additional feasible mitigation beyond compliance with the CAP Update and General Plan Update policies that would further lessen these impacts or reduce them to less than significant. Therefore, mitigation is considered infeasible.

(c) Findings. Based on the DEIR and the entire record before this City Council, this City Council finds that:

(1) No further mitigation. No additional feasible mitigation available beyond compliance with the CAP Update and proposed General Plan policies.

(2) Remaining Impacts. Even with General Plan Update policies, implementation programs, and CAP Update GHG reduction measures

that would be implemented under the Project, per capita emissions would not meet the long-term adjusted statewide emissions reduction goal of 1.4 MTCO₂e per capita by 2050, consistent with EO S-3-05 and the 2017 Scoping Plan. No additional mitigation or information regarding future available technology advancements or future State plans for achieving post-2030 emission reductions is available at this time that can be further quantified. Therefore, this impact would remain significant and unavoidable.

- (3) **Overriding Considerations.** The environmental, economic, social, and other benefits of the Project override any remaining significant adverse impact of the Project resulting from post-2030 GHG emissions, as more fully stated in the Statement of Overriding Considerations in Section VIII of this document.

F. Hydrology and Water Quality

1. Groundwater Supplies (EIR Impact 5.9.4)

(a) **Potential Impact.** Implementation of the Project would increase demand for domestic water supply, which may result in the need for additional water supplies. Almost all of the new demand under the Project would be the result of development in the Study Areas. It is possible that Study Area demand may need to be met with increased groundwater pumping in shortfall years. Climate change may also affect the reliability of groundwater supplies. The demand would not occur all at once but would be expected to increase over time. Existing programs are in place to protect groundwater resources in the Central Basin to ensure the sustainable yield set forth in the Water Forum Agreement, but the Project may contribute to conditions that could affect aquifer volume or groundwater levels, and the City has no authority over management of groundwater resources. The development of future groundwater supplies could result in environmental impacts, some of which may be significant. Examples of such impacts could include effects on biological resources, changes in surface water flows, or changes in groundwater levels. This is a potentially significant impact. See DEIR pages 5.9-36 through 5.9-38.

(b) **Mitigation Measures.** Mitigation Measure MM 5.12.1.1 (Plan for Services) is hereby adopted and will be implemented as provided by the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program.

(c) **Findings.** Based on the DEIR and the entire record before this City Council, this City Council finds that:

(1) **Effects of Mitigation.** Mitigation measure MM 5.12.1.1 requires demonstration of adequate water supply prior to annexation through preparation of a Plan for Services prepared by the City and submitted to Sacramento LAFCo for approval. Condition (2) specifically requires that the Plan for Services demonstrate the water purveyor is a signatory to the Water Forum Agreement and that groundwater will be provided in a manner that ensures no overdraft will occur (i.e., the sustainable yield for the Central Basin will not be exceeded). LAFCo would condition future annexations on compliance with mitigation measure MM 5.12.1.1.

(2) Remaining Impacts. Documenting sufficient water supply, which would include groundwater, pursuant to mitigation measure MM 5.12.1.1 would conform to General Plan Update Policy INF-1-1 requirements. However, the evaluation and analysis needed to demonstrate sufficient supply, along with necessary environmental review and implementation of mitigation measures to ensure groundwater resources would not be adversely affected, would be the responsibility of the water purveyor, not the City. Such an evaluation by the City would be remote and speculative, considering the programmatic nature of the EIR. There is no additional feasible mitigation to reduce this impact to less than significant, and this would remain a significant and unavoidable impact.

(3) Overriding Considerations. The environmental, economic, social, and other benefits of the Project override any remaining significant adverse impact of the Project resulting from potential increased demand on groundwater supply, as more fully stated in the Statement of Overriding Considerations in Section VIII of this document.

2. Cumulative Groundwater Impacts (EIR Impact 5.9.7)

(a) Potential Impact. The cumulative setting for groundwater impacts is the area that pumps groundwater from the Central Basin portion of the South American Subbasin, which includes the Cities of Elk Grove, Sacramento, and Folsom as well as areas of unincorporated Sacramento County. As cumulative development occurs in the region, the demand for groundwater resources may increase, resulting in greater withdrawals from the Central Basin portion of the South American subbasin. Continued implementation of the Water Forum Agreement and the Groundwater Management Plan, which would be the responsibility of Sacramento County Water Agency (SCWA), would protect the Central Basin from overdraft by limiting withdrawals to below the established sustainable yield. The Project could increase demand for water resources, a portion or all of which would be met with groundwater. Because the West and South Study Areas have not been included in the projected demand relative to supply, and additional groundwater production may be needed to meet Project demand, the Project's contribution to this impact would be potentially cumulatively considerable. See DEIR pages 5.9-41 and 5.9-42.

(b) Mitigation Measures. Mitigation Measure MM 5.12.1.1 (Plan for Services) is hereby adopted and will be implemented as provided by the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program.

(c) Findings. Based on the DEIR and the entire record before this City Council, this City Council finds that:

(1) Effects of Mitigation. Mitigation measure MM 5.12.1.1 requires demonstration of adequate water supply prior to annexation through preparation of a Plan for Services prepared by the City and submitted to Sacramento LAFCo for approval. Condition (2) specifically requires that the Plan for Services demonstrate the water purveyor is a signatory to the Water Forum Agreement and that groundwater will be provided in a manner that ensures no overdraft will occur (i.e., the sustainable yield for

the Central Basin will not be exceeded). LAFCo would condition future annexations on compliance with mitigation measure MM 5.12.1.1.

- (2) **Remaining Impacts.** Mitigation measure MM 5.12.1.1 is intended to ensure that sufficient water supplies are available to meet the demand of new development in the Planning Area, in addition to existing and planned development under normal, single dry, and multiple dry years. However, the determination of whether additional groundwater production is needed and how it would be managed to ensure compliance with the Water Forum Agreement is not within the purview of the City to implement. Therefore, the Project's contribution to the impact would be cumulatively considerable. There is no additional feasible mitigation, and the cumulative impact would remain significant and unavoidable.
- (3) **Overriding Considerations.** The environmental, economic, social, and other benefits of the Project override any remaining significant adverse cumulative impact of the Project resulting from long-term increased use of groundwater supplies, as more fully stated in the Statement of Overriding Considerations in Section VIII of this document.

G. Noise

1. Long-Term Traffic Noise (EIR Impact 5.10.2)

- (a) **Potential Impact.** The Project includes new land use modifications and designations that would result in increased traffic volumes on major arterial and collector roadways in the City as well as increased volumes on I-5 and SR 99. The Project also includes new proposed roadways and would increase traffic volumes on new and existing City roadways. These increased traffic volumes could expose existing and future sensitive receptors and noise-sensitive land uses to increased traffic noise that exceed the City's noise standards. This is a potentially significant impact. See DEIR pages 5.10-35 through 5.10-42.
- (b) **Mitigation Measures.** General Plan Update policies N-1-1, N-1-2, N-1-4, N-1-5, and N-2-3 are intended to limit noise impacts on existing and future development in the City. These policies are intended to ensure that new proposed development projects would comply with noise standards and would not adversely impact sensitive land uses from traffic noise. However, there is no additional feasible mitigation beyond compliance with General Plan Update policies that would further lessen these impacts or reduce them to less than significant. Therefore, mitigation is considered infeasible.
- (c) **Findings.** Based on the DEIR and the entire record before this City Council, this City Council finds that:
 - (1) **No further mitigation.** No additional feasible mitigation measures available beyond compliance with proposed General Plan policies.
 - (2) **Remaining Impacts.** General Plan Update policies would serve to limit traffic noise exposure to sensitive receptors, but these policies cannot ensure that noise levels would be reduced to levels within the City's noise standards at all sensitive receptors. With increases for existing roadways

ranging from 3 dB or more and up to 20 dB along some roadway segments, the ability to reduce impacts along roadways with measures such as sound walls or berms may not be feasible. There is no additional feasible mitigation available. Therefore, this impact would remain significant and unavoidable.

- (3) **Overriding Considerations.** The environmental, economic, social, and other benefits of the Project override any remaining significant adverse impact of the Project resulting from traffic noise, as more fully stated in the Statement of Overriding Considerations in Section VIII of this document.

