FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

NORTH WATT AVENUE SPECIFIC PLAN



Control Number: PLNP2023-00256
State Clearinghouse Number: 2026010390

COUNTY OF SACRAMENTO
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW DIVISION
827 7TH STREET, ROOM 225
SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA 95814

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This Environmental Impact Report has been prepared pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act of 1970 (Public Resources Code Division 13). An Environmental Impact Report is an informational document which, when this Department requires its preparation, shall be considered by every public agency prior to its approval or disapproval of a project. The purpose of an Environmental Impact Report is to provide public agencies with detailed information about the effect that a proposed project is likely to have on the environment; to list ways in which any adverse effects of such a project might be minimized; and to suggest alternatives to such a project.

Prepared by the
COUNTY OF SACRAMENTO
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW DIVISION
827 7TH STREET, ROOM 225
SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA 95814
www.planning.saccounty.gov

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ACRONYMS

°F	Fahrenheit
µg/m^3	micrograms per cubic meter
2022 Scoping Plan	2022 Scoping Plan for Achieving Carbon Neutrality
AADT	Average Annual Daily Traffic
AB	Assembly Bill
ACHP	Advisory Council on Historic Preservation
ACMs	asbestos-containing materials
ACRPD	Arcade Creek Recreation and Park District
ACT	Advanced Clean Trucks
ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act
ADT	average daily traffic
AFB	McClellan Air Force Base
afy	acre-feet per year
ALUC	Airport Land Use Commission
ALUCP	Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan
ANSI	American National Standards Institute
APN	Assessor's Parcel Number
AR-1	Agricultural-Residential 1
Area Plan	Area Plan for Emergency Response to Hazardous Materials Incidents in Sacramento County
ASTs	aboveground storage tanks
ATCM	Airborne Toxic Control Measure
B.P.	Before Present
BACT	best available control technology for toxics
Basin Plan	Water Quality Control Plan for the Sacramento and San Joaquin River Basins
BMPs	best management practices
BTU	British thermal units
CA MUTCD	California Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices
CAA	Clean Air Act
CAAQS	California Ambient Air Quality Standard
CAFE	Corporate Average Fuel Economy
CAL FIRE	California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection
CalEEMod	California Emissions Estimator Model
CALGreen Code	California Green Building Standards Code
CalOSHA	California Occupational Safety and Health Administration
CalRecycle	California Integrated Waste Management Board or California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery
Caltrans	California Department of Transportation
CALVENO	California Vehicle Noise

CAP	Climate Action Plan
CAPCOA	**California Air Pollution Control Officers Association**
CARB	California Air Resources Board
CASGEM	California Statewide Groundwater Elevation Monitoring
CBC	California Building Standards Code
CCAA	California Clean Air Act
CCR	California Code of Regulations
CDFW	California Department of Fish and Wildlife
CEC	California Energy Commission
CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act
CERS	California Environmental Reporting System
CESA	California Endangered Species Act
CFCs	Chlorofluorocarbons
CFGC	California Fish and Game Code
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
CGS	California Geological Survey
CH_4	Methane
CHABA	Committee of Hearing, Bio Acoustics, and Bio Mechanics
CIWMA	California Integrated Waste Management Act
CLOMR	Conditional Letters of Map Revision
CNDDB	California Natural Diversity Database
CNPS	California Native Plant Society
CO	carbon monoxide
CO_2	carbon dioxide
CO_2e	carbon dioxide equivalence
Construction General Permit	National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System General Permit for Stormwater Discharges Associated with Construction and Land Disturbance Activities
Corridor Plan	2012 North Watt Avenue Corridor Plan
County	Sacramento County
CPTED	Crime Prevention through Environmental Design
CRPR	California Rare Plant Rank
CSD-1	County Sanitation District No. 1
CWA	Clean Water Act
DAYVMT	daily vehicle miles traveled
dB	decibels
dBA	A-weighted decibels
dBA/DD	dBA per doubling of distance
dbh	diameter at breast height
DCE	dichloroethane
DOC	California Department of Conservation
DOF	California Department of Finance

DPM	diesel particulate matter
DPR	California Department of Parks and Recreation
DTSC	Department of Toxic Substances Control
DWMR	Department of Waste Management & Recycling
DWR	California Department of Water Resources
DYV	Directional daily traffic volumes
EDR	Environmental Data Resources, Inc.
EIR	environmental impact report
EJ	environmental justice
EMFAC	EMission FACtor
EMP-Flex	Employment Flex
EMS	Emergency medical services
EO	Executive Order
EPA	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
ESA	Environmental Site Assessment
Evacuation Plan	Sacramento County Operational Area Evacuation Annex
EVs	electric vehicles
FAA	Federal Aviation Administration
FAR	floor area ratio
FAR	Federal Aviation Regulation
Farmland	Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FESA	federal Endangered Species Act
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
FHZ	Flood Hazard Zone
FIRMs	Flood Insurance Rate Maps
FRA	Federal Railroad Administration
FTA	Federal Transit Administration
General Plan	Sacramento County General Plan of 2005–2030
GHG	greenhouse gas
GSP	gross state product
GTFS	General Transit Feed Specification
GWP	Global Warming Potential
H_2S	hydrogen sulfide
HAPs	hazardous air pollutants
HASP	Health and Safety Plan
HCFCs	Hydrochlorofluorocarbons
HCP	Habitat Conservation Plan
HFCs	Hydrofluorocarbons
High GWP	High Global Warming Potential
HUD	U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

HVAC	heating, ventilation, and air conditioning
Hz	Hertz
I-80	Interstate 80
IEPR	Integrated Energy Policy Report
in/sec	inches per second
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
ISO	Insurance Service Office
JPA	joint powers authority
K	Kelvin
LC	Light Commercial
LCFS	Low Carbon Fuel Standard
LDL	Larson Davis Laboratories
LEV	Low Emission Vehicle
LID	Low Impact Development
LNG	liquefied natural gas
LOMR	Letters of Map Revision
LOS	level of service
LPFS	local-serving public facilities/service
LRAs	Local Responsibility Areas
LT	long-term
LTS	Level of Stress
LUST	Leaking Underground Storage Tank
M-1	Light Industrial
M4S	Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems
MACT	maximum available control technology for toxics
MBTA	Migratory Bird Treaty Act
McClellan Air Force Base	Now McClellan Business Park
McClellan Business Park	former McClellan Air Force Base
mg/m^3	milligrams per cubic meter
MLD	Most Likely Descendant
MMBtu	million British thermal units
MMT	million metric tons
mph	miles per hour
MPOs	Metropolitan Planning Organizations
MT	metric tons
MTP	Metropolitan Transportation Plan
MU-C	Mixed-Use Corridor
MU-N	Mixed-Use Neighborhood
MWELO	Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance
MWh	megawatt hours
N_2O	Nitrous Oxide
NA	not applicable

NAAQS	national ambient air quality standards
NAHC	Native American Heritage Commission
NARS	North Area Recovery Station
NCIC	North Central Information Center
NEMDC	Natomas East Main Drainage Canal
NFPA	National Fire Protection Association
NHPA	National Historic Preservation Act
NHRPD	North Highlands Recreation and Park District
NHTSA	National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
NMFS	National Marine Fisheries Service
NO_2	nitrogen dioxide
NOA	Naturally Occurring Asbestos
NOP	Notice of Preparation
NO_X	nitrogen oxide
NPDES	National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System
NPL	National Priorities List
NWI	National Wetland Inventory
O&M	Operations and Maintenance
O_3	ozone
OES	Sacramento County Office of Emergency Services
Omnibus	Heavy-Duty Omnibus
OSHA	Occupational Health and Safety Administration
Ozone Plan	Sacramento Regional 2015 national ambient air quality standards 8-Hour Ozone Attainment & Reasonable Further Progress Plan
PAHs	polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons
PAR	PAR Environmental Services, Inc.
PCBs	polychlorinated biphenyls
PCE	perchloroethylene, also known as tetrachloroethylene
PER	Planning and Environmental Review
PFCs	Perfluorinated Chemicals
PG&E	Pacific Gas & Electric Company
PHMSA	Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration
PM	particulate patter
PM_{10}	particulate matter with aerodynamic diameter less than 10 microns
$PM_{2.5}$	particulate matter with aerodynamic diameter less than 2.5 microns
Porter-Cologne Act	Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act
ppb	parts per billion
ppm	parts per million.
PPV	peak particle velocity
RCCC	Rio Cosumnes Correctional Center

RD-2	Residential 2
RHNA	Regional Housing Needs Allocation
RMS	root mean square
ROG	reactive organic gases
ROW	right-of-way
RPS	Renewable Portfolio Standards
RTP	Regional Transportation Plan
RWQCB	Regional Water Quality Control Board
SAA	Streambed Alteration Agreement
SacDOT	County Department of Transportation
SACOG	Sacramento Area Council of Governments
SacRT	Sacramento Regional Transit
SacSewer	Sacramento Area Sewer District
SACSIM	Sacramento Activity-Based Travel Simulation Model
San Juan USD	San Juan Unified School District
SB	Senate Bill
SCC	Sacramento County Code
Scoping Plan	Climate Change Scoping Plan
SCS	Sustainable Communities Strategy
Sewer Study	Level 1 Sewer Study
SF_6	Sulfur hexafluoride
SFNA	Sacramento Federal Nonattainment Area
SGMA	Sustainable Groundwater Management Act
SHPO	State Historic Preservation Officer
SIP	state implementation plan
SLF	Sacred Lands File
SMAQMD	Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District
SMARTS	Stormwater Multiple Application and Report Tracking
SMFD	Sacramento Metropolitan Fire District
SMUD	Sacramento Municipal Utility District
SO_2	sulfur dioxide
SO_X	oxides of sulfur
SPA	Special Planning Area
Specific Plan	North Watt Avenue Specific Plan
Specific Plan Area	North Watt Avenue Specific Plan Area
SRAs	State Responsibility Areas
SRCSD	Sacramento Regional County Sanitation District
now Sacramento Area Sewer District	
SRWTP	Sacramento Regional Wastewater Treatment Plant
SRWTP	now EchoWater Facility

SSQP	Sacramento Stormwater Quality Partnership – Sacramento County, and the Cities of Sacramento, Elk Grove, Citrus Heights, Folsom, Rancho Cordova, and Galt
SSWD	Sacramento Suburban Water District
ST	short-term
State SIP Strategy	2022 State Strategy for the State Implementation Plan
SVAB	Sacramento Valley Air Basin
SVP	Society of Vertebrate Paleontology
SWPPP	Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan
SWRCB	State Water Resources Control Board
TAC	Toxic Air Contaminant
TAG	Transportation Analysis Guidelines
TCA	trichloroethane
TCP	Traditional Cultural Property
TCRs	tribal cultural resources
TDS	Total dissolved solids
Technical Advisory	2017 Technical Advisory: Strategies to Reduce Air Pollution Exposure Near High-Volume Roadways
TIPG	Transportation Improvement and Program Guide
TMDLs	total maximum daily loads
TOD	Transit-Oriented Development
TPA	Transit Priority Area
TRUs	transportation refrigeration units
TSM	transportation systems management
Twin Rivers USD	Twin Rivers Unified School District
UCMP	University of California, Berkeley Museum of Paleontology
UDA	Urban Development Area
UPRR	Union Pacific Railroad
USACE	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
USC	United States Code
USEPA	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
USFWS	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
USTs	underground storage tanks
UWMP	Urban Water Management Plan
VdB	vibration decibels
VMT	vehicle miles traveled
VOC	volatile organic compounds
Water Study	Domestic Water Study
WDRs	waste discharge requirements
ZETI	Zero-Emission Technology Inventory
ZEV	zero emission vehicles
µin/sec	microinch per second

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0 PREFACE

FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

This final environmental impact report (Final EIR) has been prepared by Sacramento County (County), as lead agency, in accordance with the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the State CEQA Guidelines (California Code of Regulations [CCR] Section 15132). The Sacramento County Board of Supervisors will use the Final EIR as one of the informational sources to determine whether to approve or deny the proposed North Watt Avenue Specific Plan (Specific Plan).

The proposed Specific Plan was heard by the Sacramento County Planning Commission (Planning Commission) on September 28, 2026, for a formal recommendation to the Sacramento County Board of Supervisors. The Planning Commission directed staff to prepare this Final EIR and for staff to prepare a response to all comments received. This Final EIR contains comments and responses to comments received on the Draft EIR for the proposed Specific Plan, along with the entire body of the Draft EIR showing revisions made in response to comments. See Chapter 23 "Response to Comments," of this Final EIR for comments and responses to comments.

A Notice of Preparation (NOP) for the proposed Specific Plan was published and circulated for public review from January 9th to February 12th, 2026. The County invited additional input via scoping meetings held in the morning and afternoon of January 22nd, 2026. Along with a Notice of Availability and Notice of Completion, the Draft EIR was released and circulated for public review period from August 14th to October 1st, 2026. Consistent with the directives in Public Resources Code Section 21161, the County provided public notice of the availability of the Draft EIR for public review through publication in a local newspaper of general circulation, notices sent to agencies and individuals who requested such notification, and notices sent to property owners and tenants within a 500-feet radius of the proposed Specific Plan Area.

Where changes to the text of the EIR were made to reflect revisions to the proposed Specific Plan or are required as a result of the comments received, those changes are shown with **bold underline for text added** and ~~strikethrough for text deleted~~ within the pertinent chapter(s). Corrections to errors in pagination or format, spelling corrections, grammatical corrections, and other such editorial changes that are unrelated to the substantive content of the EIR are not highlighted. None of the revisions change the intent or content of the analysis or effectiveness of mitigation measures presented in the Draft EIR.

CEQA Guidelines Section 15088.5 requires a lead agency to recirculate a Draft EIR or portions of a Draft EIR when "significant new information" is added to the EIR after the lead agency gives public notice of the availability of the Draft EIR but before certification. "Information" may include project changes, changes to the environmental setting, or additional data or other information. The CEQA Guidelines do not consider new

information to be significant unless the lead agency changes the EIR in a way that deprives the public of a meaningful opportunity to comment on a substantial adverse environmental effect or a feasible way to mitigate the impact that the agency or project proponent has declined to implement.

CEQA Guidelines Section 15088.5 states "significant new information" requiring recirculation may include:

- A new significant environmental impact that had not previously been disclosed in the Draft EIR would result from the project or from a new mitigation measure;
- A substantial increase in the severity of an environmental impact that had already been identified unless mitigation measures would be adopted to reduce the impact to a level of insignificance;
- A feasible project alternative or mitigation measure would considerably lessen the significant environmental impacts of the project, but the proponents will not adopt it; or
- The Draft EIR was so inadequate and conclusory that meaningful public review and comment were precluded.

Highlighted changes within the text of the Final EIR include the addition of cumulative impact summaries in the Executive Summary, updates to the Project Description, updates to correspondences with public agencies, a new construction noise mitigation measure to reduce temporary construction-related noise near schools, clarification regarding the applicability of the County's Climate Action Plan in Chapter 6, "Climate Change," and minor modifications resulting from responses to comments received on the Draft EIR (see Chapter 23, "Response to Comments"). None of the triggers requiring recirculation identified in CEQA Guidelines Section 15088.5 have been met.

The Draft EIR, Final EIR, and all appended materials are available electronically on Sacramento County's website. Visit: https://planning.saccounty.gov/us/en/planning-environmental-review/projects/infill/northwattsp.html.

0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This environmental impact report (EIR) describes the potential environmental impacts of the proposed North Watt Avenue Specific Plan (Specific Plan). The purpose of an EIR is to evaluate a project's effects on environmental resources, both singularly and in a cumulative context, to examine alternatives to the project as proposed, and identify mitigation measures to reduce or avoid potentially significant effects.

Sacramento County (County) is the lead agency under CEQA. This document has been prepared in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA; Sections 21000-21189 of the Public Resources Code and the CEQA Guidelines (Title 14, Sections 15000-15387 of the California Code of Regulations).

PROPOSED PROJECT SUMMARY

PROPOSED PROJECT

Sacramento County's 2030 General Plan includes policies and implementation measures for reinvestment along major developed corridors of the unincorporated County, including North Watt Avenue. The Board of Supervisors identified a Specific Plan as the appropriate tool to guide necessary utility infrastructure investments to support the corridor's development potential, as well as outline the costs, timing, and existing or potential funding sources, through an accompanying financing plan, for the required infrastructure and public facilities.

The proposed Specific Plan identifies allowable land uses, development standards, and design standards for future development within the Specific Plan Area, along with public investments required to support infill development and implementation strategies to advance the consensus vision in the North Watt Avenue corridor.

The County is the CEQA lead agency for this EIR, which was prepared in compliance with the CEQA of 1970 (Public Resources Code Section 21000 et seq.) and the CEQA Guidelines (CCR, Title 14, Section 15000 et seq.).

The Specific Plan Area comprises approximately 700 acres developed with commercial, residential, light-industrial, and institutional uses, as well as vacant and undeveloped parcels. Existing development includes one-story and multi-story commercial structures, surface parking areas, and limited residential development. Parcels vary in size, configuration and use, and development intensity is not uniform across the Specific Plan Area. Built features include shopping centers, stand-alone commercial buildings, small offices, industrial buildings, public facilities, and single-family residential developments east and north of Watt Avenue.

SUMMARY OF ALTERNATIVES

The following summary provides brief descriptions of the alternatives. For a more thorough discussion of project alternatives, see Chapter 19, "Alternatives."

ALTERNATIVE 1: NO PROJECT

As described in Chapter 19, "Alternatives", of the Draft EIR, CEQA requires an evaluation of a No Project alternative so that decision makers can compare the impacts of approving the project with the impacts of not approving the project. Under the No Project alternative, the proposed Specific Plan would not be adopted, and the area would continue to be regulated under the 2012 North Watt Avenue Corridor Plan and the 2008 North Highlands Town Center Development Code. A substantially reduced amount of infill development with residential uses and complementary local-serving commercial uses envisioned under the proposed Specific Plan would occur. The current commercial and light industrial uses and densities would continue as they are now. The existing conditions would remain mostly unchanged, meaning that individual properties within the Specific Plan Area would continue as they are now with the exception of minor construction, and the Watt Avenue corridor would not be substantially redeveloped with residential uses, parks, trails, streetscape improvements, and supporting infrastructure (stormwater, water supply, and wastewater) improvements. This alternative would not meet the basic objectives identified in Chapter 19, "Attainment of Project Objectives" section.

ALTERNATIVE 2: AVOID CREEK CORRIDORS AND ADJACENT HABITAT

As described in Chapter 19, "Alternatives", of the Draft EIR, Alternative 2 would include development within the Specific Plan Area similar in character to the proposed Specific Plan. However, infill development would not occur along the creek corridors or adjacent areas. Alternative 2 is designed to reduce potentially significant impacts related to loss of special-status plants and wildlife, fill of jurisdictional wetlands, loss of sensitive habitat, loss of wildlife nursery sites and corridors, conflicts with policies intended to reduce impacts on biological resources, and hydromodification and degradation of water quality. For additional details about Alternative 2, see Chapter 19, "Alternatives."

ORGANIZATION OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

In accordance with CEQA, lead agencies must prepare an EIR to evaluate the potential consequences of development and operation of projects that could significantly affect the environment. The EIR process is specifically designed to objectively evaluate and disclose potentially significant direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts of a project; to identify alternatives that reduce or eliminate a project's significant effects; and to identify feasible measures that mitigate significant environmental effects. In addition, CEQA requires that an EIR identify those adverse impacts that remain significant after mitigation. The purpose of an EIR is not to recommend approval or denial of a project, but to provide decision makers, public agencies, and the general public with information about the project.

The remainder of this document includes a detailed description of the proposed Specific Plan, analysis of potential environmental impacts that could result from Specific Plan implementation, discussion of cumulative and growth-inducing impacts, and evaluation of potential alternatives to the proposed Specific Plan. This information is organized as detailed below:

- **Chapter 2, Project Description.** Describes the location of the Specific Plan Area, background, existing conditions, and details related to anticipated development and planned infrastructure and public facilities to serve development under the Specific Plan.
- **Chapters 3-18, Environmental Analysis by Resource Topic.** Includes a topic-by-topic analysis of impacts that would or could result from the proposed Specific Plan implementation. Each chapter includes a discussion of the environmental and regulatory setting, impact analysis, and mitigation measures.
- **Chapter 19, Alternatives**. Describes feasible alternatives to the proposed Specific Plan, including the No Project alternative, describes the environmental impacts related to each alternative, and discusses alternatives that were considered but ultimately rejected for further analysis.
- **Chapter 20, Summary of Impacts and Their Disposition.** Includes a summary of the environmental findings in the Draft EIR, includes a discussion of effects found not be significant, and includes a discussion of cumulative impacts.
- **Chapter 21, Bibliography.** Lists all resources used to prepare the Draft EIR.
- **Chapter 22, Acknowledgements.** Identifies individual contributors to the preparation of the Draft EIR.
- **Appendices.** The appendices contain several reference items providing support and documentation of the analyses performed for this report.

SUMMARY OF IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

The following environmental impact and mitigation summary table (Table ES-1) briefly describes the proposed Specific Plan impacts and the mitigation measures recommended to eliminate or reduce the impacts. The residual impact after mitigation is also identified. Detailed discussions of each of the identified impacts and mitigation measures, including pertinent support data, can be found in the specific topic sections in the remainder of this report.

Table ES-1: Executive Summary of Impacts and Mitigation

Impacts	Level of Significance Before Mitigation	Mitigation Measure	Level of Significance After Mitigation
CHAPTER 3, AESTHETICS			
Impact AES-1: Conflict with Applicable Policies Governing Scenic Quality	LTS	No mitigation measures are required.	LTS
Impact AES-2: Create Substantial New Sources of Light or Glare	LTS	No mitigation measures are required.	LTS
CHAPTER 4, AIR QUALITY			
Impact AQ-1: Generate Short-Term Construction Emissions of Criteria Pollutants and Precursors (ROG, NOx, PM_{10}, and $PM_{2.5}$) that Exceed Standards	PS	**AQ-1a: Implement SMAQMD's Basic Construction Emission Control Practices** For all construction activities within the Specific Plan Area, including transportation and infrastructure improvements, construction contractor(s) shall implement the following SMAQMD Basic Construction Emission Control Practices at a minimum: • Water all exposed surfaces two times daily. Exposed surfaces include, but are not limited to demolition sites, soil piles, graded areas, unpaved parking areas, staging areas, and access roads. • Cover or maintain at least two feet of free board space on haul trucks transporting soil, sand, or other loose material on the site. Any haul trucks that would be traveling along freeways or major roadways should be covered. • Use wet power vacuum street sweepers to remove any visible trackout mud or dirt onto adjacent public roads at least once a day. Use of dry power sweeping is prohibited. • Limit vehicle speeds on unpaved roads to 15 miles per hour (mph).	LTSM

Impacts	Level of Significance Before Mitigation	Mitigation Measure	Level of Significance After Mitigation
		• All roadways, driveways, sidewalks, parking lots to be paved should be completed as soon as possible. In addition, building pads should be laid as soon as possible after grading unless seeding or soil binders are used. • Minimize idling time either by shutting equipment off when not in use or reducing the time of idling to 2 minutes (5 minute limit is required by the state airborne toxics control measure [CCR, Title 13, sections 2449(d)(3) and 2485]). Provide clear signage that posts this requirement for workers at the entrances to the site. • Provide current certificate(s) of compliance for CARB's In-Use Off-Road Diesel-Fueled Fleets Regulation [CCR, Title 13, sections 2449 and 2449.1]. For more information contact CARB at 877-593-6677, doors@arb.ca.gov, or www.arb.ca.gov/doors/compliance_cert1.html. • Maintain all construction equipment in proper working condition according to manufacturer's specifications. The equipment must be checked by a certified mechanic and determined to be running in proper condition before it is operated. All fugitive dust control measures shall be shown as notes on grading, improvement, and demolition plans, to be initiated at the start and maintained throughout the duration of construction. Compliance shall be verified by the County prior to approval of grading, improvement, and demolition plans. **AQ-1b: Reduce Off-Road Equipment Exhaust-Related Emissions** For all construction activities within the Specific Plan Area, including transportation and infrastructure improvements, all construction contractor(s) shall ensure that off-road diesel-fueled equipment with engines larger than 50 horsepower shall meet or exceed CARB Tier 4 Final emissions standards. An exemption from these requirements may be granted by the County if the construction contractor(s) submits documents to the County demonstrating that equipment with the required tier is not reasonably available. Before an exemption may be considered by the County, construction contractor(s) shall be required to demonstrate that two construction fleet owners/operators in Sacramento County were contacted and that those owners/operators confirmed Tier 4 final equipment could not be located within Sacramento County.	

Impacts	Level of Significance Before Mitigation	Mitigation Measure	Level of Significance After Mitigation
		AQ-1c: Use Low-VOC Paint for First Coating in Non-Residential Development For non-residential development[JS1.1] and the non-residential portion of a mixed-use development that also includes residential development, the County shall require in new construction [JS2.1]the use of super-compliant VOC paints that meet a VOC standard of less than 10 grams per liter for the first coating of exterior and interior coatings. Project building plans for non-residential development shall submit technical data sheets and a brief summary indicating the VOC content of any architectural coatings proposed to be applied. This mitigation measure applies to the new construction portion of an expansion of existing structures, but does not apply to rehabilitation and adaptive reuse projects that do not involve new construction.	
Impact AQ-2: Generate Long-Term Operational Emissions of Criteria Pollutants and Precursors (ROG, NOx, PM_{10}, and $PM_{2.5}$) that Exceed Standards	S	**CC-1: Implement All-Electric Ready Design in New Mixed-Use and Nonresidential Development (see Impact CC-1)** **AQ-2: Use Low VOC Paint in County-Operated Facilities** For County-operated facilities, the County shall require the use of super-compliant volatile organic compound (VOC) paints that meet a VOC standard of less than 10 grams per liter.	SU
Impact AQ-3: Expose Sensitive Receptors to Substantial Mobile-Source CO Concentrations	LTS	No mitigation measures are required.	LTS
Impact AQ-4: Expose Sensitive Receptors to Substantial Pollutant Concentrations	PS	Construction-Related TACs: **AQ-1a: Implement SMAQMD's Basic Construction Emission Control Practices (see Impact AQ-1)** **AQ-1b: Reduce Off-Road Equipment Exhaust-Related Emissions (see Impact AQ-1)** **AQ-4a: Use Zero-Emission Construction Equipment Where Commercially Available**	LTSM

Impacts	Level of Significance Before Mitigation	Mitigation Measure	Level of Significance After Mitigation
		This measure applies to construction activities within the Specific Plan Area that (1) are within 300 feet of the nearest property line where sensitive receptors (defined as residences, schools, daycare centers, parks and playgrounds, and medical facilities) are located, (2) would be greater than or equal to 3 acres, and (3) have an existing electrical supply to the construction site. For these circumstances, the County will require construction contractor(s) to use zero-emission construction equipment where commercially available. For the purposes of this measure, zero-emission equipment is considered commercially available if the equipment is capable of serving the intended purpose and is included in one of the below equipment inventories: • California Air Resources Board (CARB) Advanced Clean Equipment List; • CARB Clean Off-Road Equipment Voucher Incentive Project catalog; or • Global Commercial Vehicle Drive to Zero Off-Road Zero-Emission Technology Inventory (ZETI) inventory. The County shall be responsible for the final determination of commercial availability, based on all the facts and circumstances at the time the determination is made. In addition to the use of commercially available zero-emission construction equipment, all portable engines, such as generators, shall be electric. If grid electricity is not available, propane or natural gas generators shall be used. An exemption from these requirements may be granted by the County if the County documents that equipment required under this measure is not reasonably available. Before an exemption may be considered by the County, the applicant shall be required to demonstrate that two construction fleet owners/operators in Sacramento County were contacted and that those owners/operators confirmed electric equipment could not be located within Sacramento County.	

Impacts	Level of Significance Before Mitigation	Mitigation Measure	Level of Significance After Mitigation
		AQ-4b: Further Reduce Potential Construction-Related Health Effects for Development within 300 Feet of Sensitive Receptors This measure applies to construction activities within the Specific Plan Area that would include (1) construction of new development on vacant parcels, or (2) redevelopment of existing parcels that require demolition and grading activities. If such construction activities would require the use of diesel-fueled construction equipment within 300 feet of the nearest property line where sensitive receptors (defined as residences, schools, daycare centers, parks and playgrounds, and medical facilities) may be located and would be greater than or equal to 3 acres, the County shall require the construction contractor(s) to implement the below actions to reduce potential construction-related health risks: • Establish staging areas for the construction equipment that are as far as possible from sensitive receptors; • Use electric-powered equipment in accordance with Mitigation Measure AQ-4a; and • For non-electric equipment, use Tier 4 Final or better equipment. Project applicants shall provide documentation demonstrating compliance with the above actions prior to approval of subsequent Planning reviews (i.e., discretionary entitlements or non-discretionary design reviews). If a project cannot implement the above actions, a project applicant shall prepare a site-specific construction health risk assessment, with mitigation, if necessary, to demonstrate compliance with applicable SMAQMD-recommended thresholds of significance. This assessment shall be provided to the County accompanying any application for subsequent Planning reviews (i.e., discretionary entitlements or non-discretionary design reviews). Site-specific analysis may include screening-level analysis, dispersion modeling, and/or a health risk assessment, consistent with applicable guidance from the SMAQMD. Analyses shall take into account regulatory requirements for proposed uses. If the SMAQMD does not have applicable thresholds at the time of this analysis, the thresholds will be an increased cancer risk of 10.0 in a million or more attributable to the project, and an increased non-cancer risk of 1.0 Hazard Index (chronic or acute) or more attributable to the project. If the project would exceed applicable thresholds recommended by the SMAQMD, mitigation will be required to reduce the impact to a less-than-significant level. The County will require the	

Impacts	Level of Significance Before Mitigation	Mitigation Measure	Level of Significance After Mitigation
		project applicant(s) to identify and implement feasible mitigation measures to reduce any potentially significant effect and communicate with SMAQMD to identify measures to reduce exposure of sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations to levels consistent with thresholds recommended by the SMAQMD applicable at the time the project is proposed. Agreed upon feasible mitigation actions shall be documented as a project condition of approval and incorporated on applicable construction demolition and grading plans. Operational-Related TACs: **AQ-4c: Avoid Exposure of Sensitive Receptors to Substantial Pollutant Concentrations** The County of Sacramento shall require projects that would be located within 300 feet of the nearest property line where sensitive receptors (defined as residences, schools, daycare centers, parks and playgrounds, and medical facilities) are located and that could result in substantial operational TAC emissions directly or indirectly, such as by generating substantial truck trips (defined as 25 diesel-powered trucks or 50 one-way diesel-powered truck trips, with no more than 40 one-way truck trips having diesel-powered transportation refrigeration units, per day for any individual operations, or individual operations with a building gross floor area greater than 80,000 square feet) associated with commercial trucking facilities, delivery/distribution areas, uses that could attract heavy duty truck traffic, or heavy industrial uses that would expose sensitive receptors to substantial TAC concentrations (e.g., from stationary sources), to implement the below actions to reduce potential operational-related health risks, as applicable: • Proposed commercial and industrial land uses that have the potential to emit TACs or host TAC-generating activity shall be located as far away as possible from existing and proposed sensitive receptors; • Commercial facilities with truck loading areas shall be designed such that buildings or walls shield locations of truck activity from nearby residences or other sensitive land uses; • Commercial facilities with truck loading areas that accommodate more than 100 trucks per day, or 40 trucks equipped with transportation refrigeration units (TRUs), shall be located farther than 1,000 feet away from sensitive receptors; • Truck loading areas at proposed new and redeveloped commercial facilities shall include only electric hook-ups;	

Impacts	Level of Significance Before Mitigation	Mitigation Measure	Level of Significance After Mitigation
		• Commercial facilities shall include on-site charging for electric on-site equipment; • On-site cargo and material handling equipment shall be required to be all-electric for proposed new commercial and industrial businesses; • Incorporate exhaust emission controls on mobile and/or stationary sources (e.g., filters, oxidizers); and • Signs shall be posted at all loading docks and truck loading areas which indicate that diesel powered delivery trucks must be shut off when not in use for longer than 5 minutes on the premises to reduce idling emissions of DPM. Project applicants shall provide documentation demonstrating compliance with the above actions prior to approval of subsequent Planning reviews (i.e., discretionary entitlements or non-discretionary design reviews). If a project that could emit substantial operational TAC emissions, as defined above based on truck trips and building gross floor area, cannot implement the above actions, the project applicant shall prepare a project-specific operational health risk assessment, with TAC emissions reduction strategies implemented, if necessary, to demonstrate compliance with applicable SMAQMD-recommended thresholds of significance. This assessment shall be provided to the County accompanying any application for subsequent Planning reviews (i.e., discretionary entitlements or non-discretionary design reviews). Site-specific analysis may include screen level analysis, dispersion modeling, and/or a health risk assessment, consistent with applicable guidance from the SMAQMD. Analyses shall take into account regulatory requirements for proposed uses. If the SMAQMD does not have applicable thresholds at the time of this analysis, the thresholds will be an increased cancer risk of 10.0 in a million or more attributable to the project, and an increased non-cancer risk of 1.0 Hazard Index (chronic or acute) or more attributable to the project. If the project would exceed applicable thresholds recommended by the SMAQMD, TAC emissions reduction strategies will be required to reduce the impact to below this threshold. The County will require the project applicant(s) to identify and implement TAC emissions reduction strategies and communicate with SMAQMD to identify TAC emissions reduction strategies demonstrated to reduce exposure of sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations to levels consistent with thresholds recommended by the SMAQMD applicable at the time the project is proposed. TAC emissions reduction strategies shall be documented as a project condition of approval.	