2. Cumulative Traffic Noise Impacts (EIR Impact 5.10.5)

(a) **Potential Impact.** Predicted future cumulative transportation noise levels are projected to exceed the City's noise standards. While traffic volumes would likely increase irrespective of Project implementation, the Project would introduce future development that would contribute to cumulative traffic volumes. Modeling results for traffic volumes resulting from the Project show that there would be a cumulative contribution to traffic noise levels along major roadways in the Planning Area. With the addition of the Project, traffic noise levels along roadways in the Planning Area would exceed the City's applicable noise standards for traffic noise as well as contribute to substantial increases in traffic noise levels along roadways that already currently exceed the City's noise level standards. The Project's contribution would be cumulatively considerable. See DEIR pages 5.10-46 and 5.10-47.

(b) **Mitigation Measures.** General Plan Update policies N-1-1, N-1-2, N-1-4, N-1-5, and N-2-3 address and limit noise impacts on existing and future development in the City. These policies are intended to ensure that new specific proposed development would comply with noise standards and would not adversely impact sensitive land uses from traffic noise. However, there is no additional feasible mitigation beyond compliance with General Plan Update policies that would further lessen these impacts or reduce them to less than significant. Therefore, mitigation is considered infeasible.

(c) **Findings.** Based on the DEIR and the entire record before this City Council, this City Council finds that:

(1) **No further mitigation.** No additional feasible mitigation available beyond compliance with proposed General Plan policies.

(2) **Remaining Impacts.** General Plan Update policies would serve to limit traffic noise exposure to sensitive receptors, but because information on all future development activity is not currently available, traffic noise mitigation measures may not be considered feasible for all noise-sensitive land uses that may be impacted. This may result in noise-sensitive land uses that are still exposed to traffic noise levels above applicable City standards. There is no additional feasible mitigation available. Therefore, the cumulative impact would remain significant and unavoidable.

(3) **Overriding Considerations.** The environmental, economic, social, and other benefits of the Project override any remaining significant adverse cumulative impact of the Project resulting from traffic noise, as more fully

stated in the Statement of Overriding Considerations in Section VIII of this document.

H. Public Services

1. Public School Facilities (EIR Impact 5.11.3.1)

(a) **Potential Impact.** Anticipated development under the Project would result in a substantial number of school-aged children in the Planning Area, triggering the need for new or expanded public school facilities. Where new growth in the existing City limits would occur, such as in approved specific plan areas, new school sites have been assumed as part of the planning process to accommodate the anticipated growth. Prior to development of the Study Areas, community plans would be prepared that would identify sites and funding sources for future schools as determined necessary to meet anticipated demand. Construction or expansion of public school facilities to accommodate population growth could result in significant impacts on such resources as aesthetics, air quality, biology, cultural resources, geology, hazards and hazardous materials, water quality, noise, and transportation. Because the location of any such school facility has not been determined, it is speculative to address any precise environmental impacts associated with them. The actual impacts of new school facilities would depend upon the specific type and location of those facilities and, therefore, project-specific environmental review would be required. Because the entire Planning Area is assumed for development, however, the physical impacts of facility construction would not exceed the impacts assumed as part of development of the Planning Area and analyzed throughout the EIR. Nonetheless, because school facilities would be constructed by the Elk Grove Unified School District (EGUSD), which is not subject to local regulations or any General Plan Update policies or mitigation, this impact would be potentially significant. See DEIR pages 5.11-11 through 5.11-13.

(b) **Mitigation Measures.** General Plan Update Policy CIF-4-2 requires specific plans and other land use master plans to identify future school sites and propose guidance for incorporating new schools into overall neighborhood design. All residential development within the Planning Area would be subject to the EGUSD residential fee in place at the time an application is submitted for a building permit. Under California Government Code Section 65995(h), payment of EGUSD residential development fees is considered mitigation for school facilities generated by Project implementation. However, the environmental impacts of construction the facilities are unknown at this time, and mitigation measures that would reduce potential impacts to less than significant are also unknown. There is no additional feasible mitigation available beyond compliance with existing laws and General Plan Update policies to further lessen these impacts or reduce them to less than significant. Therefore, mitigation is considered infeasible.

(c) **Findings.** Based on the DEIR and the entire record before this City Council, this City Council finds that:

(1) **No further mitigation.** No additional feasible mitigation available beyond compliance with existing laws and proposed General Plan policies.

(2) Remaining Impacts. The Project would increase enrollment in the EGUSD, which could exceed school capacities. Exceeding school capacity would not be considered a physical impact under CEQA, and payment of fees is considered mitigation. Although the physical impacts of facility construction would not exceed the impacts assumed as part of development of the Planning Area and analyzed throughout the EIR, the EGUSD is not subject to General Plan Update policies or mitigation adopted by the City to reduce environmental effects of school construction. No enforceable measures are available. Therefore, this impact would remain significant and unavoidable.

(3) Overriding Considerations. The environmental, economic, social, and other benefits of the Project override any remaining significant adverse impact of the Project resulting from increased need for public school facilities, the construction of which could result in environmental impacts, as more fully stated in the Statement of Overriding Considerations in Section VIII of this document.

2. Cumulative Public School Facilities Impacts (EIR Impact 5.11.3.2)

(a) Potential Impact. The EGUSD boundaries encompass not only the Planning Area, but portions of the cities of Sacramento and Rancho Cordova, and most of southern Sacramento County. The EGUSD (2017) determined in the facility needs analysis that it is currently lacking capacity for K-12 and Special Day Class Severe students. Implementation of the Project, in combination with the existing shortage in class space and other planned and approved projects in the EGUSD service area, would increase the student population in the district, requiring the expansion of existing facilities or construction of new facilities, which could result in environmental impacts. Construction of these facilities would be similar to that identified throughout the EIR for development within the Planning Area. While the General Plan includes policies to ensure development in the Planning Area would be reduced to the extent feasible, these policies would not apply to the EGUSD. Therefore, the Project's contribution to this impact would be cumulatively considerable. See DEIR page 5.11-14.

(b) Mitigation Measures. Under California Government Code Section 65995(h), payment of EGUSD residential development fees is considered mitigation for school facilities generated by Project implementation. However, the environmental impacts of construction the facilities are unknown at this time, and mitigation measures that would reduce potential impacts to less than significant are also unknown and would not apply to the EGUSD. Therefore, mitigation is considered infeasible, as explained in subsection III.H.1.b, above.

(c) Findings. Based on the DEIR and the entire record before this City Council, this City Council finds that:

(1) No further mitigation. No additional feasible mitigation available beyond compliance with existing laws and proposed General Plan policies.

(2) Remaining Impacts. The Project would contribute to increased enrollment in the EGUSD. Although the physical impacts of facility construction would not exceed the impacts assumed as part of development of the Planning

Area and analyzed throughout the DEIR, the EGUSD is not subject to General Plan Update policies or mitigation adopted by the City to reduce environmental effects of school construction. No enforceable measures are available. Therefore, the cumulative impact would remain significant and unavoidable.

- (3) **Overriding Considerations.** The environmental, economic, social, and other benefits of the Project override any remaining significant adverse cumulative impact of the Project resulting from increased need for public school facilities, the construction of which could result in environmental impacts, as more fully stated in the Statement of Overriding Considerations in Section VIII of this document.

I. Public Utilities

1. Water Supplies (EIR Impact 5.12.1.1)

(a) **Potential Impact.** Implementation of the Project would increase demand for domestic water supply, which may result in the need for additional water supplies. The demand would not occur all at once but would be expected to increase over time. Almost all of the new demand under the Project would be the result of development in the Study Areas. Under a normal year and first-year multiple-dry scenario, the SCWA projects a surplus over its 20-year Urban Water Management Plan (UWMP) planning horizon, and the additional demand generated by the Project specific to the Study Areas would not exceed the surplus. However, in 2025 and beyond for the first and third year multiple-dry year scenarios, there may not be sufficient surplus water with SCWA's existing supplies and entitlements to meet Project demands. In addition, the West and South Study Areas are not in the SCWA's current service area. As noted above, climate change may also have an effect on water supplies. It is possible that Study Area demand may need to be met with increased groundwater pumping in shortfall years, or the SCWA (or other applicable water provider) could seek to increase surface water supplies. New or expanded entitlements may be needed to meet the water provider's projected demands for its service area in addition to the demand of the Project in buildout years. The City would not determine how the SCWA (or any other water purveyor such as the Elk Grove Water District or the Omochumne-Hartnell Water District) might manage its existing supplies and proceed with acquiring additional entitlements, if needed, to meet the buildout demand generated by the Study Areas. This is potentially significant impact. See DEIR pages 5.12-21 through 5.12-24.