Impacts	Level of Significance Before Mitigation	Mitigation Measure	Level of Significance After Mitigation
Impact AQ-5: Conflict with an Air Quality Plan	LTS	No mitigation measures are required.	LTS
Impact AQ-6: Expose Substantial Numbers of People to Objectionable Odors	LTS	No mitigation measures are required.	LTS
CHAPTER 5, BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES			
Impact BR-1: Have a Substantial Adverse Effect on Special-Status Species	PS	**BR-1a: Pre-Construction Biological Resources Reports for Potentially Sensitive Sites** Appropriate pre-construction baseline biological resources reports shall be prepared for each phase of development with vegetation removal or ground disturbance in areas that (1) are mapped as annual grassland, annual grassland/vernal pool complex, or seasonal wetland, or (2) are within 300 feet of aquatic resources identified in this EIR (i.e., the tributary to Dry Creek, Robla Creek and its tributary, the drainage canal north of Elkhorn Boulevard, Magpie Creek, and the stockpond). A qualified biologist shall prepare a biological resources report documenting current land cover, including sensitive natural communities and riparian habitat; potential special-status species; potentially jurisdictional aquatic resources; and any other biological resources needed to reach a conclusion regarding which of the following mitigation measures are required for the specific project phase. If potentially jurisdictional aquatic resources are present in the construction footprint, a field delineation shall be conducted, and a preliminary jurisdictional delineation report shall be prepared. **BR-1b: Avoid, Minimize, and Mitigate for Impacts on Special-Status Plant Species** The following measures shall be implemented to avoid impacts on special-status plants: • A pre-construction protocol-level botanical survey shall be conducted within suitable habitat for special-status plant species with potential to occur (Table BR-2) at the project site and, where access is permitted, within a 250-foot buffer of the work limits. Surveys shall be conducted by a qualified botanist in accordance with *Protocols for Surveying and Evaluating Impacts to Special Status Plant Populations and Sensitive Natural Communities* (CDFW 2018), or the most recent guidelines, including conducting surveys during appropriate bloom periods for targeted species. If no special-status species are observed during the pre-construction survey, then no further actions or mitigation are required.	LTSM

Impacts	Level of Significance Before Mitigation	Mitigation Measure	Level of Significance After Mitigation
		• If special-status plants are present within the work limits, a qualified biologist shall establish an adequate buffer of each population to exclude activities that would directly remove, alter the habitat of, or result in indirect adverse impacts on the special-status plants. A biologist shall oversee installation of fencing and appropriate signage to protect these occurrences from inadvertent encroachment by construction vehicles and personnel. The fencing shall be checked and maintained weekly until construction is complete. • If special-status plants are present within the work limits, a qualified biologist shall provide training for all contractors, work crews, and on-site personnel prior to the initiation of construction. The training shall include information about the species' identification and habitat, statutory requirements and the consequences of non-compliance, and the boundaries of avoidance buffers and permitted disturbance zones. • If direct impacts on special-status plants cannot be avoided, the project applicant shall mitigate for impacts by one or more of the following methods: (1) salvage and replant plants at the same location following construction; (2) salvage and relocate the plants to a suitable off-site location with long-term assurance of site protection; (3) collect seeds or other propagules for reintroduction at the site or elsewhere; or (4) purchase mitigation credits from an approved conservation or mitigation bank in sufficient quantities to offset the loss of occupied habitat. Restoration or compensation shall be detailed in a Mitigation and Monitoring Plan, which shall be developed prior to the start of construction and in coordination with applicable agencies. • All necessary permits and approvals from USFWS and CDFW shall be obtained for any impacts on special-status plant species. **BR-1c: Avoid, Minimize, and Mitigate for Impacts on Special-Status Aquatic Invertebrates** • Unless a smaller buffer is approved through consultation with USFWS, construction fencing shall be installed a minimum of 250 feet from the delineated wetland edge of any potentially suitable aquatic habitats (e.g., vernal pools, seasonal wetlands) for vernal pool fairy shrimp and vernal pool tadpole shrimp. All project activities are prohibited within this buffer area. If total avoidance is achieved, no further action is required.	

Impacts	Level of Significance Before Mitigation	Mitigation Measure	Level of Significance After Mitigation
		If avoidance, as described above, is not feasible, implement Mitigation Measure BR-3 to achieve the performance standard of no net loss of state and federally protected wetlands, including habitat acreage, function, and values for vernal pool fairy shrimp and vernal pool tadpole shrimp. Direct and indirect effects to on-site suitable aquatic habitats that may support federally listed vernal pool branchiopods shall be offset through on-site preservation and/or the purchase of species preservation credits from a USFWS-approved in-lieu fee program or other USFWS-approved conservation or mitigation bank. These effects and compensation shall be quantified in the Mitigation and Monitoring Plan provided by the project applicant. The mitigation ratios shall, at minimum, comply with applicable mitigation ratios in terms and conditions of a Biological Opinion issued by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service pursuant to section 7 of the Endangered Species Act. **BR-3: Avoid, Minimize, and Mitigate for Impacts on Wetlands and Waters (see Impact BR-3)** **BR-1d: Avoid and Minimize Impacts on Monarch Butterfly** • If vegetation clearing is scheduled between May and October, a qualified biologist shall survey suitable habitat at the work site for monarch butterfly larval host plants, specifically milkweed. If host plants are found, the biologist shall conduct surveys to determine the presence or absence of adult monarch butterflies and inspect host plants for monarch eggs, larvae, and pupae. If no life stages of monarch butterfly are observed during the pre-construction survey, then no further actions or mitigation are required. • If monarch butterfly eggs, larvae, or pupae are documented during the pre-construction survey, a qualified biologist shall establish an adequate buffer of host plants to exclude activities that would directly remove or result in indirect adverse impacts on the host plants or monarch butterfly. A biologist shall oversee installation of fencing and appropriate signage to protect these occurrences from inadvertent encroachment by construction vehicles and personnel. The fencing shall be checked and maintained weekly until all construction is complete.	

Impacts	Level of Significance Before Mitigation	Mitigation Measure	Level of Significance After Mitigation
		• If occupied host plants cannot be avoided by project activities, the plants may only be removed when a qualified biologist determines the plants are no longer occupied. The project applicant shall prepare and implement a mitigation plan for the County's review minimizing habitat impacts on one or more of the following methods: (1) re-establish the same milkweed species at the project site; (2) establishing milkweed plants at a suitable off-site location with long-term assurance of site protection; (3) purchase mitigation credits from an approved conservation or mitigation bank in sufficient quantities to offset the loss of occupied habitat; or (4) contribute an in-lieu fee determined through consultation with USFWS. **BR-1e: Avoid and Minimize Impacts on Crotch's Bumblebee** • Prior to vegetation clearance or ground-disturbing construction activities, a qualified biologist shall conduct focused surveys for Crotch's bumblebee consistent with CDFW's *Survey Considerations for California Endangered Species Act (CESA) Candidate Bumble Bee Species* (CDFW 2023), or the most recent guidelines, in suitable habitat within the project site. Surveys shall be conducted during the Crotch's bumblebee worker flight period (i.e., approximately March through June) in each year of construction. During the surveys, the qualified biologist shall flag inactive small mammal burrows and other potential nest or overwintering sites. • If Crotch's bumblebees are detected, the project applicant shall prepare and implement a site-specific avoidance and minimization plan for the County's review. The plan will include a description of on-site habitat, potential nest and overwintering sites present, recommendations for avoidance and minimization (such as unoccupied burrow avoidance buffers), potential identification of methods to evaluate potential nest sites for use (e.g., burrow scoping or emergence surveys), and compensatory mitigation for the loss of potential nest sites, such as incorporation of appropriate native flower resources during site revegetation to support this species throughout the flight period and promote development of queens (i.e., perennial plants) and reducing use of harmful pesticides. All the measures included in the approved plan will be implemented during project activities. • Construction personnel shall receive worker environmental awareness training. This training shall instruct workers about any active Crotch's bumble bee nests and avoidance buffers.	

Impacts	Level of Significance Before Mitigation	Mitigation Measure	Level of Significance After Mitigation
		BR-1f: Avoid and Minimize Impacts on Northwestern Pond Turtle • A qualified biologist shall conduct a pre-construction survey for northwestern pond turtle within 48 hours prior to the start of ground-disturbing activities. The survey shall include suitable aquatic habitat and 1,650 feet of adjacent uplands surrounding aquatic habitat within the project area. The pre-construction survey shall include searches for nesting sites. The biologist shall establish a no-disturbance buffer around any identified nest sites with high-visibility flagging or fencing for avoidance during construction activities. The buffer distance will be determined based on environmental conditions and planned activities in the vicinity and will remain in place until the biologist has determined the nest is no longer in use. • Construction personnel shall receive worker environmental awareness training. This training shall instruct workers how to recognize northwestern pond turtles and their habitat. If a northwestern pond turtle is observed during construction, construction activities shall be suspended within a 100-foot buffer. Construction may resume when the turtle leaves the work area on its own or is relocated by a qualified biologist. If the animal is injured or trapped, a qualified biologist will move the animal out of the construction area and into suitable habitat. **BR-1g: Avoid and Minimize Impacts on Nesting Swainson's Hawk** In each year with project construction that includes ground-disturbing activities within 0.25 mile of trees suitable for Swainson's hawk nesting or any tree removal, the following measures will be implemented: • A qualified biologist shall conduct a focused survey for nesting Swainson's hawk in publicly accessible habitat no later than 30 days prior to the start of construction activities during the nesting season (i.e., March 1 through September 15). • If nesting Swainson's hawk are identified within 0.25 mile of the work area during the pre-construction survey or at any point during project construction, CDFW shall be contacted to determine the appropriate protective measures, and these measures will be implemented prior to the start of any ground-disturbing activities. • Construction personnel shall receive worker environmental awareness training. This training shall instruct workers about any active nests and no-disturbance buffers. • If no active nests are found during the focused survey, no further mitigation will be required.	

Impacts	Level of Significance Before Mitigation	Mitigation Measure	Level of Significance After Mitigation
		BR-1h: Avoid and Minimize Impacts on Nesting Birds For project construction activities that include ground-disturbing activities within 500 feet of trees or 50 feet of undeveloped habitat (i.e., annual grassland or aquatic habitat), or any vegetation removal, the following measures will be implemented: • A qualified biologist shall conduct a survey for nesting birds within 14 days prior to construction activities during the nesting season (i.e., February 1 through August 31). • If any active nests are observed during the survey, a qualified biologist shall establish a suitable buffer of the nest. The buffer will be determined based on the species of bird, environmental conditions (e.g., line of sight, surrounding land use), and planned construction activities in the vicinity. The buffer shall remain in place until the biologist determines the nest is no longer active (i.e., until the young have fledged). • Construction personnel shall receive worker environmental awareness training. This training shall instruct workers about any active nests and no-disturbance buffers. • To the extent feasible, trees slated for removal shall be removed during the period of September through January to avoid the nesting season. Any trees that are to be removed during the nesting season, which is February through August, shall be surveyed by a qualified biologist and will only be removed if no nesting migratory birds are found. **BR-1i: Avoid and Minimize Impacts on Roosting Bats** For project construction activities that include demolition of bridges or buildings or removal or trimming of mature trees, the following measures will be implemented: • A qualified bat biologist meeting the standards described in Caltrans Bat Mitigation: A Guide to Developing Feasible and Effective Solutions (Johnston, et al 2019) shall conduct a daytime habitat assessment at least one year in advance of any anticipated project-related disturbance, when feasible, or as much in advance as feasible to allow time for additional seasonal surveys and roost exclusions, if needed. The survey area will include all areas of anticipated disturbance and a surrounding 250-foot buffer. All structures and trees will be inspected with the naked eye, binoculars, and a flashlight, for indications of bat roosting (e.g., guano or urine staining, bats in residence, sounds or smells of bats) and for features with characteristics that could provide suitable roosting habitat (i.e., suitable physical structure, access, solar exposure, protection from predators, etc.). Such features may include trees, bridges and culverts, and other man-made structures and buildings.	

Impacts	Level of Significance Before Mitigation	Mitigation Measure	Level of Significance After Mitigation
		• If no potential bat roosting habitat is observed, a letter report shall be prepared and provided to the project proponent to document the survey, and no additional measures are recommended. • If potential roost features are identified, the qualified biologist shall establish a no-disturbance buffer around roost sites until the biologist determines the roosts are no longer active. The size of the no-disturbance buffer will generally follow buffer guidance in Johnston, et al. 2019, and will be determined considering the bat species and roost type (if known), environmental conditions (e.g., surrounding land use and disturbance buffers), and planned construction activities (e.g., the type of equipment used and their associated levels of disturbance). • If use of a disturbance buffer is not feasible, the qualified biologist will conduct focused inspections of any accessible potential roost habitat to evaluate the species and numbers of bats roosting, and the season(s) that the roost is used. Focused inspections may include the use of borescopes and guano DNA analysis for species identification, as needed. • If potential roost habitat is not accessible for focused inspection, the qualified biologist will conduct seasonal evening emergence surveys, as needed, to evaluate the species and numbers of bats roosting, and the season(s) that the roost is used. Emergence surveys will be conducted over a minimum of two nights at least two weeks apart, from one half hour before sunset to one hour after sunset. The qualified biologist will use professional grade night-vision technology and acoustic recording equipment to identify roosting bat species. Acoustic recordings will be analyzed using automated species identification software such as Sonobat, and species identifications will be manually vetted for accuracy. Focused inspections and emergence surveys shall be repeated if construction activities do not commence within three years. • Following these focused inspections and/or emergence surveys, the qualified biologist will prepare a Bat Management Plan in consultation with CDFW that will be implemented to minimize and compensate for potential impacts to roosting bat species. This Bat Management Plan may include measures such as seasonal roost avoidance, seasonal roost exclusion in advance of project-related disturbance, seasonal tiered disturbance to discourage roosting, use of sound buffers, worker environmental awareness training, construction monitoring, and/or compensatory roost replacement, as warranted.	

Impacts	Level of Significance Before Mitigation	Mitigation Measure	Level of Significance After Mitigation
Impact BR-2: Have a Substantial Adverse Effect on Riparian Habitat or Other Sensitive Natural Communities	PS	**BR-1a: Preconstruction Biological Resources Reports for Potentially Sensitive Sites (see Impact BR-1)** **BR-2: Avoid, Minimize, and Mitigate for Impacts on Riparian Habitat** Where riparian habitat exists, as identified in the biological resource report produced per Mitigation Measure BR-1a, the proponent(s) of development within the Specific Plan Area will avoid and minimize impacts on riparian habitat consistent with County policies with the following measures: o Riparian habitat will be avoided through project design, if feasible. Where riparian habitat must be disturbed, the minimum area of disturbance necessary for construction will be identified. If required, permits or approvals shall be sought from CDFW or other applicable agencies. o A qualified biologist shall establish an adequate buffer of riparian habitat to be avoided by project construction to exclude activities that would directly remove or result in indirect adverse impacts on the riparian habitat. A biologist shall oversee installation of fencing and appropriate signage to protect this habitat from inadvertent encroachment by construction vehicles and personnel. The fencing shall be checked and maintained weekly until all construction is complete. o Where disturbance to riparian habitat cannot be avoided, the natural function of the waterway will be maintained by: o Minimizing development within the floodplain such that uses within the floodplain can support occasional inundation o Providing functional setbacks on each side of the waterway equivalent to or greater than the extent of riparian vegetation prior to construction activities o Vegetating the setback with species native to the surrounding area and adapted to the anticipated hydrologic regime o Avoiding removal of mature native riparian trees unless required for channel maintenance or restoration activities	LTSM

Impacts	Level of Significance Before Mitigation	Mitigation Measure	Level of Significance After Mitigation
		• Where permanent impacts on riparian habitat cannot be avoided, compensation shall be provided at a 1:1 ratio, or at a level agreed upon with applicable regulatory agencies. Compensation may be in the form of permanent on- or off-site creation, restoration, enhancement, or preservation of habitat; purchase of mitigation credits from an approved conservation or mitigation bank; or paying an in-lieu fee. Restoration or compensation shall be detailed in a Mitigation and Monitoring Plan, which will be developed prior to the start of construction and in coordination with applicable agencies. **BR-3: Avoid, Minimize, and Mitigate for Impacts on Wetlands and Waters (see Impact BR-3)** **BR-5a: Implement Native Tree Protection (see Impact BR-5)** **BR-5b: Compensate for Removal of Native Trees (see Impact BR-5)** **BR-5c: Mitigate for Non-Native Tree Canopy (see Impact BR-5)**	
Impact BR-3: Have a Substantial Adverse Effect on State or Federally Protected Wetlands	PS	**BR-1a: Preconstruction Biological Resources Reports for Potentially Sensitive Sites (see Impact BR-1)** **BR-2: Avoid, Minimize, and Mitigate for Impacts on Riparian Habitat (see Impact BR-2)** **BR-3: Avoid, Minimize, and Mitigate for Impacts on Wetlands and Waters** • The project will be designed to avoid, to the extent feasible, work within wetlands and waters under the jurisdiction of USACE, the Central Valley RWQCB, and CDFW. • Prior to approval of grading permits or improvement plans and where wetlands, vernal pools, or other surface waters are present on candidate sites, the applicant shall obtain all applicable permits from regulatory agencies, including: o Section 1600 Streambed Alteration Agreement from CDFW – CWA Section 404 permit from USACE o CWA Section 401 water quality certification from the RWQCB	LTSM

Impacts	Level of Significance Before Mitigation	Mitigation Measure	Level of Significance After Mitigation
		• Where permanent impacts on wetlands or other waters cannot be avoided, compensation shall be provided at a 1:1 ratio, or at a level agreed upon with applicable agencies. Compensation may be in the form of permanent on- or off-site creation, restoration, enhancement, or preservation of habitat; purchase of mitigation credits from an approved conservation or mitigation bank; or paying an in-lieu fee. Restoration or compensation shall be detailed in a Mitigation and Monitoring Plan, which will be developed prior to the start of construction and in coordination with applicable agencies. • The applicant shall implement all conditions of the permits, including any performance monitoring and reporting, if required.	
Impact BR-4: Interfere Substantially with the Movement of Any Native Resident or Migratory Species or Impede the Use of Native Wildlife Nursery Sites	PS	**BR-1a: Preconstruction Biological Resources Reports for Potentially Sensitive Sites (see Impact BR-1)** **BR-1h: Avoid and Minimize Impacts on Nesting Birds (see Impact BR-1)** **BR-1i: Avoid and Minimize Impacts on Roosting Bats (see Impact BR-1)** **BR-2: Avoid, Minimize, and Mitigate for Impacts on Riparian Habitat (see Impact BR-2)** **BR-3: Avoid, Minimize, and Mitigate for Impacts on Wetlands and Waters (see Impact BR-3)**	LTSM
Impact BR-5: Conflict with Any Local Policies or Ordinances Protecting Biological Resources, such as a Tree Preservation Policy or Ordinance	PS	**BR-5a: Implement Native Tree Protection** Prior to any ground-disturbing activities, a certified arborist shall prepare a report if native trees (as defined by the General Plan) will be impacted by development. The report shall include the species, diameter, dripline, and health of the trees. The report shall include an exhibit that shows the trees and their dripline in proximity to subsequent development improvements. The report shall identify any tree that will be removed and quantify the dripline encroachment from subsequent development. With the exception of the native trees removed and compensated for through Mitigation Measure BR-5b, all healthy native trees that are 6 inches dbh or larger on a work site, all portions of adjacent off-site healthy native trees that are 6 inches dbh or larger which have driplines that extend onto a work site, and all off-site healthy native trees that are 6 inches dbh or larger which may be impacted by utility installation and/or improvements associated with subsequent development, shall be preserved and protected as follows:	LTSM

Impacts	Level of Significance Before Mitigation	Mitigation Measure	Level of Significance After Mitigation
		1. A circle with a radius measurement from the trunk of the tree to the tip of its longest limb shall constitute the dripline protection area of each tree. Limbs must not be cut back in order to change the dripline. The area beneath the dripline is a critical portion of the root zone and defines the minimum protected area of each tree. Removing limbs that make up the dripline does not change the protected area. 2. Any protected trees on the site that require pruning shall be pruned by a certified arborist prior to the start of construction work. All pruning shall be in accordance with the American National Standards Institute A300 pruning standards and the International Society of Arboriculture "Tree Pruning Guidelines." 3. Prior to initiating construction, temporary protective fencing shall be installed at least one foot outside the driplines of the protected trees within 100 feet of construction related activities, in order to avoid damage to the tree canopies and root systems. Where encroachment occurs, temporary high-visibility protective fencing shall be installed a maximum of one foot outside the work areas to minimize damage to the tree canopies and root systems. 4. Any removal of paving or structures (i.e., demolition) that occurs within the dripline of a protected oak tree shall be done under the direct supervision of a certified arborist. To the maximum extent feasible, demolition work within the dripline protection area of the oak tree shall be performed by hand. If the certified arborist determines that it is not feasible to perform some portion(s) of this work by hand, then the smallest/lightest weight equipment that will adequately perform the demolition work shall be used. 5. No signs, ropes, cables (except those which may be installed by a certified arborist to provide limb support) or any other items shall be attached to the protected trees. Small metallic numbering tags for the purpose of preparing tree reports and inventories shall be allowed. 6. No vehicles, construction equipment, mobile home/office, supplies, materials or facilities shall be driven, parked, stockpiled or located within the driplines of protected trees. 7. No grading (grade cuts or fills) shall be allowed within the driplines of protected trees, except for the minimum required for construction and streetscape improvements. 8. Drainage patterns on the site shall not be modified so that water collects or stands within, or is diverted across, the dripline of any protected tree.	

Impacts	Level of Significance Before Mitigation	Mitigation Measure	Level of Significance After Mitigation
		9. No trenching shall be allowed within the driplines of protected trees. If it is absolutely necessary to install underground utilities within the dripline of a protected tree, the utility line shall be bored and jacked under the supervision of a certified arborist. 10. The construction of impervious surfaces within the driplines of protected trees shall be stringently minimized. When it is absolutely necessary, a piped aeration system per County standard detail shall be installed under the supervision of a certified arborist. 11. All portions of any masonry wall that will encroach into the dripline protection area of any protected tree shall be constructed using grade beam wall panels and posts set no closer than 10 feet on center. Any wrought iron fencing shall be similarly installed, with posts set no closer than 10 feet on center. Posts shall be spaced in such a manner as to maximize the separation between the tree trunks and the posts in order to reduce impacts to the trees. 12. Trunk protection measures, per Sacramento County standards, shall be used for all protected trees where development/construction activity, including installation of any masonry wall and wrought iron fence, occurs within 10 feet of the trunk of a tree. 13. No sprinkler or irrigation system shall be installed in such a manner that sprays water or requires trenching within the driplines of protected trees. An above ground drip irrigation system is recommended. 14. Landscaping beneath oak trees may include non-plant materials such as bark mulch, wood chips, boulders, etc. Landscape materials shall be kept two (2) feet away from the base of the trunk. The only plant species which shall be planted within the driplines of oak trees are those which are tolerant of the natural semi-arid environs of the trees. A list of such drought-tolerant plant species is available with Planning and Environmental Review (PER). Limited drip irrigation approximately twice per summer is recommended for the understory plants.	

Impacts	Level of Significance Before Mitigation	Mitigation Measure	Level of Significance After Mitigation
		BR-5b: Compensate for Removal of Native Trees To the maximum extent feasible, all on-site healthy native trees shall be protected and preserved. Any substantial (>20%) encroachment and/or removal of native trees shall be compensated by planting native trees (as defined by the General Plan), equivalent to the dbh inches lost, based on the ratios listed below. On-site preservation of native trees that are less than 6 inches (<6 inches) dbh, may also be used to meet this compensation requirement. Encroachment of over 20 percent within the dripline radius of native trees will require compensatory mitigation based on the percentage of encroachment multiplied by the dbh. Encroachment over 50 percent will require compensation for the entire tree. Equivalent compensation based on the following ratio is required: • one preserved native oak tree < 6 inches dbh on-site = 1 inch dbh • one depot seedling (40 cubic inches or larger) = 1 inch dbh • one 15-gallon tree = 1 inch dbh • one 24-inch box tree = 2 inches dbh • one 36-inch box tree = 3 inches dbh Replacement tree planting shall be completed prior to the issuance of building permits or a bond shall be posted by the applicant in order to provide funding for purchase, planting, irrigation, and 3-year maintenance period, should the applicant default on replacement tree mitigation. The bond shall be in an amount equal to the prevailing rate of the County Tree Preservation Fund. Prior to the approval of Improvement Plans or building permits, a Replacement Native Tree Planting Plan shall be prepared by a certified arborist or licensed landscape architect and shall be submitted to the Environmental Coordinator for approval. The Replacement Native Tree Planting Plan(s) shall include the following minimum elements: • Species, size and locations of all replacement plantings and <6-inch dbh trees to be preserved; • Method of irrigation; • The Sacramento County Standard Tree Planting Detail L-1, including the 10-foot deep boring hole to provide for adequate drainage;	

Impacts	Level of Significance Before Mitigation	Mitigation Measure	Level of Significance After Mitigation
		• Planting, irrigation, and maintenance schedules; • Identification of the maintenance entity and a written agreement with that entity to provide care and irrigation of the trees for a 3-year establishment period, and to replace any of the replacement oak trees which do not survive during that period. • Designation of 20-foot root zone radius and landscaping to occur within the radius of oak trees <6-inch dbh to be preserved on-site. No replacement tree shall be planted within 15 feet of the driplines of existing oak trees or landmark size trees that are retained on-site, or within 15 feet of a building foundation or swimming pool excavation. The minimum spacing for replacement oak trees shall be 20 feet on center. Examples of acceptable planting locations are publicly owned lands, common areas, and landscaped frontages (with adequate spacing). Generally unacceptable locations are utility easements (sewer, storm drains), under overhead utility lines, private yards of single-family lots (including front yards), and roadway medians. Native trees <6-inch dbh to be retained on-site shall have at least a 20-foot radius suitable root zone. The suitable root zone shall not have impermeable surfaces, turf/lawn, dense plantings, soil compaction, drainage conditions that create ponding, utility easements, or other overstory tree(s) within 20 feet of the tree to be preserved. Trees to be retained shall be determined to be healthy and structurally sound for future growth, by a certified arborist. If native tree replacement plantings are demonstrated to be infeasible for any or all trees removed, then compensation shall be through payment into the County Tree Preservation Fund. Payment shall be made at the prevailing rate at the time payment into the fund is made. **BR-5c: Mitigate for Non-Native Tree Canopy** Removal of non-native tree canopy for development will be mitigated by creation of new tree canopy equivalent to the acreage of non-native tree canopy removed. New tree canopy acreage will be calculated using the Sacramento County Department of Transportation's 15-year shade cover values for tree species. Preference is given to on-site mitigation. If on-site mitigation is infeasible, funding will be contributed to the Sacramento Tree Foundation's Greenprint program in an amount proportional to the tree canopy lost, as determined by the 15-year shade cover calculations for the tree species to be planted with the funding.	