(b) **Mitigation Measures.** Mitigation Measure MM 5.12.1.1 (Plan for Services) is hereby adopted and will be implemented as provided by the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program. There are established laws, regulations, and mechanisms in place that provide for such planning. These include preparation of water supply assessments (WSAs) pursuant to California Water Code Section 10910, as applicable, and written verification of supply (California Government Code Section 66473.7).

(c) **Findings.** Based on the DEIR and the entire record before this City Council, this City Council finds that:

- (1) Effects of Mitigation.** Mitigation measure MM 5.12.1.1 requires demonstration of adequate water supply prior to annexation through preparation of a Plan for Services prepared by the City and submitted to Sacramento LAFCo for approval. Condition (2) specifically requires that the Plan for Services demonstrate the water purveyor is a signatory to the Water Forum Agreement and that groundwater will be provided in a manner that ensures no overdraft will occur (i.e., the sustainable yield for the Central Basin will not be exceeded). LAFCo would condition future annexations on compliance with mitigation measure MM 5.12.1.1.
- (2) Remaining Impacts.** Documenting sufficient water supply pursuant to mitigation measure MM 5.12.1.1 would conform to General Plan Update Policy INF-1-1 requirements. However, the evaluation and analysis needed to demonstrate sufficient supply, along with necessary environmental review and implementation of mitigation measures to ensure groundwater resources would not be adversely affected, would be the responsibility of the water purveyor, not the City. Such an evaluation by the City would be remote and speculative, considering the programmatic nature of the EIR. There is no additional feasible mitigation to reduce this impact to less than significant, and this would remain a significant and unavoidable impact.
- (3) Overriding Considerations.** The environmental, economic, social, and other benefits of the Project override any remaining significant adverse impact of the Project resulting from increased demand on water supply, as more fully stated in the Statement of Overriding Considerations in Section VIII of this document.

2. Construction of Water System Facilities (EIR Impact 5.12.1.2)

- (a) Potential Impact.** Water demand within the existing City limits and the East and North Study Areas were accounted for in the SCWA demand projections and therefore the SCWA 2016 Water Supply Infrastructure Plan (WSIP), but the West and South Study Areas were not. As a result, necessary infrastructure, such as water conveyance facilities, are also not reflected in the SCWA 2016 WSIP. New water transmission infrastructure would be required for the Study Areas. Some improvements may also be needed in the existing City limits. The SCWA may also determine that improvements are needed elsewhere within its service area to meet Planning Area demand at buildout. Potential impacts of construction of new or modified water system infrastructure could include disturbance of biological and/or cultural resources, conversion of agricultural land, construction-related air emissions, soil erosion and water quality degradation, handling of hazardous materials (e.g., fuels), temporary excessive noise, and temporary construction traffic. This is a potentially significant impact. See DEIR pages 5.12-24 and 5.12-25.
- (b) Mitigation Measures.** Mitigation Measure MM 5.12.1.1 (Plan for Services) is hereby adopted and will be implemented as provided by the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program. In addition, General Plan Update Standard INF-1-1.a sets forth specific requirements for ensuring necessary infrastructure is in place to serve new development. General Plan Standard IFP-1-8.b directs that new development in expansion areas should be phased

where public services and infrastructure exist or may be extended with minimal impact. Policies IFP-1-7 and IFP-1-8 and Standard IFP-1-8a provide similar direction to ensure that adequate infrastructure is in place to serve future development.

(c) **Findings.** Based on the DEIR and the entire record before this City Council, this City Council finds that:

(1) **Effects of Mitigation.** Mitigation measure MM 5.12.1.1 requires demonstration of adequate water system facilities prior to annexation through preparation of a Plan for Services prepared by the City and submitted to Sacramento LAFCo for approval. LAFCo would condition future annexations on compliance with mitigation measure MM 5.12.1.1.

(2) **Remaining Impacts.** The construction of facilities to demonstrate compliance with mitigation measure MM 5.12.1.1 could result in environmental impacts. The evaluation and analysis needed to identify the required water system infrastructure improvements, environmental review, and implementation of mitigation measures would be the responsibility of the water purveyor, not the City. Such an evaluation by the City would be remote and speculative, considering the programmatic nature of the EIR. There is no additional feasible mitigation to reduce this impact to less than significant, and this would remain a significant and unavoidable impact.

(3) **Overriding Considerations.** The environmental, economic, social, and other benefits of the Project override any remaining significant adverse impact of the Project resulting from water system infrastructure construction impacts, as more fully stated in the Statement of Overriding Considerations in Section VIII of this document.

3. Cumulative Water Supply Impacts (EIR Impact 5.12.1.3)

(a) **Potential Impact.** The SCWA projects a water surplus for cumulative development for all scenarios out to 2040. Therefore, the cumulative demand for domestic water supply is considered a less than significant cumulative impact. The Project's projected total water demand at buildout, which predominantly includes demand associated with future development in the West and South Study Areas, was not considered in the SCWA's 2015 UWMP, and the infrastructure to deliver water to and within the West and South Study Areas is not a component of the Zone 40 WSMP or WSIP. While the demand associated with the Project could be accommodated in the short term by the surplus identified by the SCWA, in the long term, project demand would be greater than this surplus. Therefore, because the Project's long-term demand would exceed projected supply and infrastructure was not assumed for the West and South Study Areas, the Project's contribution to significant cumulative water supply and infrastructure impacts would be cumulatively considerable. See DEIR pages 5.12-25 and 5.12-26.

(b) **Mitigation Measures.** Mitigation Measure MM 5.12.1.1 (Plan for Services) is hereby adopted and will be implemented as provided by the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program. There are established laws, regulations, and mechanisms in place that provide for such planning. These include

preparation of water supply assessments (WSAs) pursuant to California Water Code Section 10910, as applicable, and written verification of supply (California Government Code Section 66473.7).

(c) **Findings.** Based on the DEIR and the entire record before this City Council, this City Council finds that:

(1) **Effects of Mitigation.** Mitigation measure MM 5.12.1.1 requires demonstration of adequate water supply prior to annexation through preparation of a Plan for Services prepared by the City and submitted to Sacramento LAFCo for approval. Condition (2) specifically requires that the Plan for Services demonstrate the water purveyor is a signatory to the Water Forum Agreement and that groundwater will be provided in a manner that ensures no overdraft will occur (i.e., the sustainable yield for the Central Basin will not be exceeded). LAFCo would condition future annexations on compliance with mitigation measure MM 5.12.1.1.

(2) **Remaining Impacts.** Implementation of mitigation measure MM 5.12.1.1 is intended to ensure that sufficient water supplies are available to meet the demand of new development in the Planning Area, in addition to existing and planned development under normal, single-dry, and multiple-dry years. However, the identification of potential supplies and their management is not within the purview of the City to implement. Provision of water supplies and distribution infrastructure may also result in significant environmental impacts, which cannot be determined at this time, and therefore the cumulative impacts would remain significant and unavoidable.

(3) **Overriding Considerations.** The environmental, economic, social, and other benefits of the Project override any remaining significant adverse cumulative impact of the Project resulting from increased demand water supply and infrastructure, as more fully stated in the Statement of Overriding Considerations in Section VIII of this document.

4. Cumulative Wastewater Impacts (EIR Impact 5.12.2.3)

(a) **Potential Impact.** Future development in the Sacramento Regional County Sanitation District (Regional San) service area would result in an incremental cumulative demand for wastewater and related services at the Sacramento Regional Wastewater Treatment Plant (SRWTP). The SRWTP has been master planned to accommodate future growth in the Regional San service area, and the plant would be expanded and upgraded to respond to future growth. The construction of these facilities would result in associated environmental impacts. The Project would generate wastewater that would require treatment at the SRWTP, increasing demand beyond that assumed for the plant, and therefore would contribute to the need for expanded capacity, the construction of which could result in significant environmental effects, which cannot be determined at this time. The Project's contribution would be cumulatively considerable. See DEIR pages 5.12-31 and 5.12-32.