Impacts	Level of Significance Before Mitigation	Mitigation Measure	Level of Significance After Mitigation
CHAPTER 6 CLIMATE CHANGE			
Impact CC-1: Generate Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Either Directly or Indirectly, That May Have a Significant Impact on the Environment and Conflict with an Applicable Plan, Policy, or Regulation Adopted for the Purposes of Reducing GHG Emissions	**PCC**	Construction **AQ-1a: Implement SMAQMD's Basic Construction Emission Control Practices (see Impact AQ-1)** **Measure AQ-4a: Use Zero-Emission Construction Equipment Where Commercially Available (see Impact AQ-4)** Operations **BR-5a: Implement Native Tree Protection (see Impact BR-5)** **BR-5c: Mitigate for Non-Native Tree Canopy (see Impact BR-5)** **CC-1: Implement All-Electric Ready Design in New Mixed-Use and Nonresidential Development** The County shall require new mixed-use and nonresidential development projects within the Specific Plan Area to be designed and constructed as all-electric ready with the necessary wiring and electrical capacity. Compliance shall be verified by the County prior to the issuance of building permit(s).	LTCCM
CHAPTER 7 CULTURAL AND PALEONTOLOGICAL RESOURCES			
Impact CR-1: Cause a Substantial Adverse Change in the Significance of a Historical Resource	NI	No mitigation measures are required.	NI
Impact CR-2: Cause a Substantial Adverse Change in the Significance of an Archaeological Resource	PS	**CR-2: Mitigate for Unanticipated Discoveries** In the event that human remains are discovered in any location other than a dedicated cemetery, work shall be halted and the County Coroner contacted. For all other potential archaeological or cultural resources discovered during ground disturbing activities, work shall be halted until a qualified archaeologist and/or tribal representative may evaluate the resource.	LTSM

Impacts	Level of Significance Before Mitigation	Mitigation Measure	Level of Significance After Mitigation
		1. **Unanticipated human remains**. Pursuant to Sections 5097.5 and 5097.98 of the State Public Resources Code, and Section 7050.5 of the State Health and Safety Code, if a human bone or bone of unknown origin is found during construction, all work is to stop and the County Coroner and Planning and Environmental Review shall be immediately notified. If the remains are determined to be Native American, the coroner shall notify the Native American Heritage Commission within 24 hours, and the Native American Heritage Commission shall identify the person or persons it believes to be the Most Likely Descendant (MLD) from the deceased Native American. The MLD may make recommendations to the landowner or the person responsible for the excavation work, for means of treating or disposition of, with appropriate dignity, the human remains and any associated grave goods. 2. **Unanticipated cultural resources**. In the event of an inadvertent discovery of cultural resources (excluding human remains) during construction or decommissioning, all work must halt within a 100-foot radius of the discovery. A qualified professional archaeologist, meeting the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualification Standards for prehistoric and historic archaeology, shall be retained at the applicant's expense to evaluate the significance of the find. If it is determined due to the types of deposits discovered that a Native American monitor is required, the Guidelines for Monitors/Consultants of Native American Cultural, Religious, and Burial Sites as established by the Native American Heritage Commission shall be followed, and the monitor shall be retained at the applicant's expense. Work cannot continue within the 100-foot radius of the discovery site until the archaeologist and/or tribal monitor conducts sufficient research and data collection to make a determination that the resource is either (1) not cultural in origin; or (2) not potentially eligible for listing on the NRHP or CRHR. If a potentially-eligible resource is encountered, then the archaeologist and/or tribal monitor, Planning and Environmental Review staff, and project proponent shall arrange for either (1) total avoidance of the resource, if possible; or (2) test excavations or total data recovery as mitigation. The determination shall be documented in writing and submitted to the County Environmental Coordinator as verification that the provisions of CEQA for managing unanticipated discoveries have been met.	

Impacts	Level of Significance Before Mitigation	Mitigation Measure	Level of Significance After Mitigation
Impact CR-3: Disturb any Human Remains, Including Those Interred Outside of Dedicated Cemeteries	PS	**CR-2: Mitigate for Unanticipated Discoveries (see Impact CR-2)**	LTSM
Impact CR-4: Damage to or Destruction of Unique Paleontological Resource or Site	PS	**CR-4: Avoid Impacts to Unique Paleontological Resources** Prior to the start of earthmoving activities for development projects and infrastructure improvements within the Specific Plan Area, the project applicant shall do the following: 1. Retain the services of either a qualified archaeologist or a qualified paleontologist to provide training to all construction personnel involved with earthmoving activities regarding the possibility of encountering fossils, the appearance and types of fossils likely to be seen during construction, and proper notification procedures should fossils be encountered. 2. If paleontological resources are discovered during earthmoving activities, the construction crew shall immediately cease work within 100 feet of the find and shall notify the project applicant and Sacramento County. 3. If paleontological resources are discovered during earthmoving activities, the project applicant shall retain a qualified paleontologist to evaluate the resource and prepare and implement a recovery plan. The recovery plan may include, but is not limited to, a field survey, construction monitoring, sampling and data recovery procedures, museum curation for any specimen recovered, and a report of findings. The recovery plan shall be submitted to Sacramento County for review and approval. Recommendations in the recovery plan shall be implemented before construction activities can resume at the site where the paleontological resource(s) were discovered.	LTSM
CHAPTER 8 ENERGY			
Impact EN-1: Result in Wasteful, Inefficient, Or Unnecessary Consumption Of Energy During Project Construction	LTS	No mitigation measures are required.	LTS

Impacts	Level of Significance Before Mitigation	Mitigation Measure	Level of Significance After Mitigation
Impact EN-2: Result in Wasteful, Inefficient, Or Unnecessary Consumption Of Energy During Project Operation	LTS	No mitigation measures are required.	LTS
Impact EN-3: Conflict with or Obstruct A State Or Local Plan For Renewable Energy Or Energy Efficiency	LTS	No mitigation measures are required.	LTS
CHAPTER 9 HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS			
Impact HAZ-1: Release of Hazardous Materials from Routine Transport, Use, or Disposal of Hazardous Materials or Reasonably Foreseeable Upset and/or Accident Conditions	LTS for hazardous materials for construction/ operations, asbestos and lead-based paint, and hazards from underground pipelines; PS for aerially deposited lead, soil contamination along rail lines	**HAZ-1a: Perform Soil Testing for Hazardous Materials Associated with Aerially Deposited Lead from Watt Avenue** Transportation and other infrastructure projects or development projects that would involve disturbance of undeveloped property within 30 feet of the edge of Watt Avenue shall require a qualified remediation consultant to obtain soil borings and employ laboratory testing for aerially deposited lead. Soil testing shall be performed within 30 feet of Watt Avenue, extending to a depth of at least 3 feet. If lead is not present or is present at levels below established human health and environmental safety thresholds, then no further action shall be required. A copy of the soil testing report shall be provided to the Sacramento County. If lead is found to be present at levels above human health or environmental safety thresholds, then soil remediation shall be performed as determined in consultation with DTSC or the Sacramento County Environmental Health Department. Remediation activities may include, but are not limited to, the following: excavating and disposing of lead-containing soil at an appropriately permitted landfill; reusing the soil on-site in areas that would be covered by paved parking lots or paved roadways and where soil placement would be at least 5 feet above the maximum water table elevation (if approved by the regulatory agency depending on the level of contamination); watering the soil during construction to control dust; and covering soil stockpiles until the soil is reused or transported off-site for disposal at a permitted solid waste landfill or other permitted hazardous waste facility.	LTS for hazardous materials for construction/operations, asbestos and lead-based paint, and hazards from underground pipelines; LTSM for aerially deposited lead, soil contamination along rail lines

Impacts	Level of Significance Before Mitigation	Mitigation Measure	Level of Significance After Mitigation
		HAZ-1b: Perform Soil Testing for Hazardous Materials Associated with Rail Lines Transportation and other infrastructure projects or development projects that would involve disturbance of undeveloped property within 30 feet of the edge of the Union Pacific Railroad line or spur shall require a qualified remediation consultant to obtain soil borings and employ laboratory testing for residual chemicals that may be present. If reported constituents of concern are present at levels that are below established human health and environmental thresholds, then no further action shall be required. A copy of the soil testing report shall be provided to Sacramento County. If constituents of concern are found to be present at levels above human health or environmental safety thresholds, then soil remediation shall be performed as determined in consultation with DTSC or the Sacramento County Environmental Health Department. Remediation activities would likely consist of excavating and disposing of contaminated soil at an appropriately permitted landfill, and replacement with clean fill dirt.	
Impact HAZ-2: Result in Hazardous Emissions or Use of Hazardous Materials Within One-Quarter Mile of Schools	PS	**AQ-1a: Implement SMAQMD's Basic Construction Emission Control Practices (see Impact AQ-1)** **AQ-1b: Reduce Off-Road Equipment Exhaust-Related Emissions during Construction (see Impact AQ-1)** **AQ-4b: Further Reduce Potential Construction-Related Health Effects for Development within 300 Feet of Sensitive Receptors (see Impact AQ-4)**	LTSM
Impact HAZ-3: Potential Release of Hazardous Materials from Site Listed in California Government Code Section 65962.5 (Cortese List)	NI for former McClellan AFB; PS for all other hazardous materials sites	**HAZ-3a: Perform Environmental Site Assessments** Prior to the start of construction activities at any of the properties where a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) is recommended in Table HAZ-1 and properties adjacent to adjoining properties with possible environmental concerns, the project applicant shall hire a remediation specialist to perform a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment or to document that conditions have changed such that there is no longer any recognized environmental condition. Where a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment is required and does not identify any recognized environmental condition, no further action is required. In instances where a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment identifies potential hazards, a Phase II Environmental Site Assessment shall be prepared to further assess site soil, soil vapor, and/or groundwater conditions (as appropriate). Depending on the results of the Phase II investigation, additional remediation or cleanup measures shall be implemented as necessary, in coordination with the appropriate regulatory agencies (e.g., DTSC, RWQCB, Sacramento County Environmental Management Department) before the start of construction.	NI for former McClellan AFB; LTSM for all other hazardous materials sites

Impacts	Level of Significance Before Mitigation	Mitigation Measure	Level of Significance After Mitigation
		HAZ-3b: Prepare and Implement a Site-Specific Health and Safety Plan for Parcels with Known Hazardous Materials Issues Prior to the start of construction activities at any of the properties where a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) is recommended in Table HAZ-1 and properties adjacent to adjoining properties with possible environmental concerns, a site-specific Health and Safety Plan (HASP) shall be prepared and implemented in accordance with State and federal OSHA regulations (29 CFR 1910.120) and approved by a certified industrial hygienist. Copies of the HASP shall be made available to construction workers for review during their orientation training and/or during regular health and safety meetings. The HASP shall identify potential hazards such as stained or odiferous soils at any location where earthmoving activities would occur within the Specific Plan Area, chemicals of concern (i.e., VOCs, heavy metals, and gases), personal protective equipment and devices, decontamination procedures, the need for personal or area monitoring, and emergency response procedures. The HASP shall state that if stained or odiferous soil or groundwater is discovered during project-related construction activities, project applicants shall retain a licensed environmental professional to conduct a Phase II ESA that includes appropriate soil and/or groundwater analysis. Recommendations contained in the Phase II ESA to address any contamination that is found, shall be implemented before reinitiating ground-disturbing activities in these areas. The HASP shall also require notification of the appropriate federal, State, and local agencies if evidence of previously undiscovered soil or groundwater contamination (e.g., stained soil, odorous groundwater, or groundwater with a surface sheen) or if previously undiscovered underground storage tanks are encountered during construction activities. Any contaminated areas shall be remediated in accordance with recommendations made by the RWQCB, DTSC, the Sacramento County Environmental Health Division, and/or other appropriate federal, State, or local regulatory agencies.	
Impact HAZ-4: Result in Airport Safety Hazard	LTS	No mitigation measures are required.	LTS

Impacts	Level of Significance Before Mitigation	Mitigation Measure	Level of Significance After Mitigation
Impact HAZ-5: Impair Implementation of or Physically Interfere with an Adopted Emergency Response Plan or Emergency Evacuation Plan	LTS	No mitigation measures are required.	LTS
CHAPTER 10 HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY			
Impact HWQ-1: Violate Water Quality Standards or Substantially Degrade Surface or Groundwater Quality	LTS	No mitigation measures are required.	LTS
Impact HWQ-2: Impede Sustainable Groundwater Management of the Basin by Substantially Decreasing Groundwater Supplies or Interfering with Groundwater Recharge	LTS	No mitigation measures are required.	LTS
Impact HWQ-3: Substantially Alter Drainage Patterns or Add Impervious Surface Resulting in Substantial Erosion or Siltation	LTS	No mitigation measures are required.	LTS

Impacts	Level of Significance Before Mitigation	Mitigation Measure	Level of Significance After Mitigation
Impact HWQ-4: Substantially Alter Drainage Patterns or Add Impervious Surfaces That Would Exceed Storm Drainage Systems, Substantially Increase the Rate or Amount of Surface Runoff Resulting in Flooding On- or Off-site, or Substantially Degrade Water Quality	LTS	No mitigation measures are required.	LTS
Impact HWQ-5: Substantially Alter Drainage Patterns or Add Impervious Surface That Would Impede or Redirect Flood Flows or Risk Release of Pollutants due to Inundation in Flood Hazard Area	LTS	No mitigation measures are required.	LTS
Impact HWQ-6: Conflict with a Water Quality Control Plan or Sustainable Groundwater Management Plan	LTS	No mitigation measures are required.	LTS
CHAPTER 11 LAND USE AND PLANNING			
Impact LU-1: Physically Divide an Established Community	LTS	No mitigation measures are required.	LTS

Impacts	Level of Significance Before Mitigation	Mitigation Measure	Level of Significance After Mitigation
Impact LU-2: Cause a Significant Environmental Impact Due to a Conflict with Any Land Use Plan, Policy, or Regulation Adopted for the Purpose of Avoiding or Mitigating an Environmental Effect	LTS	No mitigation measures are required.	LTS
CHAPTER 12 NOISE			
Impact NOI-1: Generate Construction Noise that Exceeds County Standards	S	**NOI-1: Implement Noise-Reducing Construction Practices for Nighttime Construction.** This mitigation measure shall apply to development projects and infrastructure improvement projects where construction outside of permitted construction hours (i.e., between 8:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m. Monday through Friday and between 8:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. on Saturdays and Sundays) is required due to special construction needs or to avoid disruption to traffic. • The use of impact equipment (e.g., pile drivers) is prohibited during the hours of 8:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m. on Monday through Friday, and between 8:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. on Saturday and Sunday. • Noise-reducing enclosures or acoustical barriers designed to result in a minimum 10-dB reduction shall be installed as close as possible to noise-generating equipment (e.g., compressors and generators) wherever noise-generating equipment is within clear line-of-sight of any noise-sensitive use within 250 feet.	SU
		• Written notification of construction activities shall be provided to all noise-sensitive receptors located within 850 feet of planned nighttime construction activities. Notification shall include anticipated dates and hours during which construction activities are anticipated to occur. Recommendations to assist noise-sensitive land uses in reducing interior noise levels (e.g., closing windows and doors) shall also be included in the notification. The applicant and/or contractor shall provide proof of notification to the County one week prior to the scheduled nighttime construction activities.	

Impacts	Level of Significance Before Mitigation	Mitigation Measure	Level of Significance After Mitigation
		NOI-1b: Implement Noise-Reducing Construction Practices Near Schools. **This mitigation measure shall apply to development projects and infrastructure improvement projects where construction would occur within 200 feet of the edge of an occupied school classroom building.** • **At least 10 business days before construction begins, provide written notification to the affected school district identifying the anticipated construction schedule, major noise-generating activities, and a construction contact person.** • **Locate stationary noise-generating equipment and construction staging areas as far as feasible from occupied classrooms and outdoor instructional areas.** • **Maintain construction equipment in accordance with manufacturer specifications, including mufflers and other noise-reduction devices.** • **Coordinate with the affected school district to identify testing periods and other particularly noise-sensitive instructional activities. Schedule particularly disruptive activities outside these periods where feasible.** • **Install noise-reducing enclosures or acoustical barriers designed to result in a minimum 10-dB reduction as close as feasible to stationary noise-generating equipment (e.g., compressors and generators).**	
Impact NOI-2: Generate Excessive Construction Vibration	S	**NOI-2: Implement Measures to Reduce Groundborne Noise and Vibration Levels.** Project applicants or contractor(s) for projects proposing pile driving within 291 feet of an existing building and use of a vibratory rollers within 135 feet of an existing building shall develop and implement a vibration control plan to avoid damage to any buildings and avoid human disturbance according to the following performance standards: • Building damage: less than 0.5 PPV, inches/second for reinforced concrete, steel, or timber; less than 0.3 PPV, inches/second for engineered concrete and masonry; and 0.2 PPV, inches/second for non-engineered timber and masonry buildings • For human response: 72 VdB for frequent events for residences (i.e., more than 70 events per day), 75 VdB for residences for occasional events (i.e., 30-70 events), and 80 VdB for residences infrequent events (i.e., fewer than 30 events per day) • For human response: 75 VdB for frequent events for non-residential buildings (i.e., more than 70 events per day), 78 VdB for non-residential buildings for occasional events (i.e., 30-70 events), and 83 VdB for non-residential buildings infrequent events (i.e., fewer than 30 events per day)	SU

Impacts	Level of Significance Before Mitigation	Mitigation Measure	Level of Significance After Mitigation
		The vibration control plan shall establish setback distances, equipment limitations, alternatives to pile driving, monitoring vibration and making adjustments in the field, and other measures demonstrated to be effective in avoiding building damage and causing human annoyance according to the performance standards. Minimum setbacks and limitations on equipment shall be established by a qualified geotechnical engineer or ground vibration specialist to ensure against any structural damage to any adjacent buildings based on the proposed equipment use and locations, the type and duration of the foundation/compacting activity, weight and type of construction equipment, on-site and adjacent soil conditions, and the type of construction of the nearby structures. Vibration-inducing activity using pile driving within 291 feet of an existing building or use of a vibratory rollers within 135 feet of an existing building above shall be monitored, and if vibration levels would exceed the performance standards, additional feasible measures, including decreasing the frequency of disturbances for human response, shall be incorporated. Vibration-inducing vibratory and impact activities (e.g., pile driving, vibratory rollers, jack hammers) shall be limited to the daytime hours between 6:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. Monday through Friday and between 8:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday.	
Impact NOI-3: Generate a Substantial Permanent Increase in Traffic Noise Levels	S	No feasible mitigation is available.	SU
Impact NOI-4: Expose New or Existing Sensitive Receptors to New Stationary Noise Sources that Exceed County Standards	PS	**NOI-4: Implement Measures to Reduce Potential Exposure of Sensitive Receptors to Non-Transportation Source-Generated Noise** • All commercial mechanical equipment that could generate noise above County standards in areas adjacent to existing noise-sensitive uses (e.g., HVAC units, compressors, pumps, and generators) shall be shielded with material appropriate to attenuate noise to block the line of sight between these noise sources and outdoor activity areas of adjacent noise-sensitive land uses. • Projects proposing loading docks within 600 feet of occupied noise-sensitive uses shall construct enclosures or provide structural shielding for all loading dock activity areas of sufficient height and length to break the line-of-sight between the loading dock and outdoor activity areas of noise-sensitive receptors.	LTSM

Impacts	Level of Significance Before Mitigation	Mitigation Measure	Level of Significance After Mitigation
Impact NOI-5: Expose People Residing or Working in the Specific Plan Area to Excessive Aircraft Noise	LTS	No mitigation measures are required.	LTS
CHAPTER 13 POPULATION AND HOUSING			
Impact PH-1: Induce Substantial Unplanned Population Growth	LTS	No mitigation measures are required.	LTS
Impact PH-2: Displace Substantial Numbers of Existing People or Housing, Necessitating the Construction of Replacement Housing Elsewhere	LTS	No mitigation measures are required.	LTS
CHAPTER 14 PUBLIC SERVICES			
Impact PS-1: Result in Substantial Adverse Physical Impacts Associated with the Provision of Fire Protection Services	LTS	No mitigation measures are required.	LTS

Impacts	Level of Significance Before Mitigation	Mitigation Measure	Level of Significance After Mitigation
Impact PS-2: Result in Substantial Adverse Physical Impacts Associated with the Provision of Law Enforcement Services	LTS	No mitigation measures are required.	LTS
Impact PS-3: Result in Substantial Adverse Physical Impacts Associated with the Provision of Schools	LTS	No mitigation measures are required.	LTS
Impact PS-4: Result in Substantial Adverse Physical Impacts Associated with the Provision of Libraries	LTS	No mitigation measures are required.	LTS
CHAPTER 15 RECREATION			
Impact REC-1: Result in the Substantial Physical Deterioration of Existing Parks or Result in Substantial Adverse Physical Impacts Associated with the Provision of Parks and Recreation Services	LTS	No mitigation measures are required.	LTS

Impacts	Level of Significance Before Mitigation	Mitigation Measure	Level of Significance After Mitigation
CHAPTER 16 TRANSPORTATION			
Impact TR-1: Adversely Affect an Existing Bicycle and Pedestrian Facility or Public Transit Operations, Interfere with the Implementation of a Planned Bikeway, Result in Unsafe Conditions for Bicyclists or Pedestrians, or Fail to Provide Access to Transit	LTS	No mitigation measures are required.	LTS
Impact TR-2: Generate VMT That Exceeds County Standards	LTS	No mitigation measures are required.	LTS
Impact TR-3: Substantially Increase Hazards Due to a Geometric Design Feature or Incompatible Uses	LTS	No mitigation measures are required.	LTS
Impact TR-4: Result in Inadequate Emergency Access	LTS	No mitigation measures are required.	LTS

Impacts	Level of Significance Before Mitigation	Mitigation Measure	Level of Significance After Mitigation
CHAPTER 17 TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES			
Impact TCR-1: Cause a Substantial Adverse Change in the Significance of a Tribal Cultural Resource	PS	**TCR-1: Mitigate for Inadvertent/Unanticipated TCR Discoveries** If any suspected TCRs or resources of cultural significance to tribes, including but not limited to features, anthropogenic/cultural soils, cultural belongings or objects (artifacts), shell, bone, shaped stones or bone, or ash/charcoal deposits are discovered by any person during construction activities including ground-disturbing activities, all work shall stop immediately within 100 feet of the discovery. Work shall cease in and within the immediate vicinity of the discovery regardless of whether the construction is being actively monitored by a Tribal Monitor, cultural resources specialist, or professional archaeologist. The County shall be immediately notified and must locate a Tribal Representative from culturally-affiliated tribes who shall be immediately notified and shall determine if the discovery is a TCR (Public Resources Code Section 21074). The Tribal Representative will make recommendations regarding the treatment of the discovery. Work at the discovery location cannot resume until all necessary investigation and evaluation of the discovery under the requirements of the CEQA, including AB 52, has been satisfied. The contractor shall implement any measures deemed by the CEQA lead agency to be necessary and feasible to preserve in place, avoid, or minimize impacts to the resource, including, but not limited to, facilitating the appropriate tribal treatment of the discovery, as necessary.	LTSM

Impacts	Level of Significance Before Mitigation	Mitigation Measure	Level of Significance After Mitigation
CHAPTER 18 UTILITIES AND SERVICES SYSTEMS			
Impact US-1: Result in Environmental Effects Associated with Relocation or Construction of New or Expanded Water, Wastewater Treatment, or Storm Water Drainage Facilities, Electric Power, Natural Gas, or Telecommunications Facilities, the Construction or Relocation of Which Could Cause Significant Environmental Effects	LTS	No mitigation measures are required.	LTS
Impact US-2: Exceed Reasonably Foreseeable Future Water Supply Capacity	LTS	No mitigation measures are required.	LTS
Impact US-3: Exceed the Capacity of the Wastewater Treatment Provider	LTS	No mitigation measures are required.	LTS
Impact US-4: Generate Solid Waste in Excess of Standards or in Excess of the Capacity of Local Infrastructure	LTS	No mitigation measures are required.	LTS

Impacts	Level of Significance Before Mitigation	Mitigation Measure	Level of Significance After Mitigation
Cumulative Impacts			
Cumulative Aesthetics Impacts	LTCC	No mitigation measures are required.	LTCC
Cumulative Air Quality Impact – Short-Term Construction	CC	**AQ-1a: Implement SMAQMD's Basic Construction Emission Control Practices (see Impact AQ-1)** **AQ-1b: Reduce Off-Road Equipment Exhaust-Related Emissions (see Impact AQ-1)**	CC and SU
Cumulative Air Quality Impact – Long-Term Operational	CC	**CC-1: Implement All-Electric Ready Design in New Mixed-Use and Nonresidential Development (see Impact CC-1)** **AQ-2: Use Low VOC Paint in County-Operated Facilities (see Impact AQ-2)**	CC and SU
Cumulative Air Quality Impact – Substantial Mobile Source Concentrations	NSCI	No mitigation measures are required.	NSCI
Cumulative Air Quality Impact – Substantial Toxic Air Contaminant Concentrations	LTCC	No mitigation measures are required.	LTCC
Cumulative Air Quality Impact – Objectionable Odors	NSCI	No mitigation measures are required.	NSCI
Cumulative Biological Resources Impacts	CC	**BR-1a: Preconstruction Biological Resources Reports for Potentially Sensitive Sites (see Impact BR-1)** **BR-1b: Avoid, Minimize, and Mitigate for Impacts on Special-Status Plant Species (see Impact BR-1)** **BR-1c: Avoid, Minimize, and Mitigate for Impacts on Special-Status Aquatic Invertebrates (see Impact BR-1)** **BR-1d: Avoid and Minimize Impacts on Monarch Butterfly (see Impact BR-1)** **BR-1e: Avoid and Minimize Impacts on Crotch's Bumblebee (see Impact BR-1)** **BR-1f: Avoid and Minimize Impacts on Northwestern Pond Turtle (see Impact BR-1)**	LTCC

Impacts	Level of Significance Before Mitigation	Mitigation Measure	Level of Significance After Mitigation
		BR-1g: Avoid and Minimize Impacts on Nesting Swainson's Hawk (see Impact BR-1) **BR-1h: Avoid and Minimize Impacts on Nesting Birds (see Impact BR-1)** **BR-1i: Avoid and Minimize Impacts on Roosting Bats (see Impact BR-1)** **BR-2: Avoid, Minimize, and Mitigate for Impacts on Riparian Habitat (see Impact BR-2)** **BR-3: Avoid, Minimize, and Mitigate for Impacts on Wetlands and Waters (see Impact BR-3)** **BR-5a: Implement Native Tree Protection (see Impact BR-5)** **BR-5b: Compensate for Removal of Native Trees (see Impact BR-5)** **BR-5c: Mitigate for Non-Native Tree Canopy (see Impact BR-5)**	
Cumulative Climate Change Impact	PCC	**AQ-1a: Implement SMAQMD's Basic Construction Emission Control Practices (see Impact AQ-1)** **AQ-4a: Use Zero-Emission Construction Equipment Where Commercially Available (see Impact AQ-4)** **BR-5a: Implement Native Tree Protection (see Impact BR-5)** **BR-5c: Mitigate for Non-Native Tree Canopy (see Impact BR-5)** **CC-1: Implement All-Electric Ready Design in New Mixed-Use and Nonresidential Development**	LTCC
Cumulative Cultural Resources Impact	LTCC	**CR-2: Mitigate for Unanticipated Discoveries (see Impact CR-2)**	LTCC
Cumulative Paleontological Resources Impact	LTCC	**CR-4: Avoid Impacts to Unique Paleontological Resources (see Impact CR-4)**	LTCC
Cumulative Energy Impact	LTCC	No mitigation measures are required.	LTCC
Cumulative Hazardous Materials Impact - Storage, Use, Disposal,	NSCI	No mitigation measures are required.	NSCI

Impacts	Level of Significance Before Mitigation	Mitigation Measure	Level of Significance After Mitigation
Transport, and Accidental Release			

Impacts	Level of Significance Before Mitigation	Mitigation Measure	Level of Significance After Mitigation
Cumulative Hazardous Materials Impact - Hazardous Materials Within One-Quarter Mile of Schools	NSCI	No mitigation measures are required.	NSCI
Cumulative Hazardous Materials Impact - Development on a Hazardous Materials Site	NSCI	No mitigation measures are required.	NSCI
Cumulative Hazardous Materials Impact – Airport Safety Hazards	NSCI	No mitigation measures are required.	NSCI
Cumulative Hazardous Materials Impact – Interference with Adopted Emergency Plans	NSCI	No mitigation measures are required.	NSCI
Cumulative Hydrology and Water Quality Impact - Water Quality, Erosion, and Conflicts with Water Quality Planning	NSCI / LTCC	No mitigation measures are required.	NSCI / LTCC

Impacts	Level of Significance Before Mitigation	Mitigation Measure	Level of Significance After Mitigation
Cumulative Hydrology and Water Quality Impact - Groundwater Supplies, Recharge, and Sustainability Planning	NSCI	No mitigation measures are required.	NSCI
Cumulative Hydrology and Water Quality Impact - Stormwater Drainage Systems and Associated Flooding	LTCC	No mitigation measures are required.	LTCC

Impacts	Level of Significance Before Mitigation	Mitigation Measure	Level of Significance After Mitigation
Cumulative Hydrology and Water Quality Impact - Impede or Redirect Flood Flows, or Risk Release of Pollutants Due To Project Inundation	LTCC	No mitigation measures are required.	LTCC
Cumulative Land Use and Planning Impact	NSCI	No mitigation measures are required.	NSCI
Cumulative Noise and Vibration Impact - Traffic Noise Impacts	CC and SU	No mitigation measures are feasible.	CC and SU
Cumulative Noise and Vibration Impact – Stationary Noise	LTCC	No mitigation measures are required.	LTCC

Impacts	Level of Significance Before Mitigation	Mitigation Measure	Level of Significance After Mitigation
Cumulative Noise and Vibration Impact – Construction Noise	NSCI	No mitigation measures are required.	NSCI
Cumulative Noise and Vibration Impact – Construction Vibration	NSCI	**NOI-2: Implement Measures to Reduce Groundborne Noise and Vibration Levels**	NSCI
Cumulative Population and Housing Impact	LTCC	No mitigation measures are required.	LTCC
Cumulative Public Services Impact – Fire and Police Services	LTCC	No mitigation measures are required.	LTCC
Cumulative Public Services Impact – School Facilities	LTCC	No mitigation measures are required.	LTCC

Impacts	Level of Significance Before Mitigation	Mitigation Measure	Level of Significance After Mitigation
Cumulative Public Services Impact – Library Facilities	LTCC	No mitigation measures are required.	LTCC
Cumulative Recreation Impact	LTCC	No mitigation measures are required.	LTCC
Cumulative Transportation Impact – Vehicle Miles Traveled	LTCC	No mitigation measures are required.	LTCC
Cumulative Transportation Impact – Roadway Operations	LTCC	No mitigation measures are required.	LTCC

Impacts	Level of Significance Before Mitigation	Mitigation Measure	Level of Significance After Mitigation
Cumulative Transportation Impact – Traffic Safety	LTCC	No mitigation measures are required.	LTCC
Cumulative Transportation Impact – Emergency Access	LTCC	No mitigation measures are required.	LTCC
Cumulative Transportation Impact – Multi-Modal Policy Consistency	LTCC	No mitigation measures are required.	LTCC
Cumulative Tribal Cultural Resources Impact	LTCC	**TCR-1: Mitigate for Inadvertent/Unanticipated TCR Discoveries (see Impact TCR-1)**	LTCC
Cumulative Utilities and Service Systems Impact - Construction of New or Expanded Utilities	LTCC	No mitigation measures are required.	LTCC

Impacts	Level of Significance Before Mitigation	Mitigation Measure	Level of Significance After Mitigation
Cumulative Utilities and Service Systems Impact - Increased Demand for Water Supply	LTCC	No mitigation measures are required.	LTCC
Cumulative Utilities and Service Systems Impact - Increased Demand For Wastewater Treatment	LTCC	No mitigation measures are required.	LTCC

Impacts	Level of Significance Before Mitigation	Mitigation Measure	Level of Significance After Mitigation
Cumulative Utilities and Service Systems Impact - Increased Generation of Solid Waste and Compliance with Solid Waste Reduction Laws and Programs	NSCI	No mitigation measures are required.	NSCI

Notes: LTS= less than significant, LTSM= less than significant with mitigation, NI= no impact, PS= potentially significant, S=Significant, SU = Significant and Unavoidable; LTCC= less than cumulatively considerable; CC= cumulatively considerable; NSCI= no significant cumulative impact: PCC= potentially cumulatively considerable; LTCCM= less than cumulatively considerable with mitigation.

TERMINOLOGY USED IN THIS EIR

This EIR uses the following terminology to describe environmental effects of the proposed Specific Plan.

Significance Criteria. A set of criteria used by the lead agency to determine at what level, or "threshold," an impact would be considered significant. Significance criteria used in this EIR include those that are set forth in the CEQA Guidelines, or can be discerned from the CEQA Guidelines; criteria based on factual or scientific information; criteria based on regulatory standards of local, State, and federal agencies; and criteria based on goals and policies identified in the Sacramento County General Plan.

Less-than-Significant Impact. A project impact is considered less than significant when it does not reach the standard of significance and would, therefore, cause no substantial change in the environment. No mitigation is required for less-than-significant impacts.

Potentially Significant Impact. A potentially significant impact is a substantial, or potentially substantial, adverse change in the environment. Physical conditions that exist within the area could be directly or indirectly affected by the project. Impacts may also be short-term or long-term. A project impact is considered significant if it reaches the threshold of significance identified in the EIR. Mitigation measures may reduce a potentially significant impact to less than significant.

Significant Unavoidable Impact. A project impact is considered significant and unavoidable if it is significant and cannot be avoided or mitigated to a less-than-significant level once the project is implemented.

Significant Cumulative Impact. A cumulative impact can result when a change in the environment results from the incremental impact of a project when added to other related past, present or reasonably foreseeable future projects. Significant cumulative impacts may result from individually minor but collectively significant effects.

Cumulatively Considerable Contribution. Cumulatively considerable means that the incremental environmental effects of the proposed Specific Plan are significant when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, current projects, and probable future projects. The existence of a significant cumulative impact caused by other projects does not necessarily mean that the proposed Specific Plan's contribution is cumulatively considerable. Therefore, this EIR evaluates the relative contribution of the Specific Plan to significant cumulative impacts.

Mitigation. Mitigation measures are revisions to the project that would minimize, avoid, or reduce a significant effect on the environment. CEQA Guidelines Section 15370 identifies the following five types of mitigation:

- Avoiding the impact altogether by not taking a certain action or parts of an action.

- Minimizing impacts by limiting the degree or magnitude of the action and its implementation.
- Rectifying the impact by repairing, rehabilitating, or restoring the impacted environment.
- Reducing or eliminating the impact over time by preservation and maintenance operations during the life of the action.
- Compensating for the impact by replacing or providing substitute resources or environments.

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1 INTRODUCTION

SUMMARY OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT

The proposed North Watt Avenue Specific Plan establishes allowable land uses, development and design standards for development, infrastructure improvements, public facility improvements, and an implementation strategy for reinvestment within an approximately 705-acre Specific Plan Area in the North Highlands community of unincorporated Sacramento County (County).

The proposed Specific Plan includes a General Plan amendment to establish a new "North Watt Avenue Specific Plan" land use designation, along with several changes to functional classifications of streets and roadways within and adjacent to the Specific Plan Area. The Specific Plan proposes new zoning districts, which would supersede existing zoning within the Specific Plan Area and allow development of a complementary mix of land uses along the North Watt Avenue corridor.

The North Watt Avenue Specific Plan is intended to remove regulatory constraints to infill development, consistent with the Sacramento County Board of Supervisors' 2024 Resolution regarding housing and infill development, which directs staff to increase corridor development that can be built by-right, and to provide a flexible framework for development that allows innovation and encourages creative approaches.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT SCOPE AND PROCESS

PURPOSE OF THIS ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

This environmental impact report (EIR) evaluates the potential environmental impacts attributable to implementation of the proposed Specific Plan. This EIR has been prepared under the direction of Sacramento County in accordance with the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (Public Resources Code Section 21000 et seq.) and the State CEQA Guidelines (California Code of Regulations [CCR] Title 14. Natural Resources Division 6 Section 15000 et seq.). An EIR discloses known or possible impacts on the environment that may result from a project, alternatives to the project, and measures to mitigate those impacts to decision makers (e.g., the Sacramento County Board of Supervisors), public agencies, and the general public. The intent of the EIR is to provide objective information to allow the Sacramento County Board of Supervisors to make an informed decision when considering whether to approve or deny the proposed Specific Plan.

LEAD, RESPONSIBLE, AND TRUSTEE AGENCIES

Sacramento County is the lead agency under CEQA for this EIR since the County has discretionary authority to determine whether or how to approve the proposed Specific Plan. Responsible agencies are other agencies that are responsible for carrying out or

implementing certain components of projects – in this case, the County alone is responsible for adopting the Specific Plan. Other agencies would have some review authority over certain aspects of permitting or approvals involving future development projects, as well as infrastructure and public facility improvements that may be implemented under the proposed Specific Plan and could be considered responsible agencies for future development and infrastructure projects. Trustee agencies have jurisdiction over certain resources held in trust for the people of California, but do not have legal authority over approving or carrying out projects. Responsible and trustee agencies for future development projects, infrastructure, and public facility improvements implemented under the proposed Specific Plan could include, but would not necessarily be limited to: the United States Army Corps of Engineers, United States Fish and Wildlife Service, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board, Sacramento Municipal Utility District, Sacramento Area Sewer District, Sacramento Suburban Water District, Sacramento Area Council of Governments, North Highlands Recreation and Park District, Arcade Creek Recreation and Park District, Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District, Sacramento Metropolitan Fire District, and the Central Valley Flood Protection Board.

TYPE OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

This EIR fulfills the requirements for a program EIR. As provided in Section 15168 of the CEQA Guidelines, a program EIR may be prepared on a series of actions that could be characterized as one large project. Use of a program EIR provides the County (as lead agency) with the opportunity to consider broad policy alternatives and program-wide mitigation measures and greater flexibility to address environmental issues and/or cumulative impacts on a comprehensive basis. Agencies generally prepare program EIRs for programs or a series of related actions that are linked geographically, are logical parts of a chain of contemplated events, rules, regulations, or plans that govern the conduct of a continuing program, or are individual activities carried out under the same authority and having generally similar environmental effects that can be mitigated in similar ways.

A program EIR evaluates the broad impacts of implementing a plan – such as a community plan, general plan, master plan or specific plan – including the collective impacts of projects and activities anticipated under a plan. Once a program EIR has been prepared, subsequent activities within the program are evaluated to determine if additional CEQA documentation is required to address the significant impacts of such activities. Subsequent activities found to be within the program EIR scope would not generally require any additional environmental review (CEQA Guidelines Section 15168[c]). When a program EIR is relied on for a subsequent activity, the lead agency must incorporate feasible and applicable mitigation measures into the subsequent activities (CEQA Guidelines Section 15168[c][3]). If a subsequent activity could result in new or more severe significant impacts than reported in the program EIR, the lead agency must prepare a negative declaration, mitigated negative declaration, or a project-level subsequent or supplemental EIR. The County's Initial Study Checklist may be used to determine if a subsequent activity is within the scope of the program EIR and if not, what type of CEQA document is needed to address its effects.

SCOPE OF THIS ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

Pursuant to CEQA and the CEQA Guidelines, a lead agency is required to focus the discussion in an EIR on significant environmental effects and may limit discussion on other effects to brief explanations about why they are not significant (Public Resources Code Section 21002.1, CEQA Guidelines Section 15128). Potentially significant impacts were identified based on review of comments received as part of the public scoping process (see Appendix INT-1) and research and analysis during preparation of the proposed Specific Plan and this EIR. This EIR comprehensively addresses all relevant environmental issues, but the focus is on potentially significant effects, which include aesthetics, air quality, biological resources, climate change, cultural and paleontological resources, energy, hazards and hazardous materials, hydrology and water quality, noise and vibration, land use, population and housing, public services, recreation, transportation, tribal cultural resources, and utilities and service systems. Chapter 20 of this EIR includes a section evaluating less than significant effects, which include agriculture and forestry resources, geology and soils, mineral resources, and wildfire. This EIR also addresses other CEQA-mandated issues (e.g., alternatives, cumulative impacts, growth-inducing impacts, and significant unavoidable impacts) in Chapters 19 and 20.

PUBLIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW PROCESS

NOTICE OF PREPARATION

A Notice of Preparation (NOP) for the proposed Specific Plan Draft EIR was published and circulated for public review from January 9th to February 12th, 2026. The County invited additional input via scoping meetings held in the morning and afternoon of January 22nd, 2026. The NOP and copies of the comments received in response to the NOP are provided in Appendix INT-1. The County reviewed and considered all responses to the NOP in preparation of this EIR.

INTENDED USES OF THIS EIR

The Sacramento County Board of Supervisors will use the information contained in this EIR to evaluate the proposed Specific Plan (as described further in Chapter 2, “Project Description”). Responsible and trustee agencies will use this EIR in review of future development projects and future public infrastructure and public facility improvements implemented under the proposed Specific Plan.

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2 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

INTRODUCTION

Under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), a project description must contain (a) the precise location and boundaries of the project area, shown on a detailed map, along with a regional map of the project's location; (b) a statement of the objectives sought by the proposed project, which should include the underlying purpose of the project; (c) a general description of the project's technical, economic, and environmental characteristics; and (d) a statement briefly describing the intended uses of the environmental impact report (EIR) (CEQA Guidelines Section 15124). A project description need not be exhaustive, but should supply the information necessary for the evaluation and review of the project's significant effects on the environment. This project description for the proposed North Watt Avenue Specific Plan (the proposed Specific Plan) provides an overview of the existing environmental setting, objectives, required approvals, and a detailed description of the proposed Specific Plan.

Sacramento County's 2030 General Plan includes policies and implementation measures to plan for reinvestment along major developed corridors of the unincorporated county, including North Watt Avenue. The Board of Supervisors identified a Specific Plan as the appropriate tool to guide necessary utility infrastructure investments to support the corridor's development potential, as well as outline the costs, timing, and existing or potential funding sources, through an accompanying financing plan, for the required infrastructure and public facilities. The purpose of the North Watt Avenue Specific Plan is to:

- implement the General Plan for this corridor, and to accelerate infill development that will increase local economic activity, improve transit ridership, add housing near jobs and services, and create new public gathering spaces;
- remove regulatory constraints to infill development, consistent with the Board of Supervisors' 2024 Resolution regarding Housing and Infill Development, which directs staff to increase corridor development that can be built by-right, and to provide a flexible framework for development that allows innovation and encourages creative approaches; and
- identify public infrastructure improvements needed to support new infill development, along with strategies to fund and implement these improvements in ways that can attract private investment in both existing properties and future infill projects.

The proposed North Watt Avenue Specific Plan identifies allowable land uses, development standards, and design standards for future development within the Specific Plan Area, along with public investments required to support infill development and implementation strategies to advance the consensus vision in the North Watt corridor area. The proposed Specific Plan is consistent with the vision and goals of, but would

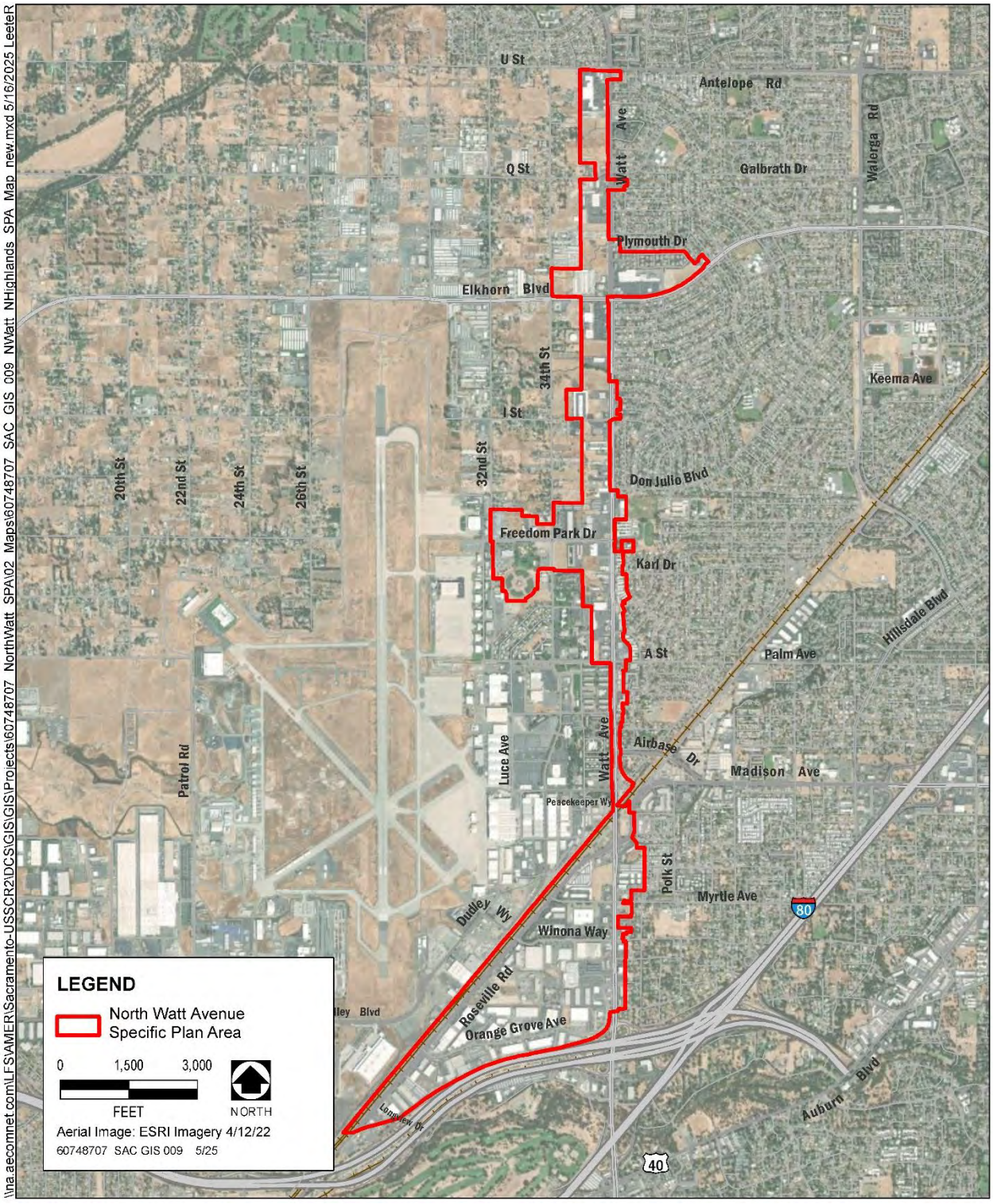
supersede the North Watt Avenue Corridor Plan (Sacramento County 2012) and the North Highlands Town Center Special Planning Area (Sacramento County 2008).

The County is the CEQA lead agency for this EIR, which was prepared in compliance with the CEQA of 1970 (Public Resources Code Section 21000 et seq.) and the CEQA Guidelines (CCR, Title 14, Section 15000 et seq.).

PROJECT LOCATION

The North Watt Avenue Specific Plan Area encompasses approximately 705 acres along a 4-mile segment of Watt Avenue from Antelope Road/U Street in the north to Interstate 80 (I-80) in the south within unincorporated Sacramento County (Plate PD-1). Surrounding uses include the McClellan Park commercial development to the west and single-family residential neighborhoods to the north and in the North Highlands community to the east.

Plate PD-1: Proposed Specific Plan Area



Source: AECOM 2025

ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

The North Watt Avenue Specific Plan Area (Specific Plan Area) is a developed urban corridor containing commercial, residential, light-industrial, and institutional uses, as well as vacant and undeveloped parcels. Existing development includes one-story and multi-story commercial structures, surface parking areas, and limited residential development. Parcels vary in size, configuration and use, and development intensity is not uniform across the Specific Plan Area. Built features include shopping centers, stand-alone commercial buildings, small offices, industrial buildings, public facilities, and residential subdivisions located east and north of Watt Avenue.

Topography within the Specific Plan Area is generally flat, with gradual slopes associated with roadway embankments and modified drainage channels. Seven creeks, including several branches of Robla Creek, a tributary to Dry Creek, and Magpie Creek, cross segments of the corridor. These creeks flow generally westward and occur within urbanized surroundings. Portions of these creek channels are lined or modified and convey stormwater through the area. No natural open space areas occur within the Specific Plan Area; however, landscaped areas and drainage features provide limited vegetation cover.

Infrastructure within the Specific Plan Area includes existing roadways, sidewalks, bicycle facilities, storm drainage improvements and utility systems installed during various stages of development. Sidewalks and bicycle facilities occur intermittently along Watt Avenue and intersecting streets. Utilities, including water, wastewater, storm drainage, and energy infrastructure, are present throughout the Specific Plan Area.

Vegetation within the Specific Plan Area consists primarily of ornamental landscaping, street trees, and non-native vegetation on undeveloped parcels. Creek corridors and drainage features contain varying amounts of riparian or ruderal (disturbed by human activities) vegetation depending on channel configuration and surrounding land uses. Wildlife use within the Specific Plan Area is typical of urban environments and is generally limited to species adapted to developed settings.

Sensitive receptors within and adjacent to the Specific Plan Area include existing single- and multi-family residences, parks and other community-serving uses.

SURROUNDING LAND USES

Surrounding land uses include the former McClellan Air Force Base (now McClellan Business Park) to the west, consisting of industrial, logistics, aviation, and commercial uses. To the north and east, the North Highlands community contains predominantly single-family residential neighborhoods, multi-family housing, and local- and regional-serving commercial uses. I-80 and associated commercial development occur to the south. Land use patterns surrounding the Specific Plan Area consist of a mix of residential subdivisions, commercial centers, employment uses, institutional facilities, and transportation infrastructure reflective of post-war suburban development in unincorporated Sacramento County.

Access and Circulation

Watt Avenue provides primary north–south access through the Specific Plan Area. The roadway includes multiple travel lanes, signalized intersections, and intermittent medians. East–west access is provided by streets connecting residential neighborhoods and commercial areas to Watt Avenue, as well as arterials and a thoroughfare, which are higher-volume roads intersecting with Watt Avenue that connect different parts of the County, typically four- or six-lane roadways, generally with access restrictions. Regional access is provided by I-80 at the southern end of the Specific Plan Area. Transit service is provided along Watt Avenue and connecting streets by the Sacramento Regional Transit District. Pedestrian and bicycle facilities are present in some locations but are not continuous throughout the Specific Plan Area.

General Plan Designations

Most of the Specific Plan Area has the Transit Oriented Development land use designation, but portions of the Specific Plan Area are also designated Urban Development Area (UDA), Medium Density Residential, High Density Residential, Intensive Industrial, and Commercial and Offices.

North Highlands Community Plan

The Specific Plan Area is within the North Highlands – North Central Area Community Plan, which was adopted originally in 1974 to protect operations at McClellan Air Force Base; expand public services for education, recreation, and public transit; eliminate blight and enhance landscaping; provide a variety of housing types; and protect agricultural operations in the plan area until such time as land is required for development.

Zoning

The Specific Plan Area is zoned Special Planning Area – both the North Highlands Town Center Special Planning Area (SPA) and the North Watt Avenue Corridor Plan area. Seven additional parcels (or portions of), not within these existing SPA areas, would be included in the Specific Plan Area. These include: three parcels north of Elkhorn Boulevard and east of 34th Street zoned Light Industrial (M-1); two parcels north of I Street, west of Watt Avenue, and east of 34th Street are zoned M-1; one parcel in the same area is zoned Agricultural-Residential 1 acre (AR-1); and one parcel south of Myrtle Avenue and approximately 250 feet east of Watt Avenue is zoned Limited Commercial (LC). The proposed Specific Plan would supersede existing zoning within the Specific Plan Area.

There are five parcels within existing SPA areas that are not proposed to be part of the Specific Plan Area. For these parcels, they will be rezoned to the zoning designations prior to adoption of the SPAs (i.e., returned to pre-SPA zoning), and accompanied by compatible General Plan land use and Community Plan designations.

PROJECT CHARACTERISTICS

PROJECT VISION

The shared Vision for the North Watt Avenue Specific Plan is based on the Sacramento County General Plan, Board of Supervisors direction related to the Infill Program, the public and stakeholder engagement conducted to support the previous North Watt Corridor Plan and North Highlands Town Center Special Planning Area (SPA), and additional outreach for this Specific Plan. This shared Vision has guided the development of this Specific Plan:

> *The North Watt Avenue Specific Plan Area is a vibrant community that has experienced significant reinvestment. This reinvestment has added new housing opportunities and supported both long-existing and newer businesses. North Watt is a desirable place to live, work, and visit. Strategic public investments have beautified the area, improved bicycle and pedestrian safety and convenience, and accelerated private investment. Today, there are few vacant properties and retail storefronts, and many residents are within walking distance of employment opportunities, public transit, green space, retail, and services. New public gathering places, along with regular and special events, have strengthened the sense of community for North Watt.*

PROJECT OBJECTIVES

CEQA Guidelines Section 15124(b) requires that an EIR project description include a statement of the objectives intended to be achieved by the project. The objectives describe the purpose of the project and are intended to assist the lead agency in developing a reasonable range of alternatives for consideration in the EIR, and to assist the decision-makers in assessing the feasibility of mitigation measures and alternatives.

The project objectives of the North Watt Avenue Specific Plan are presented below.

- Identify and implement public infrastructure improvements necessary to support infill development.
- Enhance streetscapes with shade trees and landscaping features to create safe, attractive, and climate-resilient public realms that encourage walking, biking, and transit.
- Remove regulatory constraints and increase opportunities for by-right approval of infill development, consistent with the Board of Supervisors' 2024 housing and infill development resolution.
- Accelerate private investment, including infill development that will add housing near jobs and services, increase local economic activity, and catalyze additional investment.

- Create new public gathering spaces, including new parks and open spaces areas, that provide passive recreational opportunities, increase community connectivity, and can host regular and special events.

PROJECT ENTITLEMENTS

The following entitlements are requested:

1. A **General Plan Amendment** to:

   - Amend the Land Use Element to establish a "North Watt Avenue Specific Plan" (NWASP) land use designation;

   - Change the land use designations of approximately 616.56 acres from existing land use designations to the proposed NWASP land use designation; 29.40 acres from existing land use designations to the proposed Low Density Residential (LDR) land use designation; and 1.29 acres from existing land use designations to the proposed Commercial and Office (COMM/OFF) land use designation.

   - Amend the Transportation Plan in the Circulation Element to reclassify (1) Watt Avenue between ~~Antelope Road/~~U Street and **James Way** ~~Palm Avenue~~ from a one-way couplet Smart Growth Street (SGS) to a 6-lane thoroughfare SGS; (2) 34th Street between ~~Antelope Road/~~U Street and **James Way** ~~Palm Avenue~~ from a one-way couplet SGS to a major collector; (3) U Street between Watt Avenue and 34th Street from a one-way couplet SGS to a**n arterial** ~~major collector~~; and (4) **James Way** ~~Palm Avenue~~ between Watt Avenue and 34th Street from a one-way couplet SGS to a major collector, consistent with the Board-approved Hybrid Urban Boulevard Alternative in the Re-Imagine North Watt Complete Street Plan.

   - **Amend the Circulation Element to remove the one-way couplet description from the roadway functional classification system.**

   - **Amend the Active Transportation Plan, a policy of the document of the General Plan, to remove and/or modify certain bicycle facility improvement recommendations.**

2. A **Community Plan Amendment** to change the North Highlands – North Central Area Community Plan designation of approximately **539.12** ~~616.56~~ acres from existing plan designations to the proposed NWASP designation; ~~and~~ 0.26 acres from existing plan designation to the proposed Residential 5 (RD-5) plan designation**; and 77.43 acres would maintain its existing plan designation**.

3. A **Rezone** to change the zoning designation of approximately **352.56** ~~341.90~~ acres from existing zoning designations to the proposed **SPA** ~~NWASP~~ Mixed-Use

Corridor (MU-C) zoning designation; approximately **205.48** ~~217.92~~ acres from existing zoning designations to the proposed **SPA** ~~NWASP~~ Employment Flex (Emp-Flex) zoning designation; approximately **58.52** ~~56.13~~ acres from existing zoning designations to the proposed **SPA** ~~NWASP~~ Mixed-Use Neighborhood (MU-N) zoning designation; approximately 29.14 acres from existing zoning designation to the proposed Residential 2 (RD-2) zoning designation; approximately 1.29 acres from existing zoning designation to the proposed Light Commercial (LC) zoning designation; and approximately 0.26 acres from existing zoning designation to the proposed RD-5 zoning designation.

4. A **Zoning Ordinance** to adopt the North Watt Avenue Specific Plan, and repeal the North Watt Avenue Corridor Plan and the North Highlands Town Center Development Code.

~~5. An **Amendment to the Sacramento County Active Transportation Plan**, a policy document of the General Plan, to update the bikeways and trail systems as proposed in the North Watt Avenue Specific Plan.~~

PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENTS

The proposed North Watt Avenue Specific Plan includes a new General Plan land use classification “North Watt Avenue Specific Plan”, which establishes parameters for allowable land use, density, and intensity that are developed in greater detail in the Specific Plan.

The General Plan Circulation Diagram is proposed to be amended through the proposed Specific Plan process, including changes to Functional Classifications: (1) Watt Avenue between ~~Antelope Road/~~U Street and **James Way** ~~Palm Avenue~~ from a one-way couplet SGS to a six-lane thoroughfare SGS; (2) 34th Street between ~~Antelope Road/~~U Street and **James Way** ~~Palm Avenue~~ from a one-way couplet SGS to a major collector; (3) U Street between Watt Avenue and 34th Street from a one-way couplet SGS to an arterial; and (4) **James Way** ~~Palm Avenue~~ between Watt Avenue and 34th Street from a one-way couplet SGS to a major collector.

PROPOSED NORTH WATT AVENUE SPECIFIC PLAN

SPECIFIC PLAN STRUCTURE AND CONTENTS

California Government Code Title 7, Division 1, Chapter 3, Article 8, Sections 65450-65457 provides the authority to adopt a specific plan by ordinance (as a regulatory plan) or resolution (as a policy driven plan). This allows the County to prepare specific plans as may be required for the systematic implementation of the General Plan. The proposed Specific Plan serves as both a policy and regulatory document designed to implement the General Plan’s direction for reinvestment and infill development along major corridors,

with customized development and design standards and infrastructure improvements for the North Watt Avenue corridor.

State law establishes a minimum set of requirements for specific plans, which include text and diagrams that specify the following in detail:

- The distribution, location, and extent of the uses of land, including open space, within the specific plan area.
- The proposed distribution, location and extent and intensity of major components of public and private transportation, sewage, water, drainage, solid waste disposal, energy, and other essential facilities proposed to be located within the specific plan area and which are needed to support the land uses described in the plan.
- Standards and criteria by which development will proceed, and standards for the conservation, development, and utilization of natural resources, where applicable.
- A program of implementation measures including regulations, programs, public works projects, and financing measures necessary to carry out the project.

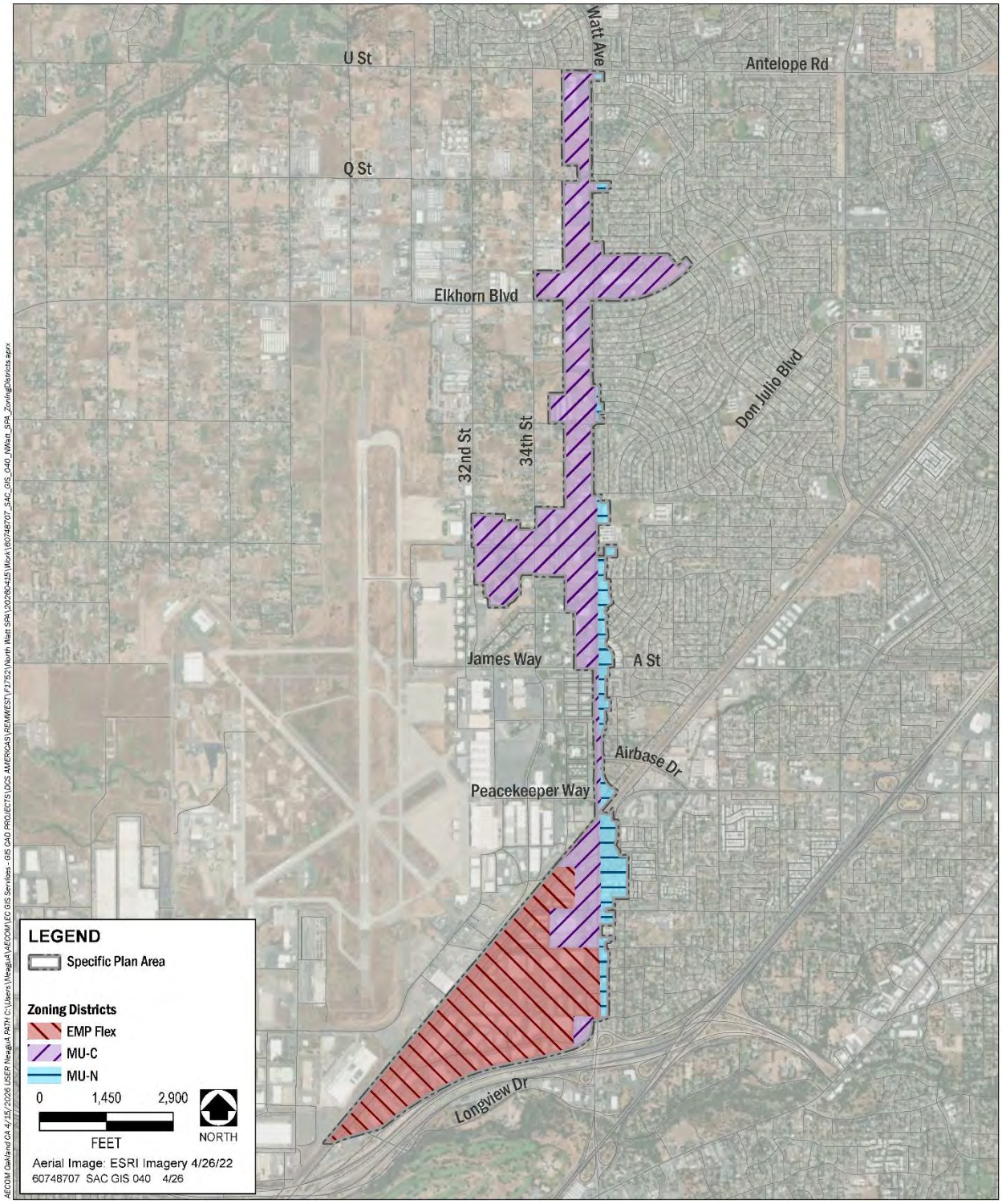
The proposed Specific Plan provides all of the information required pursuant to state law, organized into six chapters, as summarized below.