(b) **Mitigation Measures.** Mitigation measures to reduce or avoid significant environmental impacts of SRWTP improvements would not be within the City's purview to implement. Therefore, mitigation is considered infeasible.

(c) **Findings.** Based on the DEIR and the entire record before this City Council, this City Council finds that:

(1) **No further mitigation.** No additional feasible mitigation available beyond compliance with existing laws and proposed General Plan policies.

(2) **Remaining Impacts.** The design and location of any future improvements at the SRWTP that may be required to accommodate the Project's increased contribution is at the discretion of Regional San and is currently unknown. The DEIR cannot adequately assess the potential environmental impacts of such improvements without speculation. Therefore, the cumulative impact would remain significant and unavoidable.

(3) **Overriding Considerations.** The environmental, economic, social, and other benefits of the Project override any remaining significant adverse cumulative impact of the Project resulting from need to expand wastewater treatment facilities, as more fully stated in the Statement of Overriding Considerations in Section VIII of this document.

J. Transportation

1. City Roadways and Intersections Operations (Project-Level and Cumulative EIR Impact 5.13.1)

(a) **Potential Impact.** The Project includes land use and transportation network changes that would increase future traffic volumes on City roadways. Numerous intersections and roadway segments would exceed the current General Plan LOS thresholds. Applying the policies of the existing General Plan would require expanding the capacity of the impacted roadways and intersections. Capacity expansion beyond the lanes identified on Figure 5.13-10 was not considered feasible by the City due to right-of-way impact, environmental impacts including induced travel (i.e., increased VMT), and inconsistency with both complete street concepts to accommodate all modes and users, and community values like maintaining the unique character of the City. Therefore, the Project makes policy accommodations that support complete street concepts and community values and also eliminates LOS as a significance threshold for the evaluation of transportation projects under CEQA, consistent with the requirements of SB 743 and pending State guidance. By incorporating these policies, the General Plan Update would result in a transportation system that allows greater utilization of the roadway system, which would minimize the need to expand existing capacity, so that the City can focus on building complete streets, improving walking and biking as viable travel options, and making transit more effective. A key part of these changes is a shift from automobile LOS to the VMT metrics embedded in Policy MOB-1-1, which will require new development projects to reduce VMT, which may contribute to lower peak hour traffic volumes. However, even with implementation of these policies and potential lower peak hour traffic volumes, the Project would still result in decreases in LOS in the City and would result in a significant impact related to LOS. See DEIR pages 5.13-38 through 5.13-53.

(b) **Mitigation Measures.** General Plan Policy MOB-1-1 requires future development projects to demonstrate a 15 percent reduction in VMT from

existing (2015) conditions. To support the VMT reductions incorporated into Policy MOB-1-1, the Project includes policies to support development of complete streets (MOB-3-1 through MOB-3-9), mobility for all system users (MOB-3-10 through MOB-3-13), managed parking supply (MOB-3-14 through MOB-3-17), improvements to the bicycle and pedestrian network (MOB-4-1 through MOB-4-3), transportation demand management (MOB-4-4 through MOB-4-5), and transit (MOB-5-1 through MOB-5-10). However, there is no additional feasible mitigation beyond compliance with General Plan Update policies that would further lessen these impacts or reduce them to less than significant.

(c) **Findings.** Based on the DEIR and the entire record before this City Council, this City Council finds that:

(1) **No further mitigation.** No additional feasible mitigation available beyond compliance with proposed General Plan policies

(2) **Remaining Impacts.** VMT reductions may be achieved through the implementation of individual development projects in the future and increasing roadway capacity would improve LOS on affected roadways. However, the increased capacity would result in other physical environmental effects associated with increased VMT, such as increased emissions of criteria pollutants and greenhouse gases. Because increased roadway capacity contributes to increased VMT, it would also be inconsistent with Project objective #5, which is intended to reduce vehicle miles traveled, improve air quality, and reduce energy usage. There is no additional feasible mitigation available, and the impact on level of service conditions at some intersections and on some roadway segments would remain significant and unavoidable.

(3) **Overriding Considerations.** The environmental, economic, social, and other benefits of the Project override any remaining significant adverse impact on intersection and roadway segment operations, as more fully stated in the Statement of Overriding Considerations in Section VIII of this document.

2. **Caltrans Facilities (SR 99 and I-5) Operations (Project-Level and Cumulative EIR Impact 5.13.2)**

(a) **Potential Impact.** The Project includes land use and transportation network changes that would increase future traffic volumes on SR 99 and I-5 (Caltrans facilities). All study segments of SR 99 and I-5 would operate at LOS F in 2036. Implementation of the Project would contribute to unacceptable operations on these facilities. However, even with implementation of these policies and potential lower peak hour traffic volumes, the Project would still result in a significant impact related to LOS on Caltrans facilities. See DEIR page 5.13-34.

(b) **Mitigation Measures.** In addition to General Plan Update policies referenced in subsection III.J.1.a, above, the General Plan Update includes policies that address coordination with regional partners, including Caltrans, for shared roadway improvements that may include joint planning efforts, roadway construction, and funding of improvements on SR 99 and I-5. There is no additional feasible mitigation beyond compliance with General Plan Update

policies that would further lessen these impacts or reduce them to less than significant. In addition, because SR 99 and I-5 are under the jurisdiction of Caltrans, these facilities are outside the City's jurisdiction to implement improvements that would mitigate impacts. Therefore, mitigation is considered infeasible.

(c) **Findings.** Based on the DEIR and the entire record before this City Council, this City Council finds that:

(1) **No further mitigation.** No additional feasible mitigation available beyond compliance with proposed General Plan policies.

(2) **Resulting Impacts.** General Plan Update policies address coordination with regional partners, including Caltrans, for shared roadway improvements that may include joint planning efforts, roadway construction, and funding of improvements on SR 99 and I-5. However, even with implementation of these policies and potential lower peak hour traffic volumes, the Project would still add trips to and negatively affect LOS on Caltrans facilities, and the impact would remain significant and unavoidable.

(3) **Overriding Considerations.** Mitigation measures that would reduce the Project impacts are outside the City's jurisdiction to implement improvements. The environmental, economic, social, and other benefits of the Project override any remaining significant adverse impacts related to Caltrans facilities (SR 99 and I-5) operations, as more fully stated in the Statement of Overriding Considerations in Section VIII of this document.

3. Vehicle Miles Traveled (Project-Level and Cumulative EIR Impact 5.13.3)

(a) **Potential Impact.** The Project would allow for population growth that would result in an increase in VMT compared to existing baseline conditions. VMT performance, measured as VMT per service population, in some areas would result in an average service population VMT 15 percent below the City's existing baseline limit (average VMT per service population is 12.0) and would satisfy the thresholds presented in Policy MOB-1-1, if new development is built to the specifications consistent with the General Plan Land Use Diagram. However, there are also areas that would exceed the 15 percent per service volume threshold and would require project modification or other reduction strategies to satisfy the threshold, and the effectiveness of VMT reduction strategies is not certain. This is a potentially significant impact. See DEIR pages 5.13-55 through 5.13-60.

(b) **Mitigation Measures.** To support the VMT reductions incorporated into Policy MOB-1-1, the Project includes policies to support development of complete streets (MOB-3-1 through MOB-3-9), mobility for all system users (MOB-3-10 through MOB-3-13), managed parking supply (MOB-3-14 through MOB 3 17), improvements to the bicycle and pedestrian network (MOB-4-1 through MOB-4-3), transportation demand management (MOB-4-4 through MOB-4-5), and transit (MOB-5-1 through MOB-5-10), which support the VMT reductions incorporated into Policy MOB-1-1. However, there is no additional feasible mitigation available beyond compliance with General Plan Update policies

that would further lessen these impacts or reduce them to less than significant. Therefore, mitigation is considered infeasible.

(c) **Findings.** Based on the DEIR and the entire record before this City Council, this City Council finds that:

(1) **No further mitigation.** No additional feasible mitigation available beyond compliance with proposed General Plan policies.