- Chapter 1 – Introduction: Provides the overview and purpose of the North Watt Avenue Specific Plan.
- Chapter 2 – Land Use & Urban Design: Defines proposed land uses and introduces each Zoning District, including providing objective design standards and development standards for proposed private developments in each Zoning District.
- Chapter 3 – Circulation & Public Realm Design: Describes circulation and street improvements, including improvements to pedestrian, bikeway, and transit facilities, as well as streetscape standards for improvements in the public right-of-way (ROW).
- Chapter 4 – Public Infrastructure & Facilities: Describes the public infrastructure, including parks and open space, and utility services necessary to serve the North Watt Avenue Specific Plan Area.
- Chapter 5 – Implementation: Details the primary activities for implementation of the North Watt Avenue Specific Plan, including the responsibilities, timelines, and tools needed to carry out its improvements, including a financing strategy.
- Chapter 6 – Administration: Presents the methods and procedures for overseeing, interpreting, and amending the North Watt Avenue Specific Plan, as necessary.

SPECIFIC PLAN ZONING DISTRICTS

The Specific Plan proposes zoning districts, which are shown in Plate PD-2, and which would supersede existing zoning within the Specific Plan Area. The zoning districts are accompanied by guidance on allowable land use and development standards.

Plate PD-2: Proposed Specific Plan Zoning Districts



Source: AECOM 2025

The proposed zoning districts allow a complementary mix of land uses, as described below.

- **Mixed-Use Corridor (MU-C):** higher-intensity mixed-use development along the primary corridor and major transit streets. Allows a broad mix of residential and non-residential uses and applies the highest intensity and form standards to support corridor-scale development patterns.
    - Density: 12 to 100 units per gross acre for residential-only projects.
    - Intensity: 0.3 to 3.0 floor area ratio (FAR) for mixed-use and non-residential projects.
        - Residential-only projects may comply using either the density (dwelling units per acre) standards or the intensity (FAR) standards. Mixed-use projects that include both residential and non-residential uses and non-residential uses shall comply with the intensity (FAR) standards only.
- **Mixed-Use Neighborhood (MU-N):** neighborhood-scale mixed-use district that prioritizes housing and allows smaller-scale, neighborhood-serving non-residential uses. Applies standards intended to support compatibility with nearby residential areas.
    - Density: 8 to 50 units per gross acre for residential-only projects.
    - Intensity: 0.2 to 2 FAR for mixed-use and non-residential projects.
    - Residential-only projects may comply using either the density (dwelling units per acre) standards or the intensity (FAR) standards. Mixed-use projects that include both residential and non-residential uses and non-residential uses shall comply with the intensity (FAR) standards only.
- **Employment Flex (EMP-Flex):** employment-focused district that allows a range of job-generating uses, with flexibility for modern industrial, office, service, and supporting commercial uses, with standards addressing access, loading/service functions, and land use compatibility.
    - Intensity: 0.25 to 1.5 FAR.

DEVELOPMENT ASSUMPTIONS

The County has prepared a detailed set of development assumptions that have been used in the analysis reported throughout this EIR. These development assumptions are not County policy – the assumptions are for analytical purposes only. Full implementation of the 2030 General Plan and the proposed North Watt Avenue Specific Plan may involve less development compared to these assumptions, but to the extent that future projects are within the development envelope created by these assumptions, environmental review will be streamlined. This EIR analyzes the “worst case scenario” (i.e., maximum buildout anticipated for the Specific Plan Area) for potential environmental impacts.

Between present and 2050, the County assumes that between 2,100 and 7,260 new dwelling units could be constructed within the Specific Plan Area, providing opportunity for between 3,600 and 19,600 new residents depending on future housing types and household sizes. Up to 1.9 million square feet of new non-residential building space could be constructed within the Specific Plan Area, and up to 745,000 square feet of non-residential building space could be demolished on underutilized properties to accommodate new development. New development within the Specific Plan Area could provide opportunities for between 1,470 and 3,190 new jobs.

TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENTS

Transportation improvements associated with implementation of the Specific Plan would include areawide transportation improvements identified in adopted plans and County-led capital improvement programs. Transportation improvements required as part of private development approvals under the Specific Plan would generally consist of frontage and site access improvements required pursuant to applicable Sacramento County Improvement Standards and project-specific conditions of approval.

RE-IMAGINE NORTH WATT CORRIDOR PLAN

The proposed Specific Plan incorporates the Re-imagine North Watt Corridor Plan, which is a County-initiated corridor planning and capital improvement effort for Watt Avenue that identifies multimodal, streetscape, and access management improvements extending from Antelope Road to Peacekeeper Way, within the Specific Plan Area. The County envisions six lanes for Watt Avenue, with five- to eight-foot sidewalks and street crossing locations, bus stops, Class IV protected bike facilities, landscaped buffers, and, where feasible, minor upgrades to bus stops.

Within the Specific Plan Area, North Watt Avenue is designated by the County's General Plan as a Smart Growth Street which requires "features such as shade trees and plantings, well designed benches and other street furniture, trash receptacles, news racks, outdoor dining experiences, entertainment, public art, pedestrian scaled lighting fixtures, wayfinding signage, bicycle racks and other amenities as appropriate" (General Plan Circulation Element Policy CI-70).

The Re-Imagine North Watt Corridor Plan concept include planting strips between the protected bike lane and the sidewalk on each side of the street, along with a median center in many areas. The Re-Imagine North Watt Corridor Plan Hybrid Urban Boulevard Alternative, which was approved by the Board of Supervisors as the preferred alternative on April 8, 2025, depicts street trees in both the planting strips and center medians, and street trees will be included in the County's implementation of the North Watt Corridor Concept Plan, as feasible.

Please refer to Appendix PD-1, which presents conceptual diagrams illustrating the Re-imagine North Watt Corridor Plan.

Improvements to County Functional Classification System

The County's functional classification system assigns categories to public streets based on their primary role in the transportation network. The Specific Plan maintains the County's adopted classifications. The Specific Plan Area includes Thoroughfares, Arterials, Collectors, Local Streets, and Smart Growth Streets, whose role in the transportation system is described in Chapter 3 of the proposed Specific Plan. The County's Improvement Standards include typical section drawings for different Functional Classifications. For projects in new development areas (projects creating new streets or extending the street network), the County's Improvement Standards include typical cross sections for Minor and Primary Residential Streets; Arterials, Major Collectors, and Collectors; Thoroughfares; and Thoroughfare, Arterial, and Collector Intersections. The standards described by these drawings are generally required for projects proposed in new development areas of the County. As detailed in Section 4-6 of the Improvement Standards, infill development (projects proposing access to existing streets) within the Specific Plan Area may not be required to construct frontage improvements within the public easement area adjacent to the public ROW to meet the current County Improvement Standards for new development areas, but instead would only be required to match the street frontage improvements on abutting properties (or in the case of a corner property, the single abutting property interior to the block).

The County may also initiate street improvement projects within the Specific Plan Area that may require coordination with ongoing infill development. Such County-initiated improvement projects may utilize the current County Improvement Standards for new development areas or cross sections tailored specifically for the Specific Plan Area.

Sacramento County Active Transportation Plan

The proposed Specific Plan incorporates 2022 Sacramento County Active Transportation Plan recommendations for pedestrian intersection safety enhancements, sidewalk gap projects, and bicycle facility improvements. The County will prioritize implementing improvements recommended in the Active Transportation Plan in coordination with, and that would complement proposed infill development under the Specific Plan.

The Active Transportation Plan identifies safety enhancements at the following intersections within the Specific Plan Area, which will be proactively implemented by the County during the planning horizon of this Specific Plan:

- Elkhorn Boulevard and Watt Avenue
- Don Julio Boulevard and Watt Avenue
- Airbase Drive and Watt Avenue
- Roseville Road and Watt Avenue
- Myrtle Avenue and Avenue

In addition to the intersections identified above for safety-enhancing features, the County will implement safety-enhancing features at each location where a Class I multi-use pathway crosses a public street.

The Active Transportation Plan identifies sidewalk gaps at Q Street, Elkhorn Boulevard, and Roseville Road within the Specific Plan Area. Sidewalk gaps would be addressed by infill development at the Q Street and Elkhorn Boulevard locations.

Within the Specific Plan Area, the Active Transportation Plan recommends Class I off-street multi-use facilities at the following locations:

- Q Street Trail, along creek, Watt to 32nd Street
- Elkhorn Trail, along creek, Watt Avenue to Patrol Road
- Watt Avenue, Watt Avenue/Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) Undercrossing
- Robla Creek Trail, Channing Drive to Elkhorn Trail
- Winona Way/UPRR Crossing, Roseville Road to Dudley Boulevard

The Active Transportation Plan recommends Class II bike lanes at the following locations:

- Orange Grove Avenue, Roseville Road to Watt Avenue
- Future Don Julio Boulevard Extension, 32nd Street to Watt Avenue
- A Street, Skvarla Avenue to San Vicente Way
- Winona Way, Roseville Road to Watt Avenue
- 34th Street, Dudley Boulevard to U Street
- Recreation Way, Patrol Road to 32nd Street
- 32nd Street, Recreation Way to U Street

The Active Transportation Plan recommends Class III bicycle boulevards at the following location:

- Wings Way, Watt Avenue to Poplar Boulevard

The Active Transportation Plan identifies Study Corridors, which are considered candidates for Class IV separated bikeway pending study confirmation, at the following locations:

- Elkhorn Boulevard, W Elkhorn Boulevard to I-80 Westbound
- Watt Avenue, S Watt Avenue/Folsom Boulevard to Placer County Border
- Myrtle Avenue, Roseville Road to Harrison Street
- Roseville Road, City of Sacramento East Border to Madison Avenue
- Q Street, 18th Street to Watt Avenue

- U Street, 24th Street to Watt Avenue[1]

PARKS AND RECREATIONAL SPACES

The proposed Specific Plan would include improvements to parks and recreational spaces, pursued by the County in collaboration with recreation and park districts, and coordinated, as appropriate, with private development projects located in an area identified for open space. This Specific Plan prioritizes expansion of passive recreational opportunities and linear park facilities that are well-suited to infill conditions and constrained sites, including:

- Improving creek corridors and greenways for trails, passive recreational space and, where appropriate, naturalized drainage and/or restoration. Robla Creek and Dry Creek corridors represent key opportunities to provide publicly accessible trails, passive recreation areas, and linear open space. The County will coordinate with property owners, park districts, and project developers to advance the design, construction, ownership, and maintenance of multi-purpose creek corridors. Where feasible, improvements may incorporate naturalized drainage features and habitat restoration alongside recreational functions.
- Enhancing safe and convenient pedestrian and bicycle access to parks and recreational destinations. Implementation of Sacramento County Active Transportation Plan recommendations within the Specific Plan Area may include Class I multi-use paths, Class II bicycle lanes, safety-focused intersection improvements, and Class IV protected bike lanes along Watt Avenue as a part of implementing the Re-Imagine North Watt Avenue Corridor Plan. These investments will support access to existing and future parks while improving safety and convenience for pedestrian and bicycle travel.
- Capitalizing on opportunities on undevelopable properties. The Specific Plan recognizes that some parcels may be constrained by size, configuration, or other limitations that would preclude future development. In coordination with the recreation and park districts, the County will explore opportunities for these sites to support passive recreational uses, such as pocket parks, linear open space, or small greenway connections, and will advance discussions with property owners regarding potential improvement, public access, or dedication for park and open-space purposes within the Specific Plan Area.
- Pursuing opportunities for additional shared use of recreational facilities. Joint-use opportunities may include shared access to existing sports fields, play areas, gymnasiums, or other recreational facilities, as well as potential physical improvements or enhancements to existing recreational facilities that expand community access.

[1] The U Street from 24th Street to Watt Avenue (ATP Project ID 559) is modified from a Class II bike lane to a Study Corridor with this Specific Plan.

- Developing new park facilities within identified focus areas, including seeking grant funding and evaluating surplus or acquired land consistent with adopted recreation and park district master plans.
- Coordinating publicly accessible privately owned open spaces within new development projects within the Specific Plan Area. Open space standards can be met through publicly accessible, but privately owned open spaces incorporated into development projects in the Specific Plan Area with different designs and intended to meet different recreational needs.

See Chapter 4 of the proposed Specific Plan for more detail, including Exhibit 4-1, which illustrates some of the locations for potential new recreational features.

UTILITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE SYSTEMS

Chapter 4 of the proposed Specific Plan and Appendices PD-2, Domestic Water Study; PD-3, Sewer Study; and PD-4, Master Drainage Study, describe the public infrastructure and public facilities improvements required to support development within the Specific Plan Area. Infrastructure planning and ongoing service require coordination among utility providers, public agencies, and project developers to support phased development. The analysis presented throughout the EIR includes impacts of all required infrastructure improvements, which are within the footprint of the Specific Plan Area except for small portions of drainage and water supply improvements that are directly adjacent to the Specific Plan Area and would have the same impact as those within the Specific Plan Area.

WATER

The Specific Plan Area is served by both groundwater and surface water. This combined use of groundwater and surface water is referred to as conjunctive use and allows Sacramento Suburban Water District (SSWD) to rely on surface water when available and supplement with groundwater when surface water is limited by seasonal, operational, or regulatory conditions.

Existing water infrastructure within the Specific Plan Area consists of 6-, 8-, 10-, 12-, and 16-inch water mains. Improvements required to provide adequate fire flow and hydraulic pressure for new development will be implemented as part of subsequent development applications and improvement plans, as applicable. Improvements needed solely to address existing system compliance with SSWD standards will be coordinated by the County and SSWD through capital improvement planning, grant funding, connection fees or other funding mechanisms as applicable. Improvements include upsizing certain water mains, confirming existing water mains are continuous, and installing new water mains and hydrants in limited areas and making connections to provide a looped system.

WASTEWATER

The Sacramento Area Sewer District (SacSewer) serves the Specific Plan Area. Existing wastewater infrastructure within and adjacent to the Specific Plan Area includes local sanitary sewer collection systems with gravity sewer mains that generally range from 6

inches to 15 inches in diameter. These collection systems convey flows to two existing sewer interceptors that serve the area: the Upper Northwest Interceptor in Elkhorn Boulevard and the McClellan Interceptor in Roseville Road. The Specific Plan Area is located within five SacSewer trunk sewer sheds. There are no existing or proposed sewer pump stations within the Specific Plan Area; however, the existing S121 pump station in the McClellan trunk sewer shed serves portions of the area west of Watt Avenue near James Way.

Wastewater improvements would be necessary in portions of the existing sewer system to accommodate infill development within the Specific Plan Area and address sanitary sewer capacity constraints. Proposed improvements may include new or upsized sewer mains, force main improvements, and pump station improvements to provide adequate wastewater service. Sewer improvements are anticipated to extend service to portions of the northern Specific Plan Area. Additional improvements may also be needed west of Watt Avenue, surrounding James Way, to address capacity constraints and accommodate infill development in this area. Where SacSewer completes planned relief improvements before redevelopment occurs, project-specific upgrades may not be required. Where redevelopment occurs before SacSewer improvements are complete, development may be required to coordinate with SacSewer and implement necessary system upgrades and reimbursement agreements as part of project approval. The timing, sizing, funding, and implementation responsibility for wastewater improvements will be confirmed through subsequent development review, SacSewer coordination, and project-specific sewer studies, as applicable.

Stormwater

The Sacramento County Department of Water Resources (DWR) provides drainage services within the Specific Plan Area. Storm drainage within the Specific Plan Area is served by a combination of underground storm drain facilities and open channels that ultimately discharge into downstream drainage facilities. Runoff from the Specific Plan Area drains to eight streams and creeks, five of which are unnamed tributaries.

Currently, many locations within the existing storm drain system are undersized and are not able to convey existing conditions flow to current County DWR drainage standards. The County will identify funding that would not include fees on new development to implement any drainage improvements required to address existing deficiencies. Proposed improvements include the construction of stormwater detention facilities and the upsizing of existing storm drains.

Future development under the Specific Plan would be required to implement on-site drainage improvements and incorporate stormwater management practices consistent with regional and local requirements. Future development may also be required to integrate Low Impact Development (LID) strategies, including on-site detention, infiltration, and water quality treatment, to manage runoff rates and volumes while improving water quality.

Solid Waste and Recycling

The Sacramento County Department of Waste Management and Recycling (DWMR) provides solid waste services to the unincorporated portions of Sacramento County. DWMR operates the solid waste and recycling programs in Sacramento County, including the North Area Recovery Station (located in the Specific Plan Area) and the Kiefer Landfill. Solid waste and recycling services for multi-family properties with five or more units, as well as commercial and business establishments, are provided through contracts with franchised haulers authorized by Sacramento County. Projected solid waste from the Specific Plan Area would continue to be accommodated within existing service capacity, and collection and disposal costs are covered by user fees.

Natural Gas and Electric

Pacific Gas & Electric Company (PG&E) will provide natural gas service and Sacramento Municipal Utility District (SMUD) would provide electric services to the Specific Plan Area in coordination with development projects.

Intended Uses of the EIR

This EIR was prepared in compliance with the CEQA of 1970 (Public Resources Code Section 21000 et seq.) and the CEQA Guidelines (California Code of Regulations Section 15000 et seq.). This EIR evaluates the environmental impacts that could result from implementation of the North Watt Avenue Specific Plan.

The purpose of an EIR is not to recommend approval or denial of a project. An EIR is an informational document used in the planning and decision-making process by the lead agency and responsible and trustee agencies. An EIR describes the significant environmental impacts of a project, potentially feasible measures to mitigate potentially significant impacts, and potentially feasible alternatives to the project that can reduce or avoid significant environmental effects. CEQA requires decision-makers to balance the benefits of a project against its unavoidable environmental effects in deciding whether to carry out a project.

This EIR supports both current and future decisions by Sacramento County. Immediately, this EIR is designed to support the County's consideration of adoption of the proposed Specific Plan, as well as General Plan amendments to implement the proposed Specific Plan.

The proposed Specific Plan will also be implemented through a series of public and private actions and approvals, including, but not necessarily limited to subdivision maps, site plans, use permits and conditional use permits, building permits, grading permits, improvement plans, public investments, and other actions. This EIR provides a detailed analysis of impacts attributable to implementing the proposed Specific Plan so that the findings and mitigation may be applied to future entitlements and County actions, avoiding or reducing the need for additional environmental review.

STREAMLINING FUTURE ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The analysis in this EIR is the first tier of environmental review and creates the foundation upon which future CEQA review can build. Tiering refers to the concept of a multi-level approach to preparing environmental documents. Project-level environmental analysis can be streamlined to limit the scope of project approvals following the preparation of an EIR for a general plan (or other "up tier" document).

Section 15152 of the CEQA Guidelines provides that, where a first-tier EIR has "adequately addressed" the subject of cumulative impacts, such impacts need not be revisited in second- and/or third-tier documents. According to Section 15152(f)(3), significant effects identified in a first-tier EIR have been adequately addressed, for purposes of later approvals, if the lead agency determines that such effects have been either: (A) "mitigated or avoided as a result of the prior [EIR] and findings adopted in connection with that prior [EIR]"; or (B) "examined at a sufficient level of detail in the prior [EIR] to enable those effects to be mitigated or avoided by site-specific revisions, the imposition of conditions, or by other means in connection with the approval of the later project."

This EIR will help determine the need for subsequent environmental documentation, as well as dictate the scope of project level CEQA review. According to Section 15168(d) of the CEQA Guidelines, a program EIR can be used to simplify the task of preparing future environmental documents on later activities in the program. This section of the Public Resources Code also refers to consistency with community plans and zoning, but the above discussion is tailored to simplify the task of preparing future environmental documents for later activities in the program. A program EIR can: (1) "[p]rovide the basis in an Initial Study for determining whether the later activity may have any significant effects; (2) [b]e incorporated by reference to deal with regional influences, secondary effects, cumulative impacts, broad alternatives, and other factors that apply to the program as a whole; and (3) [f]ocus an EIR on a later activity to permit discussion solely of new effects which had not been considered before."

CEQA Guidelines Section 15182 provides an exemption for residential projects implementing a Specific Plan for which an EIR was prepared. CEQA Guidelines 15179.5 limits environmental review for infill multi-family residential projects and mixed-use projects of 100,000 square feet or less, when such projects are consistent with a general plan, specific plan, or zoning code that had an EIR.

The County will also use this EIR to streamline future environmental review and approval of private and public projects, as well as implementation actions. The County will make use of existing streamlining provided by CEQA, and will make use of emerging streamlining techniques, as appropriate.

PROJECT APPROVALS

The Sacramento County Planning Commission and the Board of Supervisors will use the information contained in the EIR in evaluating the proposed Specific Plan. The County will use the EIR for other County permits and approvals of public infrastructure and public

facility improvements and development projects implemented under the proposed Specific Plan.

This EIR will also serve as the CEQA document for approvals of public infrastructure and public facility improvements and development projects implemented under the proposed Specific Plan by other local and state agencies with discretionary authority (i.e., Responsible Agencies). Responsible Agencies pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15381 may include, but are not limited to, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board, and SMUD. Federal agencies that may rely on this EIR include the United States Fish and Wildlife Service and the United States Army Corps of Engineers.

Table PD-1 below includes information required by Section 15124 of the CEQA Guidelines and summarizes the following intended uses of the EIR:

- A list of agencies that are expected to use the EIR in their decision making.
- A list of permits and other approvals required to implement the project.
- A list of related environmental review and consultation requirements required by federal, state, or local laws, regulations, or polices.

Table PD-1: Approvals and Permits

Agency	Approval
Sacramento County Board of Supervisors	Certification of Final Environmental Impact Report, adoption of Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program, adoption of California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) findings and any required statement of overriding considerations.
Sacramento County Board of Supervisors	General Plan amendment to establish "North Watt Avenue Specific Plan" General Plan land use designation; change the land use designations of the Specific Plan Area to the proposed NWASP land use designation and other land use designation changes; ~~and~~ amend the Transportation Plan in the Circulation Element to change the functional classifications of roadways within the Specific Plan Area**; amend the Circulation Element to remove the description of the one-way couplet; and amend the Active Transportation Plan, a policy document of the General Plan, to remove and/or modify certain bicycle facility improvement recommendations**.
Sacramento County Board of Supervisors	Community Plan amendment to change the North Highlands Community Plan designations of the Specific Plan Area to the proposed **SPA** ~~NWASP~~ designation and other plan designation changes. Rezone to change the zoning designations of the Specific Plan Area to the proposed **SPA** ~~NWASP~~ MU-C, MU-N, and Emp-Flex zoning designations and other zoning designation changes.
Sacramento County Board of Supervisors	A Zoning Ordinance to adopt the North Watt Avenue Specific Plan, and to repeal the North Watt Avenue Corridor Plan and the North Highlands Town Center Development Code.

Agency	Approval
Future Infrastructure Improvements and Development Project Implemented under the Proposed Specific Plan:	
Sacramento Municipal Utility District (SMUD)	Agreements related to electrical service and related improvements.
County of Sacramento Site Improvement Section	Grading Permit or Improvement Plans
County of Sacramento Building Permits and Inspection Division	Building Permits
County of Sacramento Department of Transportation	Encroachment Permits, driveways, surface transportation improvements, and improvement plans
Sacramento County Environmental Management Department	On-site Wastewater Disposal Permit or Well Certification and Permits
Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District	Fugitive Dust Prevention and Control Plan
Central Valley Region Water Quality Control Board	Section 402 National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Permit Compliance, Waste Discharge Permit, Clean Water Act Section 401 Water Quality Certification; Waste Discharge Requirements
California Department of Fish and Wildlife	Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement, California Endangered Species Act Take Permit
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers	Clean Water Act Section 404 Permit
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	Federal Endangered Species Act Take Permit, Section 7 Consultation
Sacramento County Department of Water Resources	Stormwater management infrastructure improvement projects and development project review of drainage studies
Sacramento Area Sewer District	Sewer infrastructure improvement projects and development project sewer service requests
Sacramento Suburban Water District	Water infrastructure improvement projects and development project domestic water service requests
Sacramento Area Council of Governments as the Airport Land Use Commission	Determinations of airport land use compatibility
North Highlands Recreation and Park District	Collaborative parks and recreation improvements and development project reviews
Arcade Creek Recreation and Park District	Collaborative parks and recreation improvements and development project reviews
Sacramento Metropolitan Fire District	Review of development applications for fire access and code compliance
Central Valley Flood Protection Board	Approvals related to designated floodplains

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3 AESTHETICS

INTRODUCTION

This chapter of the EIR presents a description of the existing visual character of the Specific Plan Area, along with a description of existing plans, policies, and ordinances that regulate visual character and quality. This chapter evaluates the development and design standards proposed in the Specific Plan, along with other applicable plans and policies intended to regulate visual character and quality. Finally, this chapter examines the effects of nighttime lighting as related to light trespass, glare, and skyglow.

ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

EXISTING VISUAL CHARACTER

The Specific Plan Area comprises approximately 704 acres along Watt Avenue, from Antelope Road/U Street in the north to Interstate 80 (I-80) in the south. The Specific Plan Area consists of existing urban development in the North Highlands community of unincorporated Sacramento County, which is comprised primarily of commercial and light industrial uses, interspersed with some residential development and parcels of land that are undeveloped. Representative photographs are provided for the northern, central, and southern portions of the Specific Plan Area (see Representative Photographs 1 through 23). Plate AES-1 illustrates the location of each of the photos.

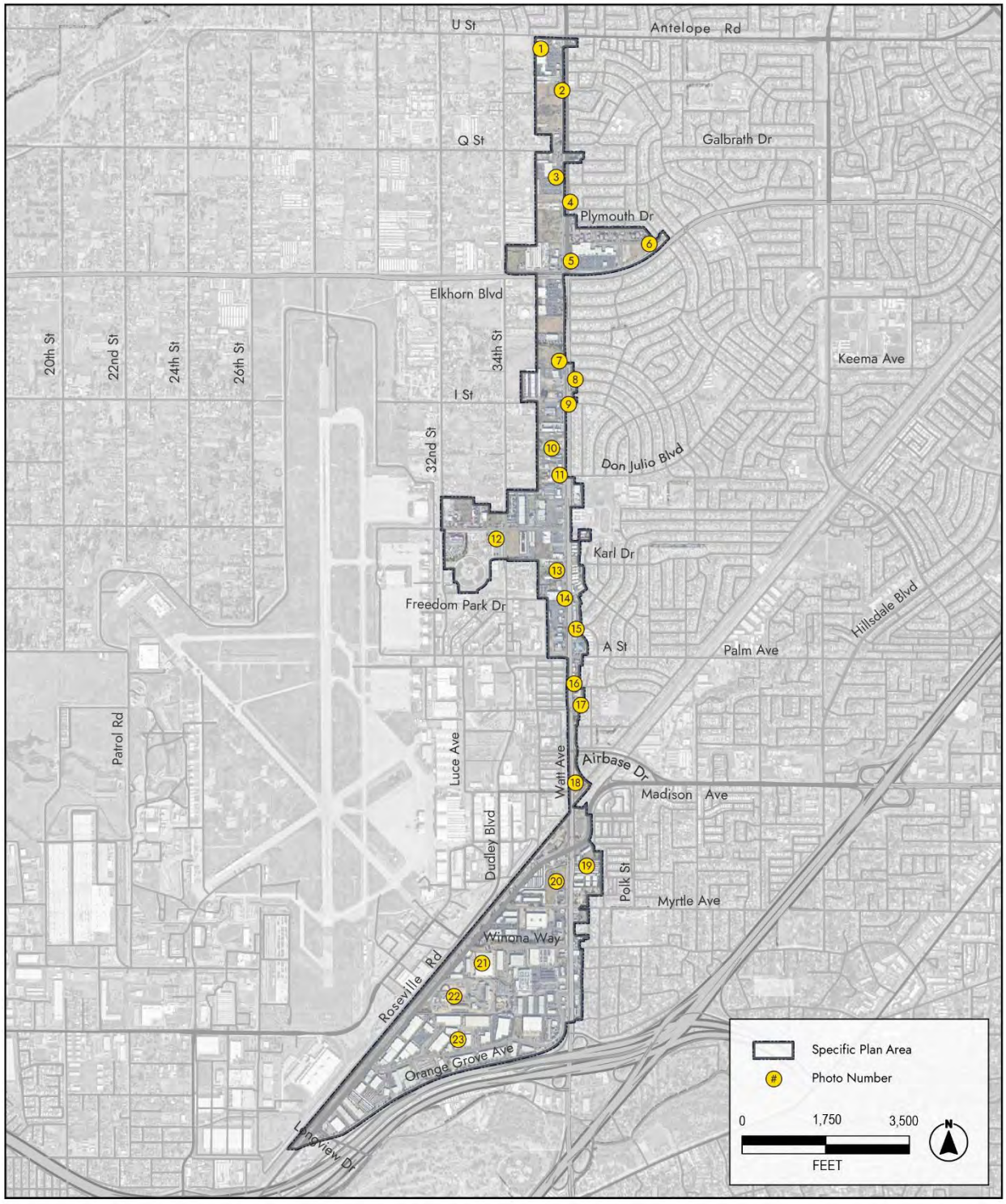
NORTHERN

The northern portion of the Specific Plan Area extends along Watt Avenue from Antelope Road/U Street south to I Street, and includes a portion of Elkhorn Boulevard. Development in the northern portion of the Specific Plan Area is more recent compared to the central and southern portions.

Overall, with the exception of limited areas along vacant properties, the viewshed in the northern portion of the Specific Plan Area is dominated by one-story commercial buildings and signage, paved parking areas, and the paved vehicular travel lanes on Watt Avenue (Representative Photo 1).

This portion of the Specific Plan Area contains most of the larger undeveloped parcels of land that exist within the Specific Plan Area, the unnamed tributary to Dry Creek, and two of the three branches of Robla Creek (Representative Photos 2, 4, 6, and 7). The undeveloped parcels are flat, and foreground views consist of mowed grassland; a few of the vacant parcels have scattered shrubs and trees. Middleground views across these vacant parcels consist of surrounding commercial development with associated landscape trees.

Plate AES-1: Representative Photo Locations



Source: AECOM 2026

The commercial development in this area consists primarily of mid-size shopping centers with large anchor stores, associated smaller pads with restaurants and small commercial stores, and large paved parking areas fronting the roadways (Representative Photos 1, 3, 5). Foreground and middleground views consist of one-story buildings, which are generally painted with light colors with exterior coatings composed of stucco and cultured stone. Landscaped planter boxes are present in the parking areas and along the property frontages at Watt Avenue. Signage, including billboards and tall monuments, is prominent and is generally lit for visibility at night. Light fixtures mounted on poles are present in parking areas and along Watt Avenue. The viewshed also includes power poles with overhead electrical and communication lines along Watt Avenue.



Source: AECOM 2025

Representative Photo 1. Shopping Center, 7517 Watt Avenue.



Source: AECOM 2025

Representative Photo 2. Dry Creek Tributary, vacant site, 7403 Watt Avenue.