(2) **Remaining Impacts.** Even with implementation of General Plan Update policies, some areas in the Planning Area will still not achieve the VMT reductions specified in Policy MOB-1-1 and the effectiveness of VMT reductions strategies is not certain. In addition, disruptive changes occurring in transportation, such as transportation network companies (i.e., Uber, Lyft), autonomous vehicles, Mobility as a Service (i.e., ride-sharing, car-sharing), Amazon (increased deliveries), may increase VMT. There is limited right-of-way for physical (i.e., capacity) improvements along the Elk Grove Boulevard corridor and the corridor is largely constructed to its General Plan designation as a six-lane arterial. There is limited right-of-way for physical improvements along Big Horn Boulevard, which is constructed to its General Plan designation as a four-lane arterial. The impact related to VMT would remain significant and unavoidable.

(3) **Overriding Considerations.** The environmental, economic, social, and other benefits of the Project override any remaining significant adverse impacts related to VMT, as more fully stated in the Statement of Overriding Considerations in Section VIII of this document.

IV. Findings and Recommendations Regarding Significant Impacts Which Are Avoided or Mitigated to a Less Than Significant Level

A. Cultural Resources

1. Historical Resources, Archaeological Resources, Tribal Cultural Resources, and Human Remains (EIR Impact 5.5.1)

(a) **Potential Impact.** The NCIC records search and AB 52 and SB 18 Native American consultation completed for the Project identified historical resources, archaeological resources, and tribal cultural resources throughout the Planning Area. There are likely previously unidentified historical resources, archaeological resources, tribal cultural resources, and human remains within the Planning Area. Therefore, it is possible that the excavation and grading required to construct future developments could impact these resources. Future development under the Project could also impact known built resources, such as those listed in the Community and Resource Protection chapter of the General Plan. It is also possible that construction activities could damage or destroy as-yet undiscovered resources or human remains, if present, if procedures are not in place to manage them if found. This is a potentially significant impact. See DEIR pages 5.5-11 and 5.5-12.

(b) **Mitigation Measures.** General Plan Update Project mitigation measures MM 5.5.1a and MM 5.5.1b are hereby adopted and will be implemented as provided by the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program. In addition,

General Plan Update Policy HR-2-2 requires consultation with Native American tribes, the Native American Heritage Commission, and any other appropriate organizations and individuals prior to project approval and construction to minimize potential impacts to archaeological resources and tribal cultural resources. Policy HR-233 requires project applicants for future projects to identify and evaluate cultural resources; when resources are identified, implementation of Policy HR-2-4 would foster the preservation, rehabilitation, and maintenance of historic, archaeological, and tribal resources. Policy HR-3-2 would limit impacts on built environment resources, and Policy HR-1-3 encourages appropriate adaptive reuse of historic resources to prevent misuse, disrepair, and demolition, would also limit impacts on built environment resources. Even more generally, Policy HR-1-2 encourages preservation of historic buildings and resources.

(c) **Findings.** Based on the EIR and the entire record before this City Council, this City Council finds that:

(1) **Effects of Mitigation.** Mitigation measure MM 5.5.1a requires that future projects complete cultural resources studies to identify cultural resources, evaluate potential effects, and develop mitigation according to CEQA and/or the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA). Mitigation measure MM 5.5.1b addresses the potential for encountering undiscovered cultural resources and tribal cultural resources. If human remains are discovered during construction, Public Resources Code Section 5097.98 and California Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5, detailed in the CEQA regulatory section above, would be followed. If the remains are determined to be Native American, the coroner will notify the Native American Heritage Commission, and the procedures outlined in CEQA Section 15064.5(d) and (e) shall be followed. These measures and California State laws require that construction and/or grading be halted upon discovery of cultural resources, tribal cultural resources, or human remains and that the resources discovered are protected using measures specific to the resource as determined by a qualified professional. Implementation of these mitigation measures and laws would reduce impacts to less than significant.

(2) **Remaining Impacts.** Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the Project which avoid or substantially lessen the significant environmental effect as identified in the final EIR.

2. **Cumulative Cultural Resources/Tribal Cultural Resources Impacts (EIR Impact 5.5.2)**

(a) **Potential Impact.** Implementation of the Project has the potential to contribute to cumulative impacts on cultural resources, including archaeological and historic resources, as well as interred human remains. The past, present, and foreseeable projects have affected, or will affect, cultural resources throughout the region despite the federal, State, and local laws designed to protect them. These laws have led to the discovery, recording, preservation, and curation of artifacts and historic structures; however, more may have been destroyed in the period before preservation efforts began or are inadvertently destroyed during grading and excavation for construction.

While past projects constructed prior to protection measures have negatively affected historic and prehistoric resources, implementation of mitigation measures MM 5.5.1a and MM 5.5.1b would ensure that the Project's contribution to the cumulative impact would be less than cumulatively considerable. See DEIR page 5.5-14.

(b) Mitigation Measures. General Plan Update Project mitigation measures MM 5.5.1a and MM 5.5.1b are hereby adopted and will be implemented as provided by the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program.

(c) Findings. Based on the EIR and the entire record before this City Council, this City Council finds that:

(1) Effects of Mitigation. Mitigation measure MM 5.5.1a requires that future projects complete cultural resources studies to identify cultural resources, evaluate potential effects, and develop mitigation according to CEQA and/or the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA). Mitigation measure MM 5.5.1b addresses the potential for encountering undiscovered cultural resources and tribal cultural resources. If human remains are discovered during construction, Public Resources Code Section 5097.98 and California Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5, detailed in the CEQA regulatory section above, would be followed. No additional mitigation is required beyond compliance with existing laws and regulations, General Plan Update policies, and mitigation measures MM 5.5.1a and MM 5.5.1b.

(2) Remaining Impacts. Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project which avoid or substantially lessen the significant environmental effect as identified in the final EIR.

B. Hazardous Materials

1. Hazardous Materials Contamination (EIR Impact 5.8.2)

(a) Potential Impact. Three locations in the Planning Area are on the Cortese List. Over the planning horizon, some sites may be removed and new sites may be added. Not all locations in the Planning Area where future development may occur have been evaluated for potential contamination. Contaminated soil could be encountered during soil-disturbing activities such as excavation and trenching and dust from contaminated soil could be dispersed beyond a construction site. Contaminated groundwater may also be present. Single-family homes, multifamily residences, and structures with subterranean features (e.g., parking garage) constructed on a site where hazardous materials contamination has not been remediated to acceptable risk levels could pose a risk to occupants through direct contact (e.g., soil disturbance) or inhalation (soil vapor). Older structures that may be demolished or renovated to accommodate future development could contain asbestos and/or lead-based paint. Each of these situations could pose a threat to public health and the environment if not properly managed. This is a potentially significant impact. See DEIR pages 5.8-18 and 5.8-19.

(b) Mitigation Measures. General Plan Update Project mitigation measure MM 5.8.2 is hereby adopted and will be implemented as provided by the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program. In addition, General Plan

Update Policy EM-1-1, which seeks to maintain acceptable levels of risk of injury, death, and property damage resulting from reasonably foreseeable safety hazards would be applicable to the investigation and cleanup of contaminated sites.

(c) **Findings.** Based on the EIR and the entire record before this City Council, this City Council finds that:

(1) **Effects of Mitigation.** Mitigation measure MM 5.8.2 requires that properties that have not already been investigated for the potential for hazards and/or hazardous materials have Phase I ESAs prepared, which would identify if any hazards exist, and if so, how those hazards can be safely managed. This mitigation measure would ensure that hazardous materials, if found, are properly remediated and are not released into the environment, where they could pose a threat to human health or the environment. Remediation activities, such as excavation of contaminated media or treatment systems, could involve activities that result in the release of hazardous materials through dust or other emissions or extraction of contaminated groundwater, to name a few. Remediation projects are required to be implemented in accordance with established hazardous materials and waste laws and regulations. Moreover, the benefits of remediation generally outweigh the risks associated with the cleanup activities. This would reduce this impact to less than significant.

(2) **Remaining Impacts.** Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project which avoid or substantially lessen the significant environmental effect as identified in the final EIR.

V. Other Impacts and Considerations

1. Growth-Inducing Impacts of the Project

CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.2(d) requires that an EIR evaluate the growth-inducing impacts of a proposed action.

(a) **Findings.** The Project would induce substantial population growth in the Planning Area, both directly and indirectly. Future infrastructure and roadway improvements would support such growth within the Planning Area. Because of the Project's potential to increase the City's housing supply and employment opportunities, the Project is considered to be growth-inducing. The environmental effects of this growth would result in substantial changes to demands for public services and utilities as discussed in Section 5.11, Public Services and Recreation and Section 5.12, Public Utilities. The effects of this growth are addressed in Sections 5.1 through 5.13 of the DEIR.

(b) **Explanation.** The General Plan Update would guide future development throughout the Planning Area and would both directly and indirectly induce growth. It would allow for the future construction of up to 47,836 new homes within the Planning Area, which would increase the City's population by approximately 157,319 residents to a total of 328,378 at buildout. This would represent an approximately 92 percent increase over the City's 2017 population. In addition, the Project would allow for substantial non-residential development throughout the Planning Area, resulting in an increase of 63 percent over the City's existing job pool. The Project would therefore induce

growth through the creation of permanent employment opportunities that would indirectly stimulate the need for additional housing and services to support the new employment demand. Annexation would allow for the extension of infrastructure into the Study Areas and make them available for future development including additional residential units and non-residential space. See DEIR pages 6.0-1 through 6.0-3.

2. Significant Irreversible Environmental Changes Involved if the Project is Implemented

CEQA Sections 21100(b)(2) and 21100.1(a) require that an EIR prepared for the adoption of a plan, policy, or ordinance of a public agency must include a discussion of significant irreversible environmental changes of project implementation.

(a) **Findings.** Based on the DEIR and the entire record before this City Council, the Project could consume more energy and natural resources and result in significant irreversible impacts.

(b) **Explanation.** Because the Project is a long-range plan and not a development project, the Project does not itself propose any new development or other physical changes which could result in significant irreversible environmental effects. However, the Project would allow for future buildout of the proposed Land Use Diagram, which constitutes a long-term commitment to residential, non-residential, and public land uses. It is unlikely that circumstances would arise that would justify the return of the land to its original condition. Buildout of the Planning Area would irretrievably commit building materials and energy to the construction and maintenance of buildings and infrastructure proposed. Renewable, nonrenewable, and limited resources would likely be consumed as part of future development projects under the General Plan Update and would include, but would not be limited to, oil, fuels, lumber, sand and gravel, asphalt, water, steel, and similar materials. In addition, build out of the Planning Area would result in increased demand on public services and utilities. See DEIR pages 6.0-3 and 6.0-4.

VI. Project Alternatives

A. Background – Legal Requirements

CEQA requires that EIRs assess feasible alternatives or mitigation measures that may substantially lessen the significant effects of a project prior to approval (Public Resources Code Section 21002). With the exception of the No Project Alternative, the specific alternatives or types of alternatives that must be assessed are not specified. CEQA “establishes no categorical legal imperative as to the scope of alternatives to be analyzed in an EIR. Each case must be evaluated on its own facts, which in turn must be reviewed in light of the statutory purpose” (*Citizens of Goleta Valley v. Board of Supervisors*, 52 Cal.3d. 553, 566 [1990]). The legislative purpose of CEQA is to protect public health, welfare, and the environment from significant impacts associated with all types of development, by ensuring that agencies regulate activities so that major consideration is given to preventing environmental damage while providing a decent home and satisfying living environment for every Californian (Public Resources Code Section 21000). In short, CEQA assists in avoiding or mitigating environmental damage associated with development. This has been largely accomplished in the Project through the inclusion of Project modifications and mitigation measures that reduce the potentially significant impacts to an acceptable level. The courts have held that a public agency “may approve a developer’s choice of a project once its significant adverse environment effects have been reduced to an acceptable level—that is, all avoidable

significant damage to the environment has been eliminated and that which remains is otherwise acceptable" (*Laurel Hills Homeowners Assoc. v. City*, 83 Cal.App.3d 515, 521 [1978]).

B. Identification of Project Objectives

The CEQA Guidelines state that the "range of potential alternatives to the project shall include those that could feasibly accomplish most of the basic purposes of the project and could avoid or substantially lessen one or more of the significant effects" of the project (CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(c)). Thus, consideration of the Project objectives is important to determining which alternatives should be assessed in the EIR.

The City has identified the following objectives for the Project:

- 1) Provide for growth of the City to meet long-term needs, including housing, employment, and recreational opportunities.
- 2) Facilitate orderly and logical development, including economic development, while maintaining the character of existing communities.
- 3) Provide an improved transportation system that includes an array of travel modes and routes, including roadways, mass transit, walking, and cycling.
- 4) Protect open space, providing trails, parkland, and a range of recreational opportunities.
- 5) Provide mechanisms to minimize noise and safety risks associated with natural and human-caused noise and safety hazards.
- 6) Promote sustainability and community resiliency through reductions in vehicle miles traveled, improved air quality, reductions in energy usage, and a diversified economy.
- 7) Provide and support public facilities and infrastructure with sufficient capacity to adequately serve the needs of the growing community.

VII. Alternatives Analysis in the DEIR

1. Alternatives Considered But Not Selected for Analysis

Alternatives may be removed from further consideration in an EIR if they fail to meet most of the project objectives, are infeasible, or do not avoid or substantially reduce any environmental effects (CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6[c]). Additionally, alternatives that are remote or speculative, or the effects of which cannot be reasonably predicted, also do not need to be considered (CEQA Guidelines Section 15126[f][2]). The City considered two alternatives that ultimately were determined infeasible and these alternatives were removed from further consideration.

(a) Alternative Location/Off-Site Alternative.

- (i) Findings.** The Alternative Location/Off-Site Alternative is rejected as a feasible alternative and not selected for analysis in the DEIR.

(ii) Explanation. The General Plan Update addresses areas within the City and potential expansion areas directly adjacent to City boundaries that are in Sacramento County. It addresses planning changes within the City and Study Areas, some of which are in ongoing planning processes by the City and private parties and may be added to the City's Sphere of Influence. Consideration of lands beyond the identified Study Areas is infeasible because of existing municipal boundaries, natural features, or Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo) regulations, which discourage planning of areas that are not contiguous with existing boundaries. Thus, the areas available for planning are inherently limited. Any alternatives involving alternative or off-site areas are infeasible. See DEIR page 7.0-7.

(b) Reduced Density/Intensity Alternative.

(i) Findings. The Reduced Density/Intensity Alternative is rejected as a feasible alternative and not selected for detailed analysis in the DEIR.

(ii) Explanation. This alternative would have fewer residences and less office space. Although this alternative would reduce community impacts such as air quality, greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, traffic, noise, and demand for utilities and public services, it would not achieve or would only partially achieve General Plan Update objectives of providing for growth of the City, providing an improved transportation system, and reducing vehicle miles traveled (VMT). Further, such an alternative would not be consistent with regional planning and could increase development pressure in other areas. Therefore, this alternative is infeasible. See DEIR page 7.0-7.

Alternatives Analyzed in the DEIR

The CEQA Guidelines state that the "range of potential alternatives to the project shall include those that could feasibly accomplish most of the basic purposes of the project and could avoid or substantially lessen one or more of the significant effects" of the project. The City evaluated the five alternatives listed below.

2. No Project Alternative (Alternative 1)

The No Project Alternative is evaluated on pages 7.0-16 through 7.0-18. This alternative assumes implementation of the existing General Plan (2003) instead of the General Plan Update. Under this alternative, the existing General Plan land uses would remain in place and development in the City would occur as anticipated in the 2003 General Plan, with an emphasis on carefully managed growth and buildout of the Southeast Policy Area (SEPA) and the Laguna Ridge area.

(a) Findings. The No Project Alternative is rejected as a feasible alternative. Although it would avoid all the significant impacts of the Project in the short-term, it would not achieve any of the Project objectives and would not have the beneficial effect of reducing GHG emissions consistent with the 2017 AB 32 Scoping Plan.