Source: AECOM 2025

Representative Photo 3. Furniture and Home Supply Stores, 7035–7115 Watt Avenue.



Source: AECOM 2025

Representative Photo 4. Robla Creek north branch, vacant site, 7000–7001 Watt Avenue.



Source: AECOM 2025

Representative Photo 5. Shopping Center, 3601–3677 Elkhorn Boulevard.



Source: AECOM 2025

Representative Photo 6. Vacant site, 3801 Elkhorn Boulevard.



Source: AECOM 2025

Representative Photo 7. Robla Creek middle branch, vacant site, 6519–6569 Watt Avenue.



Source: AECOM 2025

Representative Photo 8. Former residences converted to businesses, 6424 Watt Avenue and 6428 Larry Way.



Source: AECOM 2025

Representative Photo 9. Former residences converted to offices, 6412–6416 Watt Avenue.

CENTRAL

The central portion of the Specific Plan Area extends from I Street south to Peacekeeper Way, and includes Freedom Park Drive to the west. Overall, the viewshed throughout the central portion of the Specific Plan Area is dominated by one-story commercial buildings and signage, paved parking areas, and the paved vehicular travel lanes on Watt Avenue (Representative Photo 10, 11, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17).

The south branch of Robla Creek has been routed underground in this area and therefore is not visible from Watt Avenue.

Development in this area is primarily commercial, but also includes limited residential and office-warehouse uses. Development along Watt Avenue consists of older, individual commercial buildings including gas stations, restaurants, auto services, fitness centers, and self-storage units, along with a few small commercial strip centers (Representative Photos 10 through 18).

Foreground and middleground views consist of paved surface parking lots and one-story buildings that are painted light colors (primarily white and tan), with exterior finishes consisting primarily of stucco. The roof lines are generally flat, with some mansard and hip styles; roof accent colors such as red or blue are present in a few locations depending on the business, but are primarily tan or white. Each building has paved parking areas. A limited amount of landscaping is present in the form of scattered trees and a few grass planter strips.

There is no unified theme, and therefore the development appears as a disparate collection of individual buildings with a wide variety of styles. Signage on buildings and monuments is prominent in the viewshed and is highly varied, and is generally lit at night. Light fixtures mounted on poles are present along Watt Avenue throughout this area and in many parking lots. Watt Avenue is also lined with power poles and overhead electrical and communication lines.

Freedom Park Drive, which extends west from Watt Avenue, is the center of the North Highlands Town Center area, which currently includes a mix of multi-family and single-family residential development, church, office/warehouse space, light industrial uses, Freedom Park, and the Aerospace Museum of California.

A paved parking lot for the Watt Avenue/Poplar Boulevard bus stop, along with an overhead concrete pedestrian overcrossing over Watt Avenue, is present northeast of the intersection of Watt Avenue and Peacekeeper Way (Representative Photo 18).



Source: AECOM 2025

Representative Photo 10. Restaurant buildings, 6225–6229 Watt Avenue.



Source: AECOM 2025

Representative Photo 11. Commercial building and church, 6147-6201 Watt Avenue.



Source: AECOM 2025

Representative Photo 12. Vacant site, 3351 Freedom Park Drive.



Source: AECOM 2025

Representative Photo 13. Commercial development, 5849–5901 Watt Avenue.



Source: AECOM 2025

Representative Photo 14. Commercial development, 5800-5806 Watt Avenue



Source: AECOM 2025

Representative Photo 15. Single-story retail and commercial services buildings, 5700 Watt Avenue



Source: AECOM 2025

Representative Photo 16. Low-scale retail buildings, 5506–5520 Watt Avenue



Source: AECOM 2025

Representative Photo 17. Vacant building, 5444 Watt Avenue



Source: AECOM 2025

Representative Photo 18. Watt Avenue/Poplar Boulevard bus stop, park-and-ride lot, and pedestrian overcrossing.

Southern

The southern portion of the Specific Plan Area encompasses the area from Peacekeeper Way, south to I-80 and west to Roseville Road (Representative Photos 19 through 23).

Magpie Creek flows east–west through the northern end of this area (Representative Photos 19 and 20). The channel on the east side of Watt Avenue has earthen sides and some low-growing vegetation, while the channel on the west side is concrete lined and surrounded by chain-link fencing. The southern portion of the Specific Plan Area is mostly built out, though there are vacant properties with very few trees – one is west of Watt Avenue north of Myrtle Avenue, a small vacant property is north of Magpie Creek and east of Watt Avenue, a small vacant property is east of Watt Avenue and adjacent and south of Myrtle Avenue, and a small vacant property is north of Orange Grove Avenue approximately 1,000 feet west of Watt Avenue.

The viewshed in the southern portion of the Specific Plan Area is dominated by power poles and overhead electrical and communication lines, commercial and industrial buildings and signage, paved parking areas, and the paved vehicular travel lanes on Watt Avenue and other roadways. There is very little landscaping in the southern portion of the Specific Plan Area except along Winona Way and Myrtle Avenue and a very small amount of trees, shrubs, and grass adjacent to some buildings and within some of the parking areas along Watt Avenue (Representative Photo 21). Light fixtures mounted on poles are present along all the roadways, along with building and roadway signage.

West of Watt Avenue, visible structures are primarily of one and two-story block-style buildings, primarily white and tan, with flat roofs (Representative Photos 21, 22, and 23). Exterior finishes consist primarily of stucco, some with cultural stone accents. The buildings all have paved parking areas fronting the roadways, and many facilities have chain-link fencing and gates. Along Watt Avenue, the foreground and middleground views comprise overhead powerlines, street signage and billboards, small commercial buildings (primarily restaurants) set back from Watt Avenue with surface parking in front.

The back sides of a number of the buildings and parking lots in the very southern portion of the Specific Plan Area are visible from the I-80 westbound travel lanes, although views available to I-80 motorists looking north are partially screened in some areas by a row of landscape trees and shrubs along the Specific Plan Area's southern boundary.



Source: AECOM 2025

Representative Photo 19. Magpie Creek, east side of Watt Avenue.



Source: AECOM 2025

Representative Photo 20. Magpie Creek, west side of Watt Avenue.



Source: AECOM 2025

Representative Photo 21. Office Buildings, 3222–3300 Winona Way.



Source: AECOM 2025

Representative Photo 22. North Area Recovery Station, 4450 Roseville Road.



Source: AECOM 2025

Representative Photo 23. Industrial development, 3101-3201 Orange Grove Avenue.

Scenic Roadways

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) manages the State Scenic Highway Program and assists local communities seeking to officially designate state scenic highways. There are no State designated or eligible scenic highways within 15 miles of the Specific Plan Area (Caltrans 2019).

Sacramento County has designated certain roadway segments as scenic highways or scenic corridors as part of its General Plan and Zoning Code (Sacramento County 2022a). The nearest County-designed scenic roadway is Garden Highway, approximately 8.5 miles southeast of the Specific Plan Area. However, the Sacramento County General Plan states that freeways, including I-80 immediately south of the Specific Plan Area, are protected by scenic corridors that extend 660 feet to each side beyond the right-of-way (Sacramento County 2022a). The County's Zoning Code establishes that a "scenic corridor for a freeway shall include a horizontal distance of 1,000 feet from the center of the freeway" (Sacramento County 2025, page 7-45).

Light and Glare

A substantial amount of nighttime lighting is present throughout the Specific Plan Area in the form of light fixtures mounted on poles for street and parking lot lighting, building lighting, signage lighting, and traffic lights at roadway intersections, in addition to vehicle headlights from thousands of motor vehicles on Watt Avenue. The existing nighttime lighting currently results in skyglow effects throughout the area.

Regulatory Setting

Federal

There are no federal plans, policies, regulations, or laws related to aesthetics that apply to the proposed Specific Plan.

State

There are no state plans, policies, regulations, or laws related to aesthetics that apply to the proposed Specific Plan.

Local

Sacramento County General Plan

The *Sacramento County General Plan of 2005–2030* (Sacramento County 2022a) includes the following policies related to aesthetics that apply to the proposed Specific Plan and could apply to projects implemented under the Specific Plan.

LAND USE ELEMENT

Policy LU-8. Infill projects that are consistent with the County's definition of a Quality Infill Project may participate in the County's Infill/Urban Tree Mitigation Program. The Tree Mitigation Infill Policy is as follows: Impacts to native trees designated for removal shall be calculated and mitigated based on canopy area coverage. Canopy replacement may utilize any tree species that is listed on the Tree Coordinator's list of recommended trees for parking lot shade. For measurement purposes, replacement tree canopy shall be calculated in the same manner as the parking lot shade requirements of Section 330-94 of the Sacramento County Zoning Code, using the ultimate canopy growth as specified on the Tree Coordinator's Tree Species Specifications. Tree canopy replacement shall, ideally, occur on site. In the event the physical constraints of the site preclude the additional replacement mitigation on-site, the following options may be utilized in coordination with the County Tree Coordinator and Mitigation Program:

a. Planting in adjacent landscape/ corridor areas;

b. Planting within local parks;

c. Other plantings that may otherwise be arranged in the neighborhood or community;

d. Participation in County programs including but not limited to payment of in lieu fees for use in tree care, preservation and maintenance programs, and other similar programs to the satisfaction of the County Tree Coordinator.

Policy LU-11. It is the intent of the County to comprehensively plan for the revitalization of the targeted commercial corridors and invest the resources necessary to achieve the following: stimulate private investment; encourage development of vacant and underutilized parcels; support reuse and/or rehabilitation of abandoned or blighted buildings; encourage rezoning of excess industrial and commercial lands to allow for medium and high density residential or mixed use projects, and; avoid non transit supportive uses, such as industrial uses, low density residential, and uses that would necessitate large parking lots fronting on the street.

Policy LU-16. Apply the "Community Design Guidelines" and design review authority to all long range planning efforts, including but not limited to Specific Plans, Comprehensive Plans, Community Plans, and Commercial Corridor Plans.

Policy LU-17. Support implementation of the design review program on a project-by-project basis to ensure that all development applications positively contribute to the immediate neighborhood and the surrounding community.

Policy LU-18. Encourage development that complements the aesthetic style and character of existing development nearby to help build a cohesive identity for the area.

Policy LU-20. Planning processes for existing communities, commercial corridors, and new growth areas shall provide for distinct and identifying physical elements, which may include: gateways, signage, public art, common site or street layout, shared design qualities of buildings or infrastructure, or prominent landmarks or destinations.

Policy LU-31. Strive to achieve a natural nighttime environment and an uncompromised public view of the night sky by reducing light pollution.

Policy LU-34. Developments in the areas designated on the Land Use Diagram as Transit Oriented Development shall be designed in a manner that conforms to the concepts of transit oriented development, including:

- o High intensity, mixed-use development concentrated in a Core Area within an easy walk (one quarter mile) of a transit stop on the Trunk or Feeder Line Network.
- o An emphasis on neighborhood support commercial services at street level in the Core Area that can serve the residents of the Core and surrounding Secondary Areas, with other employment encouraged in the [transit-oriented developments] TODs created along the Trunk Line Network.
- o A pleasant walking environment created through good land use design, short distances, amenities, and streetscape features.
- o Direct, multiple linkages, especially for bicycles and pedestrians, between the Core Area and the surrounding Secondary Area.

Policy LU-43. Parking areas shall be designed to:

- o Minimize land consumption;
- o Provide pleasant and safe pedestrian and bicycle movement;
- o Facilitate shared parking
- o Allow for the possible reuse of surface parking lots through redevelopment; and,
- o Minimize parking lot street frontage.

Policy LU-48. Discourage the establishment and build-out of linear, strip pattern, commercial centers.

Policy LU-89. Support planning for and development of mixed use centers and urban villages along commercial corridors to improve quality of life by creating diverse neighborhood gathering places, supporting enhanced transit

service and non-automotive travel, stimulating local economic development, eliminating blight and balancing land uses.

Policy LU-90. Focus investment of County resources in commercial corridors to facilitate improvements to streetscapes, sidewalks, landscaping, undergrounding of utilities, and other infrastructure and public amenities to encourage and stimulate private investment.

Policy LU-102. Ensure that the structural design, aesthetics and site layout of new developments is compatible and interconnected with existing development.

CIRCULATION ELEMENT

Policy CI-67. When feasible, incorporate lighter colored (higher albedo) materials and surfaces, such as lighter-colored pavements, and encourage the creation of tree canopy to reduce the built environment's absorption of heat to reduce the urban “heat island” effect.

Policy CI-69. Incorporate public art into streetscape improvements to the extent feasible.

Policy CI-70. Smart Growth Streets shall incorporate features such as shade trees and plantings, well designed benches and other street furniture, trash receptacles, news racks, outdoor dining experiences, entertainment, public art, pedestrian scaled lighting fixtures, wayfinding signage, bicycle racks and other amenities as appropriate.

Policy CI-76. Smart Growth Street planning efforts shall develop a comprehensive strategy to reduce both the total amount of parking and total surface area dedicated to parking facilities. In general, reduced parking requirements and innovative parking solutions such as, shared parking, structured parking, parking maximums rather than minimums, on street parking, performance parking pricing, parking benefit districts and other innovative parking solutions will be strongly encouraged wherever feasible, while large surface parking lots will be strongly discouraged.

IMPACTS AND ANALYSIS

SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA

Based on Appendix G of the State California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, the proposed Specific Plan would have a significant impact related to aesthetics if it would:

- have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista;

- substantially damage scenic resources, including but not limited to trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings, within a state scenic highway;
- in an urbanized area, conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality; or
- create a new source of substantial light or glare that would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area.

ISSUES NOT DISCUSSED FURTHER

Substantial Adverse Effect on Scenic Vistas— A scenic vista is a public viewpoint that provides expansive views of highly valued scenery or landscapes; scenic vistas are considered "outstanding views" that are "the best of its kind." Scenic vistas generally consist of mountains, unique geologic features, large waterfalls, major rivers, and deep canyons. As described in the Environmental Setting above and shown in Representative Photos 1 through 23, the viewshed in the Specific Plan Area consists of flat land that has been developed with commercial, light industrial, and residential uses. There are no scenic vistas. Thus, there would be no impact, and this issue is not evaluated further in this EIR.

Damage to Scenic Resources within Scenic Highways—There are no designated or eligible State scenic highways within 15 miles of the Specific Plan Area. There are no County-designated scenic roadways within 8.5 miles of the Specific Plan Area. The southern end of the Specific Plan Area, which is developed with industrial buildings and paved parking lots, parallels the westbound travel lanes of I-80 for approximately 1.25 miles, and is within the distance defined by the County's General Plan and Zoning Code for a scenic corridor adjacent to a freeway. Views of the Specific Plan Area from I-80 consist of block-style industrial buildings and paved surface parking lots, equipment storage, and loading bays; the views are not scenic. Some views of the Specific Plan Area from I-80 are partially blocked by a row of tall landscape trees and shrubs along the north side of I-80, and furthermore the Specific Plan does not propose any changes to the existing light industrial uses along I-80. Thus, there would be no change to the views of the Specific Plan Area within the I-80 corridor, and there would be no damage to scenic resources within scenic highways since none are present. Thus, there would be no impact, and this issue is not discussed further in this EIR.

IMPACT AES-1: CONFLICT WITH APPLICABLE POLICIES GOVERNING SCENIC QUALITY

The Specific Plan Area consists of a developed commercial corridor along Watt Avenue from Antelope Road/U Street south to I-80, and includes the developed "McClellan Industrial Park" from Watt Avenue west to Roseville Road. The Specific Plan Area is adjacent to McClellan Park, including Sacramento McClellan Airport to the west, and residential development to the east. The Specific Plan Area is within the urbanized North Highlands community (U.S. Census Bureau 2020).

The General Plan land use designation for the Specific Plan Area is primarily Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) and Mixed Use Corridor (Sacramento County 2018a). The land use designations would be changed to “North Watt Avenue Specific Plan,” and the proposed Specific Plan embodies the intent of the existing (pre-Specific Plan) Transit Oriented Development and Mixed Use Corridor land use designations.

The General Plan Circulation Element designates the Specific Plan Area as a Smart Growth Street Corridor (Sacramento County 2019). As discussed in the County General Plan Transportation Element, the concept of “Smart Growth Streets” expands on the Complete Streets concept. Although both Smart Growth Streets and Complete Streets are pedestrian, bicycle, and transit friendly, Smart Growth Streets employs a holistic view that integrates the street, the adjacent corridor, the surrounding community, and the natural environment, while allowing for more flexibility in the design of street and corridor improvements. The County has applied the Smart Growth Streets concept to the Specific Plan Area to support and encourage infill development and revitalization efforts. The Smart Growth Streets concept is also intended to help implement the Sacramento Area Council of Government’s (SACOG) adopted Blueprint Vision and concepts related to smart growth and transit-oriented development (Sacramento County 2022a).

As shown in Representative Photos 1 through 23, most of the existing development along Watt Avenue within the Specific Plan Area consists of older commercial development in the form of small one-story strip centers and small one-story individual buildings. Although a few of the strip centers have been remodeled, most of the existing development retains its original visual character from the 1950s through the 1980s. The strip centers and individual buildings do not exhibit a unified theme; instead, there is a wide variety of architectural styles, finishes, and colors that do not present a cohesive appearance. Similarly, there is a wide variety of signage of different sizes, colors, and finishes. The Watt Avenue corridor within the Specific Plan Area has been designed to serve vehicular traffic; it is not currently conducive to pedestrian or bicycle traffic from the adjoining residential development to the east. For example, although the more recent strip centers have some landscaping in the form of planter boxes in parking lots, and occasionally trees or shrubs along the property frontage, overall, there is very little landscaping and no shade. Sidewalks are generally narrow and are discontinuous in some locations. Parks and greenways are absent. As shown in Representative Photos 20 through 22, within the southern portion of the Specific Plan Area, the viewshed consists almost exclusively of large block-style buildings, paved surface parking lots, and chain link fencing. There is little streetscaping or landscaping, and sidewalks and bicycle lanes are not present. The exception to this is along the western portions of Winona Way and Myrtle Avenue, where there are landscape corridors with sidewalks along both sides of the roadways. Generally, throughout the Specific Plan Area, landscaping is absent.

The Specific Plan includes a set of development and design standards that are clear for property owners, developers, builders, staff, and decision makers, and that are crafted to promote feasible infill development that will complement the surrounding area and catalyze further investment. The Specific Plan development and design standards are informed by the policies for commercial corridors in the General Plan. The Specific Plan Area would become a transit and pedestrian-friendly area, supported by improved bicycle

trails, and new housing and mixed-use development. Throughout the Specific Plan Area, new development will gradually diminish the visual presence of surface parking – new parking areas would be primarily located behind or to the side of new buildings. This would represent a substantial visual change as compared to existing conditions, where paved parking areas currently represent most of the foreground views.

The development and design standards in the Specific Plan define the development form and intensity of different land use zones. At the scale of individual lots and buildings, development standards define the relationship of the building to the lot and street to support a more pedestrian-oriented environment. In the new and redeveloped areas, buildings would be oriented to adjacent public rights-of-way- or private courts, and would include clearly defined entrances with features such as storefront windows and entrances, building projections, and/or architectural details oriented to the front facade and elevations facing adjoining side streets. New buildings and primary entrances would be oriented to front the street or pedestrian spaces (plazas, parks, open space, or transit stops/stations) rather than to parking lots.

Buildings would be constructed with durable, high-quality materials. Utility boxes, mechanical equipment, and service and delivery areas would be screened from view from the public right-of-way.

The Specific Plan also proposes streetscape landscaping along Watt Avenue and along major east-west streets, as well as landscape focal points at these major street intersections with Watt Avenue. Streetscape landscaping would consist primarily of street trees, in planting strips or tree wells, with supplementary landscaping in planting strips, medians, and at focal points. Installing a continuous canopy of street trees would provide shade and beautification of the Watt Avenue corridor, which would encourage pedestrian and bicycle use.

The proposed Specific Plan provides standards for parks and open spaces, including landscaping, that would provide recreation, community gathering areas, and visual amenities. The system of public and private open spaces establishes a connected framework of neighborhood parks, plazas, and greenways that support walking, biking, and access to green space. Parkland improvements and trail improvements in the Specific Plan Area, including those along creek corridors, would ensure residents and employees are served within a comfortable walking distance of open space. Creek corridors would serve as landscaped open space corridors with local and regional trail connections.

Implementation of the Specific Plan development and design standards would ensure that future projects implemented under the Specific Plan reduce the visual dominance of surface parking, add landscaping, place buildings closer to the public street frontages and address the street with windows and other architectural features. The Specific Plan's development and design standards that address aesthetics were developed based on guidance in the General Plan. Therefore, the proposed Specific Plan would not conflict with applicable policies governing scenic quality, and would result in a substantial benefit

in terms of improved visual character and quality as compared to existing conditions. This impact would be **less than significant**.

MITIGATION MEASURES

No mitigation measures are required.

IMPACT AES-2: CREATE SUBSTANTIAL NEW SOURCES OF LIGHT OR GLARE

As discussed in the Environmental Setting above, the Specific Plan Area is urbanized and includes substantial nighttime lighting in the form of light fixtures mounted on poles for street and parking lot lighting, building lighting, signage lighting, and traffic lights at roadway intersections, in addition to vehicle headlights from thousands of motor vehicles on Watt Avenue. The existing nighttime lighting currently results in skyglow effects throughout the area.

Because most of the Specific Plan Area is already developed with urban uses that include substantial sources of nighttime lighting, the addition of infill development on the currently vacant parcels, and redevelopment of existing parcels, would not substantially change the amount of existing light or glare within the Specific Plan Area. Replacement of some of the existing commercial development with residential development would result in a minor reduction in the amount of nighttime lighting, while new development on currently vacant parcels would result in a minor increase in nighttime lighting. Taken as a whole, the amount of nighttime lighting and glare with implementation of the proposed Specific Plan would be substantially similar to existing conditions.

Street lighting must comply with Sacramento County Improvement Standards Section 5, “Street Light Design” (Sacramento County 2018b). The proposed Specific Plan includes lighting standards including the use of low, pedestrian-scaled lighting fixtures to help identify and light pedestrian routes; light fixtures should face downward or employ shielding to reduce light sources and visibility from outside the site; illumination must be a minimum of 0.25 foot-candles at grade level for surface areas of alcoves, walkways, and yards other than required for exits and a minimum of one foot-candle at floor level for open parking areas. Outdoor lighting for surface parking areas and vehicle maneuvering areas must not exceed a correlated color temperature of 3,000 Kelvin (K) to minimize glare, skyglow, and light trespass/spill light. In addition, site and street lighting must comply with Section 5, “Street Light Design” of the Sacramento County Improvement Standards.

As described above, nighttime lighting associated with infill and redevelopment within the Specific Plan Area would not result in a substantial increase in glare or skyglow as compared to the existing conditions, and would comply with Specific Plan requirements that require lighting to be shielded and directed downward to eliminate light spillover and reduce nighttime glare and skyglow effects. Thus, this impact would be **less than significant.**

MITIGATION MEASURES

No mitigation measures are required.

4 AIR QUALITY

INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes existing local and regional air quality conditions; summarizes applicable air quality regulations at the federal, state, and local levels; and analyzes potential short-term and long-term air quality impacts that could result from implementation of the proposed Specific Plan and, where necessary, feasible mitigation for potentially significant effects.

ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

Ambient concentrations of air pollutants are determined by the amount of emissions released by the air pollutant sources and the atmosphere's ability to transport and dilute such emissions. Natural factors that affect transport and dilution include terrain, wind, atmospheric stability, and sunlight. Therefore, existing air quality conditions are determined by such natural factors as topography, meteorology, and climate, in addition to the amount of emissions released by existing air pollutant sources, as discussed separately below.

LOCATION, CLIMATE, AND ATMOSPHERIC CONDITIONS

The project site is in the Sacramento Valley Air Basin (SVAB), which is characterized by cool winters and hot, dry summers tempered by occasional westerly breezes from the Sacramento–San Joaquin River Delta.

In general, the SVAB is relatively flat and bounded by the north Coast Ranges to the west and the northern Sierra Nevada to the east. Air flows into the SVAB through the Carquinez Strait, the only breach in the western mountain barrier, and moves across the Sacramento–San Joaquin River Delta from the San Francisco Bay Area. The inland location and surrounding mountains typically prevent the area from experiencing much of the ocean breeze that moderates the temperatures in coastal regions. The mountains surrounding the Sacramento Valley create a barrier to air flow, which can trap in air pollutants, particularly in the autumn and early winter when large pressure cells lie over the Sacramento Valley and temperatures are low. The lack of surface wind during these periods and reduced vertical flow caused by less surface heating, reduces the influx of outside air and allows air pollutants generated within the SVAB to become concentrated in a stable volume of air. Ground concentrations are the highest when these conditions are combined with smoke from agricultural burning or forest fires or when temperature inversions trap cool air, fog, and pollutants near the ground. Alternatively, winds and unstable atmospheric conditions associated with the passage of winter storms result in periods of low air pollution and excellent visibility.

Characteristic of the winter months in the SVAB are periods of dense and persistent low-level fog, which are most prevalent between storms. This precipitation and fog also tend to reduce or limit some pollutant concentrations. However, between winter storms, high pressure and light winds contribute to low-level temperature inversions and stable atmospheric conditions, resulting in the concentration of air pollutants.

April through October is ozone season in the SVAB and is characterized by poor air movement in the mornings and the arrival of the Delta sea breeze from the southwest in the afternoons (Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District [SMAQMD] 2023). In addition, with the longer daylight hours, a larger amount of sunlight is available to fuel photochemical reactions between volatile organic compounds (VOC) and nitrogen oxide (NO_X), which in turn result in ozone formation. Typically, the Delta sea breeze transports air pollutants northward out of the SVAB. However, during approximately half of the time from July to September, a phenomenon known as the Schultz Eddy prevents this from occurring. The Schultz Eddy phenomenon causes winds on the west side of the SVAB to shift to a northerly wind, blowing air pollutants southward back into the SVAB. This phenomenon exacerbates the concentration of air pollutant emissions in the air basin and can contribute to violations of ambient air quality standards.

CRITERIA AIR POLLUTANTS

There are many pollutants present in the atmosphere, although most are not a significant public health concern in the region. A brief description of key criteria air pollutants in the SVAB and their health effects is provided below. Criteria air pollutants include ozone; carbon monoxide (CO); nitrogen dioxide (NO_2); sulfur dioxide (SO_2); lead; and particulate patter (PM), which is subdivided into two classes based on particle size – PM equal to or less than 10 micrometers in diameter (PM_{10}) and PM equal to or less than 2.5 micrometers in diameter ($PM_{2.5}$). However, for the purposes of this analysis, criteria air pollutants of primary concern due to the regional nonattainment status (refer to Table AQ-1 further below) include ozone (and ozone precursors) and PM. Criteria air pollutants, their sources, and potential health effects from exposure are summarized below.

OZONE

Ozone is the most common component of smog and is the principal pollutant that causes adverse health effects. Ozone is toxic and colorless and has a pungent odor. In high concentrations, ozone and other photochemical oxidants are directly detrimental to humans by causing respiratory irritation and possible alterations in the functioning of the lungs. Ozone and other oxidants can also enter the leaves of plants and reduce photosynthesis, which is the process that plants use to convert sunlight to energy to live and grow.

Ozone is not emitted directly into the air but is formed through a series of reactions involving reactive organic gases (ROG) and NO_X in the presence of sunlight. These pollutants are considered to be precursors of ozone, as their reaction leads to its formation. ROG emissions result primarily from incomplete combustion and the evaporation of chemical solvents and fuels. NO_X includes various combinations of

nitrogen and oxygen, including nitric oxide, NO_2, and others, typically resulting from the combustion of fuels.

Emissions of both ROG and NO_X are considered critical to ozone formation; therefore, either reductions in ROG or NO_X can limit the rate of ozone production. When the production rate of NO_X is lower, indicating that NO_X is scarce, the rate of ozone production is NO_X-limited. Under these circumstances, ozone levels could be most effectively reduced by lowering current and future NO_X emissions (from fuel combustion), rather than by lowering ROG emissions. Rural areas tend to be NO_X-limited, while areas with dense urban populations tend to be ROG-limited. The Specific Plan Area is located in the central region of the Sacramento Regional Nonattainment Zone, which typically exhibits NO_X-limited chemistry (SMAQMD 2023). This means strategies to reduce NO_X emissions, such as strategies that increase pedestrian, bicycle, and transit access and reduce the dependence on travel by private vehicle are relatively more effective than strategies to reduce ROG emissions.

Ozone concentrations reflect an interplay of emissions of ozone precursors, transport, meteorology, and atmospheric chemistry. Meteorology and terrain play a major role in ozone formation. Generally, low wind speeds or stagnant air, coupled with warm temperatures and clear skies provide the optimum conditions for formation. As a result, summer is generally the peak ozone season. Because of the reaction time involved, peak ozone concentrations often occur far downwind of precursor emissions. Therefore, ozone is a regional pollutant that often affects large areas.

Individuals exercising outdoors, children, and people with lung disease, such as asthma and chronic pulmonary lung disease, are the most susceptible subgroups for ozone effects. Short-term ozone exposure (lasting for a few hours) can result in changes in breathing patterns, reductions in breathing capacity, increased susceptibility to infections, inflammation of lung tissue, and some immunological changes. A correlation has also been reported between elevated ambient ozone levels and increases in daily hospital admission rates and mortality (U.S. Environmental Protection Agency [EPA] 2025a). An increased risk of asthma has been found in children who participate in multiple sports and live within communities with high ozone levels.

Emissions of the ozone precursors, ROG and NO_X, have decreased in the past several years. According to the most recently published edition of California Air Resources Board (CARB) California Almanac of Emissions and Air Quality, NO_X, and ROG emissions levels in the Sacramento metropolitan area are projected to continue to decrease through 2035, largely because of more stringent motor vehicle standards and cleaner burning fuels, as well as rules for controlling ROG emissions from industrial coating and solvent operations (CARB 2013). Air quality data for 2000 to 2022 demonstrates that ozone concentrations have decreased in the Sacramento region during that time period (SMAQMD n.d.).

Carbon Monoxide

CO is a colorless and odorless gas that is primarily produced by the incomplete burning of carbon in fuels such as natural gas, gasoline, and wood, and is emitted by a wide variety of combustion sources, including on-road and non-road mobile sources, wood-

burning stoves, incinerators, industrial sources, and wildfires. On-road and non-road mobile sources account for approximately 35 percent and 26 percent, respectively, of all CO emissions nationwide (EPA 2025b). Relatively high concentrations are typically found near crowded intersections and along heavily used roadways carrying slow-moving traffic. Even under the most severe meteorological and traffic conditions, high concentrations of CO are limited to locations within a relatively short distance (300 to 600 feet) of heavily traveled roadways. Vehicle traffic emissions can cause localized CO impacts, and severe vehicle congestion at major signalized intersections can generate elevated CO levels, called “hot spots,” which can be hazardous to human receptors adjacent to the intersections.