(b) Explanation. The No Project Alternative would either avoid or reduce the intensity of several impacts identified as significant and unavoidable impacts in the General Plan Update. These include impacts on aesthetics, agricultural land, air quality, biological resources, cultural and paleontological resources, groundwater supplies, traffic noise, construction of schools and utilities, and transportation plans and

policies, but it would not be consistent with SB 32 or the City's CAP, which require implementation of measures to reduce GHG emissions. This alternative would not achieve (or would only partially achieve) the Project objectives. Because the No Project Alternative would not promote further sustainability policies, the impacts associated with greenhouse gases and air quality would be greater than for the Project. The No Project Alternative may not be as consistent with the provisions of SB 375 and SB 743 and the VMT-reducing policies from the 2017 Scoping Plan. These plans and regulations are designed, in part, to reduce potential climate change impacts associated with GHG emissions and to meet goals for 2020, 2030, and 2050. Therefore, the No Project Alternative would result in greater environmental impacts than the General Plan Update with respect to consistency with a plan or regulation designed to reduce impacts to the environment. This alternative would not realize the benefits of the Project or achieve the Project objectives.

3. Additional Climate Action Plan Measures Alternative (Alternative 2)

The Additional Climate Action Plan Measures Alternative is evaluated on pages 7.0-18 through 7.0-20 in the DEIR. Under this alternative, the changes to the CAP could include additional building and development requirements for conservation of electricity, natural gas, and water; additional transportation sector measures (e.g., transit-oriented development, pedestrian and bicycle measures, improved public transit, efficient and alternative vehicles); and purchasing and surrendering offset credits. These measures and emissions reductions would put the City closer to achieving the State's 2050 targets.

(a) Findings. The Additional Climate Action Plan Measures Alternative is rejected as a feasible alternative. Although it meets the Project objectives and would provide additional GHG emissions compared to the Project, it would still result substantially similar significant and unavoidable physical environmental impacts as the project.

(b) Explanation. Overall, this alternative would have the same impacts as the Project but would be consistent with AB 32, SB 32, and the City's CAP, which require implementation of measures to reduce GHG emissions. This alternative would achieve all Project objectives and would increase the probability of achieving 2050 GHG reduction targets. Regarding consistency with regional plans, this alternative would be consistent with the Sacramento Area Council of Governments' (SACOG) current Metropolitan Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (MTP/SCS) and would be consistent with the 2017 AB 32 Scoping Plan. Therefore, this alternative would result in lower GHG emissions impacts than the General Plan Update.

The Additional Climate Action Plan Measures Alternative would involve the same Planning Area as the Project and would require the same mitigation measures, but it would reduce the intensity of the significant and unavoidable impact identified in the General Plan Update for GHG emissions approaching 2050. Other significant and unavoidable impacts, including on aesthetics, agricultural land, air quality, biological resources and conservation planning, cultural and paleontological resources, groundwater supplies, traffic noise, construction of schools and utilities, and transportation plans and policies, would be the same.

4. Reduced Study Areas Alternative (Alternative 3)

The Reduced Study Areas Alternative is evaluated on pages 7.0-20 through 7.0-22 in the DEIR. This alternative reduces the extent of the Study Areas to those areas within the

existing Sacramento County Urban Services Boundary as well as the area included in the Kammerer/99 Sphere of Influence Amendment that was filed by a private developer for the area south of Kammerer Road and west of SR 99 and approved in February 2018. This would result in a reduction in the size of the West and South Study Areas. The East and North Study Areas would remain the same as with the Project. Reducing the study areas would not preclude the development of areas outside the USB consistent with the existing Sacramento County General Plan and potential future amendments as development is proposed. For example, this could include development within the area south of Grant Line Road, for which Sacramento County is undertaking a visioning process.

(a) Findings. The Reduced Study Areas Alternative is rejected as a feasible alternative. The Reduced Study Areas Alternative would occur on a smaller footprint than the Project; thus, impacts on natural resources would be the less. However, although it generally meets the Project objectives, this alternative would reduce the footprint of the Study Areas by nearly one half without increasing development density, thus resulting in a reduction in development compared to the proposed Project. This substantial reduction in overall development due to the reduction in footprint would make this alternative inconsistent with the first Project Objective: Provide for growth of the City to meet long-term needs, including housing, employment, and recreational opportunities.

(b) Explanation. Impacts would be similar to the Project, but because it would encompass a smaller area that would not include portions of the South and West Study Areas, this alternative would reduce, but not avoid, some of the impacts of the Project, including impacts that would be significant and unavoidable. The Reduced Study Areas Alternative would generally achieve most of the Project objectives and would be consistent with regional plans, including SACOG's current MTP/SCS, and would be consistent with the 2017 AB 32 Scoping Plan because it could reduce GHG emissions compared to the Project. Because it would not involve development beyond the existing USB, it would not require mitigation measure MM 5.12.1.1, which requires the City to prepare and submit to LAFCo for approval a Plan of Services for areas proposed for annexation. The Reduced Study Areas Alternative would reduce the intensity of several impacts identified as significant and unavoidable for the Project. These include impacts on aesthetics, agricultural land, air quality, biological resources and conservation planning, cultural and paleontological resources, GHG emissions in 2050, groundwater supplies, traffic noise, construction of schools and utilities, and transportation plans and policies.

5. Increased Development Intensity Alternative (Alternative 4)

The Increased Development Intensity Alternative is evaluated on pages 7.0-22 and 7.0-23 in the DEIR. This alternative increases the allowable residential density and non-residential development intensity for selected key sites around the City. Land use designations for several sites would be changed from Low Density Residential (LDR) to High Density Residential (HDR). This alternative could accommodate up to 515 more High Density Residential units, 89 Medium Density Residential units, and 597 Mixed Use Village Center units. Low-density units and mixed-use residential units would be reduced by 148 and 65 units, respectively. Overall, this alternative could result in up to 988 additional dwelling units compared to the Project. This alternative would also generate approximately 300 more jobs due to the increase in Mixed Use Village Center acreage.

(a) Findings. The Increased Development Intensity Alternative is rejected as a feasible alternative. Although it would achieve most of the Project objectives, due to increased density in some areas, this alternative could result in more intense localized impacts on aesthetics and other community impacts, such as noise and traffic and could increase GHG emissions and may not be consistent with the updated CAP and the 2017 AB 32 Scoping Plan.

(b) Explanation. The Increased Development Intensity Alternative would occur on the same footprint as the Project; thus, impacts on natural resources would be the same. However, due to increased density in some areas, this alternative could result in more intense localized impacts on aesthetics and other community impacts, such as noise and traffic. This alternative would achieve most of the Project objectives and could be consistent with regional plans, including SACOG's current MTP/SCS, through infill development. However, this alternative could increase GHG emissions and may not be consistent with the updated CAP and the 2017 AB 32 Scoping Plan compared with the Project. The addition of high-density residential development under this alternative would help the City meet its future housing allocation. However, this alternative could add housing that could be considered out of proportion with the number of jobs created over the same period, resulting in a lower jobs-housing balance, additional traffic, and higher VMT. This alternative facilitates development on vacant or underutilized lots in the City while also providing opportunities for purposeful expansion.

6. Increased Employment Alternative (Alternative 5)

The Increased Employment Alternative is evaluated on pages 7.0-24 and 7.0-25 in the DEIR. This alternative would increase the amount of office development compared to the Project, resulting a greater number of jobs in the City. Specifically, south of Bilby Road in Sterling Meadows, the High Density Residential area would be increased by approximately 11.5 acres, and approximately 28 acres of the area designated as residential land use along Kammerer Road would be changed to Employment Center. The remaining 29 acres would be Medium Density Residential. The Commercial sites to the west of Promenade Parkway, as well as the majority of Opportunity Site 2 (except the portions designated as High Density Residential and Commercial), would also be changed to Employment Center. This alternative would yield approximately 330 fewer housing units and as many as 5,700 more jobs than the Project.

(a) Findings. The Increased Employment Alternative is rejected as a feasible alternative. Although it would achieve most of the Project objectives, it would generally result in the same physical environmental impacts as the Project.

(b) Explanation. The Increased Employment Alternative would have the same footprint as the Project and would have similar impacts on agricultural lands and habitats to the south. Increased employment could allow for reductions in VMT compared to the Project, which could result in the generation of fewer criteria air pollutant emissions and greenhouse gases. However, the increased intensity of development under this alternative would increase demand on services and utilities as compared to the proposed Project. This alternative would achieve most of the Project objectives and would be consistent with regional plans, including SACOG's current MTP/SCS, through employment development that would be consistent with the 2017 AB 32 Scoping Plan.

6. Environmentally Superior Alternative

The environmentally superior alternative is discussed on pages 7.0-27 and 7.0-28 in the DEIR. Under CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(e)(2), if the environmentally superior alternative is the No Project Alternative, another environmentally superior alternative must be identified. The DEIR identified the Reduced Study Areas Alternative as the environmentally superior alternative. The Reduced Study Areas Alternative would reduce the General Plan footprint by 3,938 acres without increasing development density. This alternative would reduce the footprint-related impacts on farmland, habitat, cultural resources, topsoil, and water quality. Due to the reduction in development compared to the Project in these Study Areas, it would also reduce operational impacts, such as traffic, GHG emissions in 2050, groundwater supplies, traffic noise and air emissions, and construction of schools and utilities. Thus, this would reduce the areal extent and scope of all the environmental impacts of the Project.

VIII. Statements of Overriding Considerations Related to the General Plan Update Project Findings

A. Regional Context and Growth Management. The General Plan focuses on communicating the role Elk Grove plays in the larger Sacramento area and moving Elk Grove forward as a prominent player in the region. The Project strikes a desirable balance between growth—and the requisite increase in jobs, development, and amenities—and preserving existing structures, resources, and community character. These items are not necessarily in direct competition, but they can become so if growth is not managed carefully and aligned with community desires and values. By establishing clear parameters for future development (such as Goal LU-3 and corresponding policies regarding future land plans and process and requirements for annexation applications), the General Plan facilitates development on vacant or underutilized lots in the City while also providing opportunities for purposeful expansion aligned with the Community Vision and regional growth objectives.

The Project specifically provides the ability to meet long-term needs in housing (by identifying opportunities for an additional 49,000 dwelling units) and employment (with capacity for an additional 76,000 jobs) and foster development patterns that will achieve a complete community with respect to increasing jobs and economic development and increasing the City's jobs-to-employed resident ratio.

The Project ensures that the character of Elk Grove, based on a legacy of agriculture and a rural lifestyle with specific areas identified for urban and suburban development, is preserved. Rural housing and infrastructure options continue to protect agricultural uses by identifying specific areas for continued agricultural operation and areas that preserve rural character and qualities. Further, the Project maintains policies regarding right-to-farm and provides buffering between agricultural operations and urban development.

Land use policies provide for the orderly and logical development of the City, particularly in areas to be annexed to the City, by requiring infrastructure in conjunction with new development and requiring phasing and financing plans as part of annexation projects. The Project also establishes organizing principles for annexing areas, with land use programs for each, which identify what and where development will occur over time.

Policies throughout the General Plan provide for the protection of and mitigation of impacts to the natural environment. Specifically, Policy LU-3-22 provides that a mitigation program for critical habitat for special-status species shall be prepared for future annexation applications. A proposed project determined to have a significant impact to habitat for special-status species shall implement all feasible mitigation measures established in the program, including but not limited to land dedication, payment of a fee, or both. Additional policies are provided in Chapter 7 (Community and Resource Protection), including Policy NR-1-2 (preserve and enhance natural areas that serve, or may potentially serve, as habitat for special-status species) and corresponding standards, and policies under Goal NR-2 (preserved trees and urban forest).

- B. Economic Benefits.** The Project supports balanced and diverse growth to increase the level of commercial and industrial activity in the City and improve opportunities for residents to work in the community and/or have improved accessibility to their place of employment. Economic development goals and policies focus on business retention and expansion, business attraction, and economic diversity by promoting workforce training opportunities and emphasizing employment sectors that are well matched for the skills of the local workforce, as well as encouraging the facilitation and attraction of companies in emerging industries, both known or to be identified. The Project also specifically identifies the development of a major employment center with enough available undeveloped land and potential sufficient transit access to support such a center. The Project identifies the continued investment in public infrastructure to attract target industries, such as improved broadband capacity and reliability, road construction and maintenance, public transit, new and upgraded public utilities, and adequate community services.

The Plan also reaffirms the City's ongoing commitment to the preservation of rural lands in Elk Grove's eastern portion, providing an opportunity to showcase this aspect of Elk Grove's heritage through agritourism.

A variety of housing across income levels and lifestyles, as provided through the Housing Element and sites around the City identified as implementation of the City's share of the Regional Housing Needs Allocation, creates options for employers and employees to live close to work or in an area with increased accessibility to work.

- C. Community Benefits.** The Project promotes a welcoming and thriving civic core, preservation of Old Town as a showcase for community heritage, and a continued focus on the integration of parks and schools as focal points in the community. The Project maintains the high level of safety, cleanliness, and well-kept amenities that characterize the City's local parks. Supporting walking and biking connections locally and regionally increases access to and enjoyment of both active and passive open spaces, including natural resources such as the Cosumnes River Preserve and the Stonelakes National Wildlife Refuge. The Project addresses sustainability and healthy living options in Elk Grove, such as improving resiliency to a changing climate, encouraging green technologies, and promoting resource conservation. The Project identifies opportunities and regulations (both local and State) that further per capita reductions in greenhouse gas emissions in both new and existing development. The Project considers the needs of all demographic segments of the community, including youth, the elderly, and disadvantaged families by providing access to a range of services and programs (such as under Goal CS-2) and addressing the decision-making process and community engagement through new governance

policies. The Project encourages access to public services that provide assistance for community members as well as promoting gathering spaces throughout the community that meet basic needs and improve the quality of life.

- D. Mobility.** The Project recognizes the need to tailor mobility infrastructure to an area's surrounding context, particularly in the eastern, more rural portions of the City where the population density is lower. A complete street in a rural area will be different from one in an urban area. The Project recognizes local, regional, and State transportation objectives, including vehicle miles traveled, reflecting a need to shift goals and policies regarding how roadway operations are measured and analyzed. The Project's transportation plan, in conjunction with the land use plan, provides for the reduction in vehicle miles traveled as buildout of the Project occurs over time. The Project provides for a range of transportation choices, including transit as a clean, safe, and accessible mobility option and promotes future development projects that incorporate transit and alternative transportation modes.
- E. Greenhouse Gas Reductions.** The Project includes a number of policies and implementing actions that continue the City's efforts to reduce carbon emissions and the production of greenhouse gases. Specifically, policies under Goal NR-5 (reduce greenhouse gas emissions that align with local, state, and other goals) provides specific thresholds for greenhouse gas impacts and policies under Goals NR-6 (reduced energy demand and increased renewable sources) and SD-1 and SD-2 (sustainable City management and green building) provide opportunities for reduction in greenhouse gas emissions.

Further, the Climate Action Plan provides implementation strategies that align with the City's greenhouse gas emissions thresholds and provide a way to achieve the State's adopted 2030 reduction goals and sets the stage for future 2050 objectives, pending further State guidance and legislation. Example strategies include, but are not limited to, promoting energy conservation and applicant upgrades, encouraging or requiring green building practices in new construction, increases in waste diversion rates, and construction of 30 (cumulative) new miles of bicycle lanes and trails. The Climate Action Plan, and accompanying Checklist, will serve as a tool for the City and future development applicants to determine if a project is eligible for the streamlining benefits provided under CEQA Guidelines Section 15183.5 and, if so, which reduction measures would be required to be included as mitigation measures or conditions of approval.

Based on the objectives identified for the Project, review of the Project, review of the EIR, and consideration of public and agency comments, the City has determined that the Project should be approved and that any remaining unmitigated environmental impacts attributable to the Project are outweighed by the specific social, environmental, land use, and other overriding considerations.

The City has determined that any environmental detriment caused by the General Plan Update Project has been minimized to the extent feasible through the mitigation measures identified herein, and, where mitigation is not feasible, has been outweighed and counterbalanced by the significant social, environmental, and land use benefits to be generated to the City.

Sources

City of Elk Grove. 2018. *Elk Grove General Plan Update Draft Environmental Impact Report*. SCH# 2017062058.