Adverse health effects associated with exposure to high CO concentrations, typically only attainable indoors or within similarly enclosed spaces, include dizziness, headaches, and fatigue. CO exposure is especially harmful to unborn babies, infants, elderly people, and people with anemia or with a history of heart or respiratory disease (CARB 2026a).

Nitrogen Dioxide

NO_2 is one of a group of highly reactive gases known as oxides of nitrogen, or NO_X. NO_2 is formed when ozone reacts with nitric oxide (i.e., NO) in the atmosphere and is listed as a criteria air pollutant because NO_2 is more toxic than nitric oxide. The major human-made sources of NO_2 are combustion devices, such as boilers, gas turbines, and mobile and stationary reciprocating internal combustion engines. The combined emissions of nitric oxide and NO_2 are referred to as NO_X and reported as equivalent NO_2. Because NO_2 is formed and depleted by reactions associated with ozone, the NO_2 concentration in a geographical area may not be representative of local NO_X emission sources. NO_X also reacts with water, oxygen, and other chemicals to form nitric acids, contributing to the formation of acid rain.

Inhalation is the most common route of exposure to NO_2. Breathing air with a high concentration of NO_2 can lead to respiratory illness. Short-term exposure can aggravate respiratory diseases, particularly asthma, resulting in respiratory symptoms (such as coughing, wheezing, or difficulty breathing), hospital admissions, and visits to emergency rooms. Longer exposures to elevated concentrations of NO_2 may contribute to the development of asthma and potentially increase susceptibility to respiratory infections (EPA 2025c).

Sulfur Dioxide

SO_2 is one component of the larger group of gaseous oxides of sulfur (SO_X). SO_2 is used as the indicator for the larger group of SO_X, as it is the component of greatest concern and found in the atmosphere at much higher concentrations than other gaseous SO_X. SO_2 is typically produced by such stationary sources as coal and oil combustion facilities, steel mills, refineries, and pulp and paper mills. The major adverse health effects associated with SO_2 exposure pertain to the upper respiratory tract. On contact with the moist mucous membranes, SO_2 produces sulfurous acid, a direct irritant. Concentration rather than duration of exposure is an important determinant of respiratory effects.

Children, the elderly, and those who suffer from asthma are particularly sensitive to effects of SO_2 (EPA 2025d).

SO_2 also reacts with water, oxygen, and other chemicals to form sulfuric acids, contributing to the formation of acid rain. SO_2 emissions that lead to high concentrations of SO_2 in the air generally also lead to the formation of other SO_X, which can react with other compounds in the atmosphere to form small particles, contributing to particulate matter pollution, which can have health effects of its own.

Particulate Matter

PM refers to a complex mixture of small solid matter and fine droplets (aerosols) made up of several components, including acids (such as nitrates and sulfates), organic chemicals, metals, and soil or dust particles. The major area-wide sources of $PM_{2.5}$ and PM_{10} are fugitive dust, especially from roadways, agricultural operations, and construction and demolition. Other sources of PM_{10} include crushing or grinding operations. $PM_{2.5}$ sources also include all types of combustion, including motor vehicles, power plants, residential wood burning, forest fires, agricultural burning, and some industrial processes. Exhaust emissions from mobile sources contribute only a very small portion of directly emitted $PM_{2.5}$ and PM_{10} emissions. However, they are a major source of ROG and NO_X, which undergo reactions in the atmosphere to form PM, known as secondary particles. These secondary particles make up the majority of PM pollution.

The adverse health effects of PM depend on the specific composition of the particulate matter. For example, health effects may be associated with metals, polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons, and other toxic substances adsorbed onto PM (referred to as the "piggybacking effect"), or with fine dust particles of silica or asbestos. The size of PM is directly linked to its potential for causing health problems. EPA is concerned about particles that are 10 micrometers in diameter or smaller (PM_{10}), because these particles generally pass through the throat and nose and enter the lungs. Short-term exposures to PM_{10} has been associated primarily with worsening of respiratory diseases. The effects of long-term exposure to PM_{10} are less clear, although several studies suggest a link between long-term PM_{10} exposure and respiratory mortality (CARB 2026b). $PM_{2.5}$ poses an increased health risk because these very small particles can be inhaled deep in the lungs. Short-term exposures to $PM_{2.5}$ (up to 24-hours duration) have been associated with premature mortality, increased hospital admissions for heart or lung causes, and aggravated respiratory symptoms. Long-term exposure to $PM_{2.5}$ (months to years) has been linked to premature death, particularly in people who have chronic heart or lung diseases, and reduced lung function growth in children (CARB 2026b).

Lead

Lead is a highly toxic metal that may cause a range of human health effects. Lead is found naturally in the environment and is used in manufactured products. Previously, the lead used in gasoline anti-knock additives represented a major source of lead emissions to the atmosphere. Soon after its inception, EPA began working to reduce lead emissions, issuing the first reduction standards in 1973. Lead emissions decreased substantially after the near elimination of leaded gasoline use. Metal processing is currently the primary

source of lead emissions. The highest levels of lead in air are generally found near lead smelters. Other stationary sources are waste incinerators, utilities, and lead-acid battery manufacturers. Although the ambient lead standards are no longer violated, lead emissions from stationary sources still pose “hot spot” problems in some areas. As a result, CARB has identified lead as a Toxic Air Contaminant (TAC).

Fetuses, infants, and children are more sensitive than others to the adverse effects of lead exposure. Exposure to low levels of lead can adversely affect the development and function of the central nervous system, leading to learning disorders, distractibility, inability to follow simple commands, and lower intelligence quotients. In adults, increased lead levels are associated with cardiovascular effects, increased blood pressure and incidence of hypertension, decreased kidney function, and reproductive problems (EPA 2025e).

EXISTING AIR QUALITY CONDITIONS

Concentrations of emissions from criteria air pollutants are used to indicate the quality of the ambient air. Ambient air pollutant concentration monitoring data for the latest three years for which data is available (2022 through 2024) for the criteria air pollutants for which the region is in nonattainment are provided in Table AQ-1. The data presented is based on monitoring results from the CARB monitoring site at Sacramento-Del Paso Manor, located approximately 2.4 miles southeast of the southern portion of the Specific Plan Area. The regional attainment status for each pollutant is described in Table AQ-2 below.

Table AQ-1: Local Air Quality Monitoring Summary

Pollutant and Averaging Period	Item	2022	2023	2024
Ozone 1 Hour	Max 1 Hour (ppm)	0.092	0.104	0.099
Ozone 1 Hour	Days > State Standard (0.09 ppm)	0	1	1
Ozone 8 Hour	Max 8 Hour (ppm)	0.073	0.080	0.082
Ozone 8 Hour	Days > State Standard (0.070 ppm)	3	9	14
Ozone 8 Hour	Days > National Standard (0.070 ppm)	3	9	14
NO_2 Annual	Annual Average (ppm)	0.005	0.004	0.005
NO_2 1 Hour	Max 1 Hour (ppm)	0.034	0.031	0.028
NO_2 1 Hour	Days > State Standard (0.18 ppm)	0	0	0
PM_{10} Annual	Annual Average (µg/m^3)	19.2	16.7	-
PM_{10} 24 Hour	Max 24 Hour (µg/m^3)	41.0	49.0	36.0
PM_{10} 24 Hour	Days > State Standard (50 µg/m^3)	1	0	0
PM_{10} 24 Hour	Days > National Standard (150 µg/m^3)	0	0	0
$PM_{2.5}$ Annual	Annual Average (µg/m^3)	10.6	8.4	7.3
$PM_{2.5}$ 24 Hour	Max 24 Hour (µg/m^3)	42.3	33.0	31.3
$PM_{2.5}$ 24 Hour	Days > National Standard (35 µg/m^3)	10	0	0

Source: CARB 2025

Notes:

- = insufficient data; µg/m^3 = micrograms per cubic meter; PM_{10} = particulate matter with aerodynamic diameter less than 10 microns; $PM_{2.5}$ = particulate matter with aerodynamic diameter less than 2.5 microns; ppm = parts per million.

TOXIC AIR CONTAMINANTS

TACs are a set of airborne pollutants that may cause or contribute to an increase in mortality or in serious illness, or that may pose a hazard to human health. The health effects associated with TACs are quite diverse and generally are assessed locally, rather than regionally. TACs can cause long-term health effects such as cancer, birth defects, neurological damage, asthma, bronchitis, or genetic damage; or short-term acute affects such as eye watering, respiratory irritation (a cough), running nose, throat pain, and headaches.

Public exposure to TACs can result from emissions from normal operations, as well as accidental releases. Stationary sources of hazardous air pollutants (HAPs) include gasoline stations, dry cleaners, and diesel backup generators, which are subject to permit requirements. On-road motor vehicles and off-road sources, such as construction equipment and trains, are also common sources of TACs. According to the *California Almanac of Emissions and Air Quality* (CARB 2013), most of the estimated health risk from TACs can be attributed to relatively few compounds, the most important being particulate matter from diesel-fueled engines (i.e., DPM). Other TACs for which data are available that pose the greatest existing ambient risk in California are benzene, 1,3-butadiene, acetaldehyde, carbon tetrachloride, hexavalent chromium, para-dichlorobenzene, formaldehyde, methylene chloride, and perchloroethylene.

DPM differs from other TACs because it is not a single substance, but a complex mixture of hundreds of substances. Although DPM is emitted by diesel-fueled internal combustion engines, the composition of the emissions varies depending on engine type, operating conditions, fuel composition, type of lubricating oil, and presence or absence of an emission control system. Unlike the other TACs, no ambient monitoring data are available for DPM because no routine measurement method currently exists. However, emissions of DPM are forecasted to decline; it is estimated that emissions of DPM in 2035 will be less than half those in 2010, further reducing statewide cancer risk and non-cancer health effects (CARB 2013).

Another concern related to air quality is asbestos, which was used widely in building materials until it was banned by the EPA in the 1970s, and can also occur naturally[1]. Asbestos is designated as a hazardous substance when the fibers have potential to come in contact with air because the fibers are small enough to lodge in lung tissue and cause health problems. The presence of asbestos-containing materials (ACMs) in existing buildings poses an inhalation threat only if the ACMs are in a friable state. If the ACMs are not friable, then there is no inhalation hazard because asbestos fibers remain bound in the material matrix. The demolition and removal of ACM has the potential to generate airborne asbestos fibers. Exposure to asbestos fibers may result in health issues such as lung cancer, mesothelioma (a rare cancer of the thin membranes lining the lungs, chest,

[1] According to the California Department of Conservation Open-File Report 2000-19: *A General Location Guide for Ultramafic Rocks in California – Areas More Likely to Contain Naturally Occurring Asbestos*, the Specific Plan Area is not located within areas categorized as likely to contain NOA (California Department of Conservation 2000).

and abdominal cavity), and asbestosis (a non-cancerous lung disease which causes scarring of the lungs). Because asbestos is a known carcinogen, it is considered a TAC. Asbestos has been used in a variety of building construction materials for insulation and as a fire retardant because of its fiber strength and heat resistance. Asbestos can be found in vinyl floor tiles, attic and wall insulation containing vermiculite, textured paint, hot water and steam pipes coated with asbestos material, and other building materials (EPA 2026). Due to the age of some of the on-site structures and underground pipelines, asbestos could be encountered during Specific Plan-related demolition activities.

SENSITIVE RECEPTORS

Some land uses are considered more sensitive to air pollution than others, because of the types of population groups or activities involved. Children, pregnant women, the elderly, those with existing health conditions, and athletes or others who engage in frequent exercise are especially vulnerable to the effects of air pollution. Accordingly, land uses that are typically considered sensitive receptors include residences, schools, daycare centers, parks and playgrounds, and medical facilities.

Residential areas are considered sensitive to air pollution because residents (including children and the elderly) tend to be at home for extended periods of time, resulting in sustained exposure to the pollutants present. Recreational land uses are considered moderately sensitive to air pollution. Exercise places a high demand on respiratory functions, which can be impaired by air pollution, even though exposure periods during exercise are generally short. In addition, noticeable air pollution can detract from the enjoyment of recreation. Industrial and commercial areas are considered the least sensitive to air pollution. Exposure periods are relatively short and intermittent as the majority of the workers tend to stay indoors most of the time.

The Specific Plan Area is generally surrounded by residential, commercial, retail, and industrial land uses. Sensitive land uses in the vicinity include residences, schools, and medical facilities. Parcels planned for development under the proposed Specific Plan would be adjacent to sensitive land uses, including residences and schools. Residential uses are immediately adjacent to the Specific Plan Area, with the nearest residence located approximately 30 feet from a parcel anticipated for development under the proposed Specific Plan. Schools in the vicinity of the Specific Plan Area include Cyril Spinelli Elementary, Joyce Middle School, Sierra View Elementary School, Village Elementary School, Community Outreach Academy Elementary and Middle School, Community Collaborative Charter School, and Oakdale Elementary School. The nearest school to areas of anticipated development under the proposed Specific Plan is Joyce Middle School, located on Watt Avenue near Don Julio Boulevard and approximately 40 feet from a parcel anticipated for development under the proposed Specific Plan. The McClellan Veterans Administration Clinic is located near the intersection of Palm Street and Dudley Boulevard, approximately 875 feet east of the Specific Plan Area.

ODORS

The ability to detect odors varies considerably among the population and is subjective. Offensive odors can affect human health in several ways. First, odorant compounds can irritate the eye, nose, and throat, which can reduce respiratory volume. Second, the VOCs that cause odors can stimulate sensory nerves to cause neurochemical changes that might influence health, for instance, by compromising the immune system. Finally, unpleasant odors can trigger memories or attitudes linked to unpleasant odors, causing cognitive and emotional effects, such as stress.

Several examples of common land uses that generate substantial odors are wastewater treatment plants, landfills, composting/green waste facilities, recycling facilities, petroleum refineries, chemical manufacturing plants, painting/coating operations, rendering plants, and food packaging plants.

Industrial land uses such as manufacturing and recycling facilities are present in the southern portion of the Specific Plan Area.

The North Area Recovery Station (NARS) is located within the Specific Plan Area. NARS functions as a transfer/processing facility for solid waste. Strong odor tends to be the single-most citied complaint from neighbors in the vicinity of solid waste facilities. NARS also contains a liquefied natural gas (LNG) station that fuels the fleet of County garbage trucks.

REGULATORY SETTING

The Specific Plan Area is within the SVAB within SMAQMD's jurisdictional boundary. At a federal, state, and local level, the EPA, CARB, and SMAQMD are responsible, respectively, for regulating air quality in the vicinity of the Specific Plan Area. Each agency develops rules, regulations, policies, and/or goals to comply with applicable legislation. Although EPA regulations may not be superseded, in general, both state and local regulations may be more stringent. The regulatory framework for criteria air pollutants, TACs, and other emissions are described below.

FEDERAL

CRITERIA AIR POLLUTANTS

The primary legislation that governs federal air quality regulations is the federal Clean Air Act (CAA), enacted in 1970 and amended by Congress most recently in 1990. The CAA established a cooperative federal-state program for protecting public health and welfare nationwide and establishing standards for certain common and widespread pollutants.

Under the CAA, EPA has established the national ambient air quality standards (NAAQS) for six criteria air pollutants discussed previously: ozone, CO, NO_2, SO_2, lead, and particulate matter, which is subdivided into two classes based on particle size - PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$. The purpose of the NAAQS is two-tiered: primarily to protect public health, and

secondarily to prevent degradation to the environment (i.e., impairment of visibility, damage to vegetation and property). The current primary and secondary NAAQS are shown in Table AQ-2. These health-based pollutant standards are reviewed with a legally prescribed frequency and are revised as warranted by new data on health and welfare effects. Each standard is based on a specific averaging time over which the concentration is measured. Different averaging times are based on protection from short-term, high-dosage effects or longer term, low-dosage effects.

Table AQ-2: National and California Ambient Air Quality Standards

Pollutant	Averaging Time	CAAQS[1]	NAAQS[2,3] Primary[4]	NAAQS[2,3] Secondary[5]
Ozone [6,7]	1-hour	0.09 ppm	NA	NA
	8-hour	0.070 ppm	0.070 ppm	Same as Primary
PM_{10}	24-hour	50 µg/m^3	150 µg/m^3	Same as Primary
	Annual Arithmetic Mean	20 µg/m^3	NA	NA
$PM_{2.5}$ [8]	24-hour	NA	35 µg/m^3	Same as Primary
	Annual Arithmetic Mean	12 µg/m^3	9 µg/m^3	15.0 µg/m^3
CO	1-Hour	20 ppm	35 ppm	NA
	8-Hour	9.0 ppm	9 ppm	NA
NO_2	1-hour	0.18 ppm	100 ppb	NA
	Annual Arithmetic Mean	0.030 ppm	0.053 ppm	Same as Primary
SO_2	1-hour	0.25 ppm	0.075 ppm	NA
	24-hour	0.04 ppm	0.14 ppm	NA
	Annual Arithmetic Mean	NA	0.030 ppm	NA
Lead [9]	30-day Average	1.5 µg/m^3	NA	NA
	Calendar quarter	NA	1.5 µg/m^3	Same as Primary
	Rolling 3- month Average	NA	0.15 µg/m^3	Same as Primary
Visibility-Reducing Particles	8-hour	See Note 10	NA	NA
Sulfates	24-hour	25 µg/m^3	NA	NA
H_2S	1-hour	0.03 ppm	NA	NA
Vinyl Chloride	24-hour	0.01 ppm	NA	NA

Source: CARB 2024a

Key:
µg/m^3 = micrograms per cubic meter; mg/m^3 = milligrams per cubic meter; CO = carbon monoxide; NO_2 = nitrogen dioxide; O_3 = ozone; PM_{10} = particulate matter 10 microns in diameter or less; $PM_{2.5}$ = particulate matter 2.5 microns in diameter or less; ppm = parts per million; ppb = parts per billion; SO_2 = sulfur dioxide; H_2S = hydrogen sulfide; NA = not applicable; EPA = U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

1 California standards for ozone, carbon monoxide, sulfur dioxide (1-hour and 24-hour), nitrogen dioxide, particulate matter – (PM_{10}, $PM_{2.5}$, and visibility reducing particles) are values that are not to be exceeded. All others are not to be equaled or exceeded.

2 National standards (other than ozone, particulate matter, and those based on annual arithmetic mean) are not to be exceeded more than once a year. The ozone standard is attained when the fourth highest 8-hour concentration measured at each site in a year, averaged over three years, is equal to or less than the standard. For PM_{10}, 24-hour standard is attained when the expected number of days per calendar year with a 24-hour average concentration above 150 µg/m^3 is equal to or less than one. For $PM_{2.5}$, the 24 hour standard is attained when 98 percent of the daily concentrations, averaged over 3 years, are equal to or less than the standard.

3 Concentration expressed first in units in which it was promulgated. Equivalent units given in parentheses are based upon a reference temperature of 25 °C and a reference pressure of 760 torr. Most measurements of air quality are to be corrected to a reference temperature of 25 °C and a reference pressure of 760 torr; ppm in this table refers to ppm by volume, or molecules of pollutant per mole of gas.

4 National Primary Standards: The levels of air quality necessary, with an adequate margin of safety to protect public health.

5 National Secondary Standards: The levels of air quality necessary to protect the public welfare from any known or anticipated adverse effects of a pollutant.

6 The national 1-hour ozone standard was revoked by the EPA on June 15, 2005.

7 On October 1, 2015, the national 8-hour ozone primary and secondary standards were lowered from 0.075 to 0.070 ppm.

8 On February 7, 2024, the national annual $PM_{2.5}$ primary standard was lowered from 12.0 µg/m^3 to 9.0 µg/m^3. The existing national 24-hour $PM_{2.5}$ standards (primary and secondary) were retained at 35 µg/m^3, as was the annual secondary standard of 15.0 µg/m^3. The existing 24-hour PM_{10} standards (primary and secondary) of 150 µg/m^3 also were retained. The form of the annual primary and secondary standards is the annual mean, averaged over 3 years.

9 The national standard for lead was revised in October 2008 to a rolling 3-month average.

10 In 1989, CARB converted the statewide 10-mile visibility standard to an instrumental evaluation, which is “extinction of 0.23 per kilometer”. This standard is intended to limit the frequency and severity of visibility impairment due to regional haze and is equivalent to a 10-mile nominal visual range.

The CAA requires EPA to determine if areas of the country meet the NAAQS for each criteria air pollutant. Areas are designated according to the following basic designation categories:

- **Attainment:** This designation signifies that pollutant concentrations in the area do not exceed the established standard. In most cases, a maintenance plan is required for a region after it has attained an air quality standard and is designated as an attainment or maintenance area after previously being designated as nonattainment. Maintenance plans are designed to ensure continued compliance with the standard.
- **Nonattainment:** This designation indicates that a pollutant concentration has exceeded the established standard. Nonattainment may differ in severity. To identify the severity of the problem and the extent of planning and actions required to meet the standard, nonattainment areas are assigned a classification that is commensurate with the severity of their air quality problem (e.g., moderate, serious, severe, extreme).
- **Unclassifiable:** This designation indicates that insufficient data exist to determine attainment or nonattainment. For regulatory purposes, an unclassified area is generally treated the same as an attainment area.

As shown in Table AQ-2, Sacramento County is in attainment of all criteria air pollutant standards except the federal ozone and $PM_{2.5}$ standards and the state ozone and PM_{10} standard. The CAA requires each state to prepare an air quality control plan, referred to as a state implementation plan (SIP) to demonstrate how attainment of standards will be achieved. The SIP is a legal agreement between each state and the federal government to commit resources to improving air quality. It serves as the template for conducting regional and project-level air quality analyses. The SIP is not a single document, but a compilation of new and previously submitted attainment plans, emissions reduction programs, air district rules, state regulations, and federal controls. The SIP must include pollution control measures that demonstrate how the standards will be met by the dates specified in CAA.

Toxic Air Contaminants

Air quality regulations also focus on HAPs, referred to at the state level as TACs. Stationary sources of HAPs include gasoline stations, dry cleaners, and diesel backup generators, among which are subject to permit requirements. On-road motor vehicles and off-road sources, such as construction equipment and trains, are also common sources of HAPs. Public exposure to HAPs can result from emissions from normal operations, as well as accidental releases.

Table AQ-3: Sacramento County Attainment Status for Federal and State Ambient Air Quality Standards

Pollutant	Federal Standard	State Standard
Ozone	Nonattainment	Nonattainment
Particulate Matter—10 Micrometers or Less	Attainment	Nonattainment
Particulate Matter—2.5 Micrometers or Less	Nonattainment	Attainment
Carbon Monoxide	Attainment	Attainment
Nitrogen Dioxide	Unclassifiable/Attainment	Attainment
Sulfur Dioxide	Unclassifiable/Attainment	Attainment
Lead	Attainment	Attainment
Hydrogen Sulfide	No Federal Standard	Unclassified
Sulfates	No Federal Standard	Attainment
Visibility-Reducing Particles	No Federal Standard	Unclassified

Source: CARB 2023a

HAPs can be separated into carcinogens (cancer-causing) and non-carcinogens, based on the nature of the effects associated with exposure to the pollutant. For regulatory purposes, carcinogens are assumed to have no safe threshold below which health impacts would not occur. Non-carcinogens differ in that there is generally assumed to be a safe level of exposure below which no negative health impact is believed to occur. EPA regulates HAPs through statutes and regulations that generally require the use of the maximum or best available control technology for toxics (MACT and BACT) to limit emissions.

The CAA requires EPA to identify and set national emissions standards for HAPs to protect public health and welfare. Emissions standards are set for what are called “major sources” and “area sources.” Major sources are defined as stationary sources with potential to emit more than 10 tons per year of any HAP or more than 25 tons per year of any combination of HAPs; all other sources are considered area sources. There are two types of emissions standards: those that require application of MACT and BACT, and those that are health-risk based and deemed necessary to address the risks that remain after implementation of MACT or BACT. For area sources, the MACT or BACT standards may be different because of differences in generally available control technology. The CAA also requires EPA to issue vehicle or fuel standards containing reasonable requirements that control toxic emissions of, at a minimum, benzene and formaldehyde. Performance criteria are established to limit mobile-source emissions of toxics.

STATE

CARB is responsible for coordination and oversight of state and local air pollution control programs in California and for implementing the California Clean Air Act (CCAA).

CRITERIA AIR POLLUTANTS

The CCAA, adopted in 1988, required CARB to establish California Ambient Air Quality Standard (CAAQS) (as shown above in Table AQ-2). CARB has also established CAAQS for sulfates, hydrogen sulfide, vinyl chloride, and visibility-reducing particulate matter, in addition to the above-mentioned criteria air pollutants regulated by EPA. The CCAA requires that all air districts in the state endeavor to achieve and maintain the CAAQS by the earliest practicable date. The CCAA specifies that local air districts should focus particular attention on reducing the emissions from transportation and areawide emission sources and provides districts with the authority to regulate indirect sources. CARB also maintains air quality monitoring stations throughout the state in conjunction with air districts. CARB uses the data collected at these stations to classify air basins as being in attainment or nonattainment with respect to each pollutant and to monitor progress in attaining air quality standards (see Table AQ-1 for recent air quality monitoring data).

CARB is the lead agency for developing the SIPs in California. SIPs are not single documents. They are a compilation of new and previously submitted plans, programs (such as monitoring, modeling, permitting, etc.), district rules, state regulations, and federal controls. Many of California's SIPs rely on the same core set of control strategies, including emission standards for cars and heavy trucks, fuel regulations, and limits on emissions from consumer products. Local air districts and other agencies prepare SIP elements and submit them to CARB for review and approval. CARB forwards SIP revisions to the EPA for approval and publication in the Federal Register. Most recently, in September 2022, CARB adopted the *2022 State Strategy for the State Implementation Plan* (State SIP Strategy), describing the proposed commitment to develop control measures and reduce emissions from State-regulated sources as needed to support attainment of the federal 70 parts per billion 8-hour ozone standard. While the proposed State SIP Strategy was developed primarily as a roadmap for attaining the ozone standard, the emissions reductions will also support attainment of other standards, including the $PM_{2.5}$ NAAQS.

CARB has established emission standards for vehicles sold in California and for various types of equipment. In 2021, CARB adopted the Advanced Clean Trucks[2] regulation, requiring truck manufacturers to transition from diesel-powered trucks and vans to electric zero-emission trucks beginning in 2024 with phasing in of increasingly stringent requirements through 2045. Similarly for light-duty passenger cars, trucks, and SUVs, in 2022, CARB adopted the Advanced Clean Cars II Regulations requiring manufacturers of light-duty passenger cars, trucks and SUVs to transition to electric zero-emission vehicles beginning with model year 2026 and phasing in of increasingly stringent requirements through 2035. For heavy-duty diesel vehicles, CARB adopted the In-Use Off-Road Diesel-Fueled Fleets Regulation in 2007, which requires fleets to reduce their emissions by retiring older vehicles and replacing retired vehicles with newer vehicles,

[2] On May 22, 2025, the U.S. Senate voted to revoke three waivers of preemption issued by the EPA for CARB to implement the Advanced Clean Cars II regulation, the Advanced Clean Trucks regulation, and the Heavy-Duty Low NO_X Omnibus Regulation. In June 2025, California filed a lawsuit against the federal government challenging the revocation of the waivers.

repowering older vehicles, or installing verified diesel emission control strategies in older engines; and by restricting the addition of older vehicles to fleets.

In December 2008, CARB adopted the Truck and Bus regulation which requires heavy-duty diesel vehicles that operate in California to reduce exhaust TAC emissions. Under this regulation, nearly all trucks and buses are required to have 2010 or newer model-year engines, or the equivalent to, to reduce PM and NO_X emissions. In 2017, Senate Bill (SB) 1 (the Road Repair and Accountability Act of 2017) was passed, which, in addition to funding transportation-related projects, requires the Department of Motor Vehicles to refuse registration, renewal, transfer of registration for diesel-fueled vehicles that are subject to emissions reductions requirements.

The CCAA required CARB to adopt regulations to achieve the maximum feasible reduction in VOCs emitted by consumer products. The state consumer products regulations comprise a multi-stage program of near-, mid-, and long-term control measures. Since 1989, CARB has adopted regulations to reduce emissions from antiperspirants and deodorants, consumer products, aerosol coatings (generally referred to as the Consumer Products Regulations). In 2022, CARB adopted proposed amendments to the Consumer Products Regulations to fulfill the requirement of the 2016 State Strategy for the SIP that CARB develop measures to reduce VOC emissions from consumer products by 8-10 tons per day by 2031 statewide. The amendments proposed in 2022 fulfill the emission reduction commitments needed to help California attain federal ozone standards.

Toxic Air Contaminants

As described under the federal regulations above, CARB regulates TACs, of which a subset of the identified substances are the federally identified and regulated HAPs, through statutes and regulations that generally require the use of MACT and BACT.

TACs in California are regulated primarily through the Tanner Air Toxics Act (Chapter 1047, Statutes of 1983) and the Air Toxics Hot Spots Information and Assessment Act (Assembly Bill 2588; Chapter 1252, Statutes of 1987). The Air Toxics Hot Spots Information and Assessment Act seeks to identify and evaluate risks from air toxics sources, but does not regulate air toxics emissions. TAC emissions from individual facilities are quantified and prioritized. “High-priority” facilities must perform a health risk assessment and, if specific thresholds are violated, must communicate the results to the public in the form of notices and public meetings. TACs are generally regulated through statutes and rules that require the use of MACT or BACT to limit TAC emissions.

According to the *California Almanac of Emissions and Air Quality* (CARB 2013), most of the estimated health risk from TACs is attributed to relatively few compounds, the most dominant being DPM. In 2000, CARB approved a comprehensive diesel risk reduction plan to reduce emissions from both new and existing diesel-fueled vehicles and engines. Additional regulations apply to new trucks and diesel fuel. Subsequent CARB regulations on diesel emissions include the On-Road Heavy Duty Diesel Vehicle (In-Use) Regulation, the On-Road Heavy Duty (New) Vehicle Program, the In-Use Off-road Diesel Vehicle Regulation, and the New Off-road Compression Ignition Diesel Engines and Equipment

Program. All of these regulations and programs have timetables by which manufacturers must comply and existing operators must upgrade their diesel-powered equipment.

The State of California has also implemented regulations to reduce DPM emissions. Two such regulations applicable to the proposed project include Title 13, Sections 2485 and 2449 of the California Code of Regulations (CCR), which limit idling time to a maximum of 5 minutes for heavy-duty commercial diesel vehicles (defined as diesel vehicles heavier than 10,000 pounds gross vehicle rated weight) and off-road diesel-fueled construction vehicles, respectively. These regulatory measures are driven by the CARB Airborne Toxic Control Measure and subsequent amendments.

LOCAL

SACRAMENTO METROPOLITAN AIR QUALITY MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

The SMAQMD is responsible for monitoring air pollution within the SVAB and for developing and administering programs to reduce air pollution levels below the health-based standards established by the state and federal governments. All projects within SMAQMD's jurisdictional area are subject to SMAQMD rules and regulations in effect at the time of construction. Specific SMAQMD rules relevant to the Specific Plan include but are not limited to the following:

- **Rule 201:** General Permit Requirements. The purpose of this rule is to provide an orderly procedure for the review of new sources of air pollution and of the modification and operation of existing sources through the issuance of permits.
- **Rule 202:** New Source Review. The purpose of this rule is to provide for the issuance of authorities to construct and permits to operate at new and modified stationary air pollution sources and to provide mechanisms, including emission offsets, by which authorities to construct such sources may be granted without interfering with the attainment or maintenance of ambient air quality standards.
- **Rule 401:** Ringlemann Chart. A person shall not discharge into the atmosphere from any single source of emission whatsoever any air contaminant, other than uncombined water vapor, for a period or periods aggregating more than three minutes in any one hour which is: as dark or darker in shade as that designated No. 1 on the Ringelmann Chart, as published by the United States Bureau of Mines, or of such opacity as to obscure a human observer's view, or a certified calibrated in-stack opacity monitoring system to a degree equal to or greater than does smoke described in Subsection 301.1 of this rule.
- **Rule 402:** Nuisance. A person shall not discharge from any source whatsoever such quantities of air contaminants or other materials which cause injury, detriment, nuisance, or annoyance to any considerable number of persons or the public, or which endanger the comfort, repose, health or safety of any such persons or the public, or which cause or have natural tendency to cause injury or damage to business or property.

- **Rule 403:** Fugitive Dust. A person shall take every reasonable precaution not to cause or allow the emissions of fugitive dust from being airborne beyond the property line from which the emission originates, from any construction, handling or storage activity, or any wrecking, excavation, grading, clearing of land or solid waste disposal operation. Reasonable precautions shall include, but are not limited to:
    - Use, where possible, of water or chemicals for control of dust in the demolition of existing buildings or structures, construction operations, the construction of roadways or the clearing of land.
    - Application of asphalt, oil, water, or suitable chemicals on dirt roads, materials stockpiles, and other surfaces which can give rise to airborne dusts; and
    - Other means approved by the Air Pollution Control Officer.
- **Rule 404:** Particulate Matter. Except as otherwise provided in Rule 406 of this regulation, a person shall not discharge into the atmosphere from any source particulate matter in excess of 0.23 grams per dry standard cubic meter (0.1 grains per dry standard cubic foot).
- **Rule 405:** Dust and Condensed Fumes. A person shall not discharge into the atmosphere in any one hour from any source whatsoever dust or condensed fumes in total quantities in excess of the amount shown in the Rule's Table for Process Weight and Allowable Discharge.
- **Rule 442:** Architectural Coatings. The purpose of this rule is to limit the emissions of VOCs from the use of architectural coatings supplied, sold, offered for sale, applied, solicited for application, or manufactured for use within the SMAQMD.
- **Rule 902:** Asbestos. The purpose of this rule is to implement the U.S. EPA's National Emission Standard for Hazardous Air Pollutants for Asbestos (40 CFR 61.140 et. seq.) and to limit the emission of asbestos to the atmosphere.

SMAQMD has also produced a guidebook called the *CEQA Guide to Air Quality Assessment in Sacramento County* (CEQA Guide), which contains guidance for analyzing construction and operational emissions (SMAQMD 2021a). The CEQA Guide provides methods to analyze air quality impacts from plans and projects, including screening criteria, thresholds of significance, calculation methods, and mitigation measures to assist lead agencies in complying with CEQA. In developing the thresholds, SMAQMD took into account health-based air quality standards and the strategies to attain air quality standards, emissions projections and regional growth and land use trends.

As part of the Sacramento Federal Nonattainment Area (SFNA) for ozone, and in accordance with requirements under the CAA, SMAQMD worked with the other local air districts within the Sacramento region[3] to develop the *Sacramento Regional 2015 NAAQS 8-Hour Ozone Attainment & Reasonable Further Progress Plan* (Ozone Plan) (SMAQMD

[3] The local air districts within the Sacramento region include El Dorado County Air Quality Management District, Feather River Air Quality Management District, Placer County Air Pollution Control District, and Yolo-Solano Air Quality Management District.

2023) to describe and demonstrate how the SFNA is meeting requirements under the federal CAA in demonstrating reasonable further progress and attainment of the NAAQS for ozone. CARB approved the Ozone Plan on October 26, 2023, and submitted the plan to the U.S. EPA for final review and approval as a SIP. The SFNA is classified as "serious" nonattainment for the 2015 federal ozone standard. As part of the plan, the SFNA air districts requested a reclassification to "severe" with an attainment deadline of August 3, 2033 (CARB 2023b). The Ozone Plan includes ozone trends, baseline and forecasted emissions inventories, and control measures and meets requirements for demonstrating reasonable further progress towards attaining the ozone standard. Control measures identified in the Ozone Plan include federal, state, and local control measures designed to reduce ozone precursor (ROG and NO_X) emissions from on-road vehicles, off-road equipment, consumer products, and other mobile and area sources. The Ozone Plan emissions inventory forecasts used to demonstrate progress towards attainment take into account various growth parameters including forecasts for population, housing, employment, energy demand, motor vehicle travel, along with emissions benefits from the federal, state, and local control measures (SMAQMD 2023).

The region also prepared the *$PM_{2.5}$ Maintenance Plan and Redesignation Request* (SMAQMD 2013) to address how the region attained and would continue to attain the 24-hour $PM_{2.5}$ NAAQS standard. In 2017, EPA found that the area attained the 2006 24-hour $PM_{2.5}$ NAAQS by the attainment date of December 31, 2015. The *$PM_{2.5}$ Maintenance Plan and Redesignation Request* will be updated and submitted in the future based on the clean data finding made by the EPA. Furthermore, EPA adopted an updated annual $PM_{2.5}$ NAAQS standard in 2024. Subsequently, CARB submitted area designation recommendations for this updated standard in January 2025 and recommended that Sacramento County be designated as nonattainment for the standard because monitoring data demonstrated values above the updated standard (CARB 2024b). Issuance of the final area designations by EPA is pending.

SMAQMD also prepared the *PM_{10} Implementation/Maintenance Plan and Redesignation Request for Sacramento County* (SMAQMD 2010). EPA approved the PM_{10} Plan, which allowed EPA to proceed with the redesignation of Sacramento County as attainment for the PM_{10} NAAQS. The approval of the first Maintenance Plan showed maintenance from 2013 through 2023. A second plan must provide for maintenance of the NAAQS for 10 more years after expiration of the first 10-year maintenance period. EPA approved the *Second 10-Year PM_{10} Maintenance Plan for Sacramento County* (SMAQMD 2021b) in April 2024 to demonstrate maintenance of the PM_{10} standard through 2033.

At the local level, air pollution control or management districts may adopt and enforce CARB control measures. Under SMAQMD Rule 201 (General Permit Requirements), Rule 202 (New Source Review), and Rule 207 (Federal Operating Permit Program), all sources that could emit TACs must obtain permits from SMAQMD.

Although offensive odors rarely cause any physical harm, they can be very unpleasant, leading to considerable stress among the public and often generating citizen complaints to local governments and SMAQMD. SMAQMD Rule 402 (Nuisance) regulates odorous emissions.

Sacramento Area Council of Governments

The Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG) serves as the Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Sacramento region, maintaining the regional Metropolitan Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (MTP/SCS) in coordination with each of the local 28 member cities and counties, including Sacramento County. SACOG plays a central role in transportation infrastructure planning for the region, while also serving as a forum for the study, planning, and resolution of other planning issues facing the local member governments.

The MTP/SCS for the SACOG region is the 2025 Blueprint, which lays out a plan for the region through 2050 that links land use planning, air quality, greenhouse gas emissions, and transportation needs and addresses State climate goals (SACOG 2025a). The 2025 Blueprint emphasizes revitalizing existing commercial corridors and main streets, land-efficient development (compact growth), local job opportunities, reduced traffic congestion, and investment in public transportation infrastructure.

Sacramento County General Plan

The following policies from the "Air Quality" Element of the County of Sacramento General Plan (County of Sacramento 2022) may be applicable to the project.

Policy AQ-1. New development shall be designed to promote pedestrian/bicycle access and circulation to encourage community residents to use alternative modes of transportation to conserve air quality and minimize direct and indirect emission of air contaminants.

Policy AQ-3. Buffers and/or other appropriate exposure reduction measures shall be established on a project-by-project basis and incorporated during review to provide for protection of sensitive receptors from sources of air pollution or odor. The CARB's "Strategies to Reduce Air Pollution Exposure Near High Volume Roadways" Technical Advisory and the SMAQMD's "Mobile Sources Air Toxics Protocol" or applicable SMAQMD guidance shall be utilized when establishing these exposure reduction measures.

Policy AQ-4. Developments which meet or exceed thresholds of significance for ozone precursor pollutants, and/or Greenhouse Gases (GHG) as adopted by the SMAQMD, shall be deemed to have a significant environmental impact. An Air Quality Mitigation Plan and/or a GHG Reduction Plan shall be submitted to the County of Sacramento prior to project approval, subject to review and recommendation as to technical adequacy by the SMAQMD.

Policy AQ-8. Promote mixed-use development and provide for increased development intensity along existing and proposed transit corridors to reduce the length and frequency of vehicle trips.

Policy AQ-11. Encourage contractors operating in the county to procure and to operate low-emission vehicles, and to seek low emission fleet status for their off-road equipment.

Policy AQ-16. Prohibit the idling of on-and off-road engines when the vehicle is not moving or when the off-road equipment is not performing work for a period of time greater than five minutes in any one-hour period.

Policy AQ-19. Require all feasible reductions in emissions for the operation of construction vehicles and equipment on major land development and roadway construction projects.

Policy AQ-20. Promote Cool Community strategies to cool the urban heat island, reduce energy use and ozone formation, and maximize air quality benefits by encouraging four main strategies including, but not limited to: plant trees, selective use of vegetation for landscaping, install cool roofing, and install cool pavements.

Policy AQ-21. Support SMAQMD's particulate matter control measures for residential wood burning and fugitive dust.

IMPACTS AND ANALYSIS

SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA

Thresholds of significance are based on Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines and SMAQMD's CEQA Guide (SMAQMD 2021). Implementation of the proposed Specific Plan would result in a significant impact on air quality if it would:

- generate construction-related criteria air pollutant or ozone precursor emissions that exceed the SMAQMD-recommended thresholds of 85 pounds per day for NO_X, or, after implementation of best management practices (BMPs), 80 pounds per day or 14.6 tons per year of PM_{10} and 82 pounds per day or 15 tons per year of $PM_{2.5}$;
- generate long-term regional criteria air pollutant or ozone precursor emissions that exceed the SMAQMD-recommended thresholds of 65 pounds per day of ROG or NO_X, 80 pounds per day or 14.6 tons per year of PM_{10} and 82 pounds per day or 15 tons per year of $PM_{2.5}$;
- contribute to localized concentrations of air pollutants at nearby receptors that would exceed applicable ambient air quality standards;
- generate construction- or operation-related emissions of TACs that would exceed applicable health risk thresholds;
- conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan; or

- result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people.

For cumulative impacts, SMAQMD states that, as a result of the district's approach to thresholds of significance, if a project's emissions are not anticipated to exceed the SMAQMD-recommended thresholds, as listed above, the project would not be expected to result in a cumulatively considerable contribution to a significant impact at a cumulative level (SMAQMD 2021a).

METHODOLOGY AND ASSUMPTIONS

The discussion below presents the methods used for the air quality analysis and how the significance of the proposed Specific Plan's air quality impacts were determined. Potential air quality impacts associated with short-term construction and long-term operations were evaluated in accordance with SMAQMD-recommended and CARB-approved methodologies. Construction and operational emissions of criteria air pollutants were compared with the applicable thresholds of significance (described below) to determine potential impacts. SMAQMD's significance thresholds serve as a proxy for determining whether the construction and operation associated with proposed Specific Plan could violate air quality standards, cause a substantial contribution to an existing or projected air quality violation, and/or conflict with any applicable air quality plan. See Appendix AQ-1 of this EIR for model details, assumptions, inputs, and outputs.

CONSTRUCTION

Construction-related emissions were modeled using the California Emissions Estimator Model (CalEEMod)[4] Version 2022.1.1.35, which is the most current version of the SMAQMD-recommended model for estimating construction and operational emissions from land use development projects. Construction-related emissions estimates presented in this EIR account for both the construction of development projects and also the construction of all infrastructure improvements required to serve the proposed Specific Plan at buildout. Where Specific Plan-specific information was not available or was not known at the time of the analysis, CalEEMod default parameters were used. Future development is assumed to occur through the planning horizon of 2050, with the specific timing of construction activities each year subject to market conditions and unknown at the time of preparing this analysis.

For conservative estimates, maximum daily and maximum annual construction scenarios were developed. A maximum construction year scenario was developed by assuming that

[4] CalEEMod has not yet been updated to incorporate CARB's adjustment factors for NO_X, ROG, PM_{10}, and $PM_{2.5}$, which were developed (primarily for the purposes of SIP development and conformity determinations) to remove the estimated emissions benefits attributed to the Advanced Clean Trucks (ACT), Zero-Emission Airport Shuttle, Heavy-Duty Vehicle and Engine Emission Warranty and Maintenance Provisions (Warranty Phase 1), and Heavy-Duty Omnibus (Omnibus) regulations. These regulations can no longer be enforced due to Congressional resolutions disapproving EPA's decisions to grant California waivers for several regulations in the EMFAC baseline. These Congressional resolutions are pending litigation. As such, construction-related and operational mobile source emissions are estimated based on the existing emission factors available in CalEEMod.

construction associated with transportation and infrastructure improvements occur over 5 years – this includes construction of transportation, streetscape, and utility improvements anticipated under the Re-Imagine North Watt Corridor Plan and within rights-of-way associated with the Specific Plan Area. For this analysis, it is assumed that 20 percent of the total construction of development projects and infrastructure improvements anticipated under the proposed Specific Plan could occur in a single year. This assumption is used to estimate maximum daily construction-related emissions.

To estimate maximum daily construction emissions, all individual construction activity phases (e.g. demolition, grading, site preparation, building construction, paving, etc.) are assumed to overlap, as different construction activities may be happening concurrently at different locations within the Specific Plan Area. The construction year modeled was 2027, as this year represents the earliest possible initial year of construction. Not only is this level of construction in a single year a conservative assumption, but modeling construction emissions for the year 2027 also results in a conservative estimate of construction-related emissions over the construction duration, because any construction in future years would more realistically result in fewer emissions for the same level of activity due to fleet turnover, in which older equipment and vehicles are replaced by those with newer engines meeting more recent and more stringent emission standards. Modeled construction-related emissions for the proposed Specific Plan are compared to the applicable SMAQMD-recommended construction thresholds to determine significance.

Operational

Future operational emissions would be generated by area, energy, and mobile sources, as well as potential stationary sources. Operational area- and energy-source (i.e., natural gas combustion, landscape maintenance, periodic architectural coatings, and consumer products) air pollutant emissions were modeled in CalEEMod based on the anticipated type and scale of development, including acreage affected by construction and the amount of building square footage constructed. Mobile-source emissions were estimated using projected Specific Plan Area vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and trip generation rates developed in support of this EIR and the CalEEMod default fleet mix for the Specific Plan Area land use types.

All operational emissions were modeled based on the 2050 planning horizon year for the proposed Specific Plan. To determine the net change in operational emissions associated with new development and redevelopment that would occur under the proposed Specific Plan, two operational scenarios were modeled: one representing existing conditions and assuming no new development, and one representing future conditions with implementation of new development accommodated under the proposed Specific Plan. To ensure conservative results, the existing conditions model used an operational year of 2050 so that factors that would reduce criteria air pollutant mobile emissions, but that are independent of the proposed Specific Plan, are not reflected in the net emissions estimate. Such factors include, but are not limited to, increased fuel efficiency, fleet turnover, and the rise in use of zero-emissions vehicles. The modeled existing conditions scenario utilized projected VMT and trip generation rates associated with existing land

uses within the Specific Plan Area. The future conditions scenario similarly used an operational year of 2050 and projected VMT and trip generation rates for planned new development under the proposed Specific Plan, as well as existing land uses that would remain. Therefore, to determine the net increase in operational emissions, the emissions under the existing conditions scenario are subtracted from emissions under the future conditions scenario. These long-term operational emissions for the proposed Specific Plan are compared to the applicable SMAQMD thresholds of significance for operations to determine significance.

Criteria Air Pollutant Health Risks

As detailed in "Environmental Setting", exposure to criteria air pollutants can result in adverse health effects. Ozone is considered a regional criteria air pollutant, whereas CO, NO_2, SO_2, and lead are localized pollutants. PM can be both a local and a regional pollutant, depending on its composition. The primary pollutants of concern associated with development under the proposed Specific Plan would be ozone precursors (ROG and NO_X) and PM. Adverse health effects induced by regional criteria air pollutant emissions generated by the proposed Specific Plan (ozone precursors and PM) are highly dependent on a multitude of interconnected variables (e.g., cumulative concentrations, local meteorology and atmospheric conditions, the number and character of exposed individuals [e.g., age, gender]). For these reasons, ozone precursors (ROG and NO_X) contribute to the formation of ground-borne ozone on a regional scale, where emissions of ROG and NO_X generated in one area may not equate to a specific ozone concentration in that same area. Similarly, some types of particulate pollutants may be transported over long distances or formed through atmospheric reactions. As such, the magnitude and locations of specific health effects from exposure to increased ozone or regional PM concentrations are the product of emissions generated by numerous sources throughout a region, as opposed to a single individual project.

Existing models have limited sensitivity to small changes in regional criteria air pollutant concentrations, and as such, translating project-generated regional criteria air pollutants to specific health effects would not produce meaningful results. In other words, minor increases in regional air pollution from project-generated ROG and NO_X would have nominal or negligible impacts on human health. Currently, CARB and EPA have not approved a quantitative method to meaningfully and consistently translate the mass emissions of criteria air pollutants from a project to quantified health effects.

In 2020, SMAQMD published Guidance to Address the Friant Ranch Ruling for CEQA Projects in the Sac Metro Air District (SMAQMD 2020), which provides a screening level analysis estimating the health effects of criteria air pollutants and their precursors, as well as provides guidance for conducting a health effects analysis of a project that is consistent with the *Sierra Club v. County of Fresno* decision. The Guidance was prepared by conducting regional photochemical modeling and relies on the EPA's Benefits Mapping and Analysis Program to assess health impacts from ozone and $PM_{2.5}$. Analysis was conducted to estimate the level of health effects for a proposed project that has emissions at the maximum SMAQMD-recommended non-zero thresholds of significance using 41 hypothetical project locations, as well as a screening model conducted to estimate

potential health effects for strategic areas where development is anticipated to cause exceedance of thresholds of significance. The tool's outputs are based on the simulation of a full year of exposure at the maximum daily average exposure, which is not a realistic scenario. Even with these conservative factors built in, the model's outputs indicate low overall health effects. The findings of the SMAQMD screening modeling indicate that the mean health incidence for a project emitting at the threshold of significance levels at all six representative locations was less than 3 per year for mortality and less than 1.5 per year for other health outcomes evaluated. The maximum reported mortality rate is 22 incidences per year, and all other health outcomes evaluated are under 9 per year from a project emitting 656 pounds per day of each NO_X, ROG, and $PM_{2.5}$ at the downtown Sacramento location (SMAQMD 2020).

The proposed Specific Plan is designed to accelerate infill development in alignment with the SACOG Green Means Go program to eliminate barriers to infill housing necessary to implement SACOG's Blueprint to accommodate growth while still reducing VMT and GHG emissions. The Green Means Go program promotes infill housing, improved mobility, and reduced vehicle dependence through identification of Green Zones, such as the North Watt Corridor Green Zone within which the proposed Specific Plan Area is located. Green Zones are typically places with access to transit and/or other transportation choices that have strong access to jobs, education, and services, thereby reducing vehicle dependence. Furthermore, as shown in Table AQ-4 through Table AQ-6, emissions of ROG, NO_X, PM_{10}, and $PM_{2.5}$ associated with implementation of the proposed Specific Plan after incorporation of the mitigation measures as proposed above, would be below the 656 pounds per day emission rate used as the basis for the SMAQMD screening modeling. As discussed above, the nature of criteria air pollutants is such that the emissions from an individual project cannot be directly identified as responsible for health impacts within any specific geographic location. As a result, attributing health risks at any specific geographic location to a single project is not feasible and is not evaluated further, and this information and consideration is presented for informational purposes only.

Toxic Air Contaminants and Odors

TAC emissions associated with construction and operation of the proposed Specific Plan that could affect surrounding areas are evaluated qualitatively. The potential for the development of the proposed Specific Plan to result in other emissions, such as those leading to odors, is also evaluated qualitatively.

Impact AQ-1: Generate Short-Term Construction Emissions of Criteria Pollutants and Precursors (ROG, NO_X, PM_{10}, and $PM_{2.5}$) that Exceed Standards

Construction-related activities would result in temporary emissions of criteria air pollutants (e.g., PM_{10}, $PM_{2.5}$, CO, SO_2) and ozone precursors (e.g., ROG and NO_X) from ground-disturbing activities (e.g., excavation, grading, and clearing); exhaust emissions from use of off-road equipment, material delivery, and construction worker commutes; building demolition and construction; asphalt paving; and application of architectural coatings. Emissions of ozone precursors (ROG and NO_x) would be associated primarily with

construction equipment and on-road mobile exhaust. The application of architectural coatings would result in evaporative emissions of ROG. Fugitive dust emissions of PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$ emissions would primarily be generated by ground-disturbing and demolition activities, as well as re-entrained roadway dust resulting from on-road vehicle travel and would vary as a function of parameters, such as soil silt content, soil moisture, wind speed, acreage of disturbance area, and the miles traveled by construction vehicles on and off site. Construction-related emissions are temporary and would cease after the completion of construction for each development project and infrastructure improvement project under the proposed Specific Plan, but would have the potential to adversely affect the region's air quality.

The maximum daily and annual emissions that would be generated during a maximum intensity construction year under the proposed Specific Plan are presented below in Table AQ-4, and compared to the SMAQMD-recommended thresholds of significance for construction. The maximum construction year scenario assumes that 20 percent of the total construction of development projects and infrastructure improvements anticipated under the proposed Specific Plan could occur in a single year, as further detailed in the Methodology and Assumptions section above. As described above under "Significance Criteria," the SMAQMD recommended thresholds of significance for PM are 80 pounds per day or 14.6 tons per year of PM_{10} and 82 pounds per day or 15 tons per year of $PM_{2.5}$, after implementation of BMPs. The BMPs are Basic Construction Emission Control Practices that are considered feasible for controlling fugitive dust from a construction site, allowing the use of the non-zero PM significance thresholds. Consistent with the SMAQMD CEQA Guide, these BMPs have been included as a Mitigation Measure (see Mitigation Measure AQ-1a below) to ensure compliance.

Table AQ-4: Summary of Unmitigated Construction-Related Emissions of Criteria Air Pollutants and Precursors, Maximum Construction Year

Description	ROG (lbs/day)	NO_X (lbs/day)	PM_{10} [1] (lbs/day)	$PM_{2.5}$ [1] (lbs/day)	PM_{10} [1] (tons/year)	$PM_{2.5}$ [1] (tons/year)
Development Projects under the Proposed Specific Plan	231.5	107.0	32.2	12.9	2.5	0.8
Transportation and Infrastructure Improvements	5.9	47.3	5.2	2.3	0.5	0.2
Total Construction Emissions	237.4	154.3	37.4	15.1	3.0	1.1
SMAQMD Threshold of Significance	N/A	85	80	82	14.6	15
Threshold Exceeded?	N/A	**Yes**	No	No	No	No

Notes: lbs/day = pounds per day; NO_X = nitrogen oxides; PM_{10} = particulate matter less than 10 micrometers in diameter; $PM_{2.5}$ = particulate matter less than 2.5 micrometers in diameter; ROG = reactive organic gases; SMAQMD = Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District; SP = Specific Plan; tons/year = tons per year

1 PM emissions include implementation of fugitive dust control measures listed as BMPs; therefore, this analysis utilized the non-zero SMAQMD recommended PM significance threshold.

Source: See Appendix AQ-1 for detailed construction assumptions and calculations.

As shown in Table AQ-4, the modeled daily unmitigated emissions generated by construction-related activities would exceed the SMAQMD's recommended thresholds for NO_X, an ozone precursor. Therefore, construction-related activities could result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of criteria pollutants for which the region is nonattainment, and this impact would be **potentially significant**.

MITIGATION MEASURES

AQ-1a: Implement SMAQMD's Basic Construction Emission Control Practices

For all construction activities within the Specific Plan Area, including transportation and infrastructure improvements, construction contractor(s) shall implement the following SMAQMD Basic Construction Emission Control Practices at a minimum:

- Water all exposed surfaces two times daily. Exposed surfaces include, but are not limited to demolition sites, soil piles, graded areas, unpaved parking areas, staging areas, and access roads.
- Cover or maintain at least two feet of free board space on haul trucks transporting soil, sand, or other loose material on the site. Any haul trucks that would be traveling along freeways or major roadways should be covered.
- Use wet power vacuum street sweepers to remove any visible trackout mud or dirt onto adjacent public roads at least once a day. Use of dry power sweeping is prohibited.
- Limit vehicle speeds on unpaved roads to 15 miles per hour (mph).
- All roadways, driveways, sidewalks, parking lots to be paved should be completed as soon as possible. In addition, building pads should be laid as soon as possible after grading unless seeding or soil binders are used.
- Minimize idling time either by shutting equipment off when not in use or reducing the time of idling to 2 minutes (5 minute limit is required by the state airborne toxics control measure [CCR, Title 13, sections 2449(d)(3) and 2485]). Provide clear signage that posts this requirement for workers at the entrances to the site.
- Provide current certificate(s) of compliance for CARB's In-Use Off-Road Diesel-Fueled Fleets Regulation [CCR, Title 13, sections 2449 and 2449.1]. For more information contact CARB at 877-593-6677, doors@arb.ca.gov, or www.arb.ca.gov/doors/compliance_cert1.html.
- Maintain all construction equipment in proper working condition according to manufacturer's specifications. The equipment must be checked by a certified mechanic and determined to be running in proper condition before it is operated.

All fugitive dust control measures shall be shown as notes on grading, improvement, and demolition plans, to be initiated at the start and maintained

throughout the duration of construction. Compliance shall be verified by the County prior to approval of grading, improvement, and demolition plans.

AQ-1b: Reduce Off-Road Equipment Exhaust-Related Emissions

For all construction activities within the Specific Plan Area, including transportation and infrastructure improvements, all construction contractor(s) shall ensure that off-road diesel-fueled equipment with engines larger than 50 horsepower shall meet or exceed CARB Tier 4 Final emissions standards.

An exemption from these requirements may be granted by the County if the construction contractor(s) submits documents to the County demonstrating that equipment with the required tier is not reasonably available. Before an exemption may be considered by the County, construction contractor(s) shall be required to demonstrate that two construction fleet owners/operators in Sacramento County were contacted and that those owners/operators confirmed Tier 4 final equipment could not be located within Sacramento County.

AQ-1c: Use Low-VOC Paint for First Coating in Non-Residential Development

For non-residential development and the non-residential portion of a mixed-use development that also includes residential development, the County shall require in new construction the use of super-compliant VOC paints that meet a VOC standard of less than 10 grams per liter for the first coating of exterior and interior coatings. Project building plans for non-residential development shall submit technical data sheets and a brief summary indicating the VOC content of any architectural coatings proposed to be applied. This mitigation measure applies to the new construction portion of an expansion of existing structures, but does not apply to rehabilitation and adaptive reuse projects that do not involve new construction.

Significance after Mitigation

Project construction activities would result in emissions that would exceed SMAQMD-recommended threshold of significance for NO_X, as shown in Table AQ-4. Mitigation Measure AQ-1a includes the SMAQMD Basic Construction Measures/BMPs for fugitive dust control to reduce the generation of on-site fugitive dust during earthwork and travel on unpaved roadways, to maintain equipment in good operating condition, and minimize equipment idling times beyond the requirements of CCR, Title 13 sections 2449 and 2485. Mitigation Measure AQ-1b requires that off-road diesel-powered equipment greater than 50 horsepower used for construction activities meet or exceed Tier 4 Final emission standards. Mitigation Measure AQ-1c requires the first coating of interior and exterior paint applied on non-residential buildings to meet low-VOC standards, which would serve to reduce ozone precursor emissions. Mitigated emissions estimates are shown in Table AQ-5, based on implementation of Mitigation Measures AQ-1a and AQ-1b.

Table AQ-5: Summary of Mitigated Construction-Related Emissions of Criteria Air Pollutants and Precursors, Maximum Construction Year

Description	ROG (lbs/day)	NO_X (lbs/day)	PM_{10} [1] (lbs/day)	$PM_{2.5}$ [1] (lbs/day)	PM_{10} [1] (tons/year)	$PM_{2.5}$ [1] (tons/year)
Specific Plan Development Area	224.8	35.2	29.2	10.1	2.3	0.7
Transportation and Infrastructure Improvements	2.4	14.3	3.7	0.9	0.4	0.1
Total Construction Emissions	**227.2**	**49.5**	**32.8**	**11.0**	**2.7**	**0.8**
SMAQMD Threshold of Significance	N/A	85	80	82	14.6	15
Threshold Exceeded?	N/A	No	No	No	No	No

Notes: lbs/day = pounds per day; N/A = not applicable; NO_X = nitrogen oxides; PM_{10} = particulate matter less than 10 micrometers in diameter; $PM_{2.5}$ = particulate matter less than 2.5 micrometers in diameter; ROG = reactive organic gases; SMAQMD = Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District; SP = Specific Plan; tons/year = tons per year

1 PM emissions include implementation of fugitive dust control measures listed as BMPs; therefore, this analysis utilized the non-zero SMAQMD recommended PM significance threshold.

Source: See Appendix AQ-1 for detailed construction assumptions and calculations.

As shown in Table AQ-6, with implementation of Mitigation Measures AQ-1a and AQ-1b, NO_X emissions associated with project construction would be below the SMAQMD threshold of significance. Therefore, with implementation of Mitigation Measures AQ-1a and AQ-1b, this impact for construction would be **less than significant**.

IMPACT AQ-2: GENERATE LONG-TERM OPERATIONAL EMISSIONS OF CRITERIA POLLUTANTS AND PRECURSORS (ROG, NO_X, PM_{10}, AND $PM_{2.5}$) THAT EXCEED STANDARDS

Once construction is completed, additional pollutants would be emitted through the use and operation of new development within the proposed Specific Plan Area. Such emissions sources would include motor vehicle trips to and from the site; fuel combustion from landscape maintenance equipment; natural gas combustion emissions from on-site natural gas use; evaporative emissions of ROG associated with the use of consumer products; and evaporative emissions of ROG resulting from the intermittent re-application of architectural coatings.

While construction emissions are considered short-term and temporary, operational emissions are considered long-term and occur for the lifetime of the proposed Specific Plan. Long-term operational emissions were modeled using CalEEMod. As discussed in the "Methodology" section above, the net increase in operational emissions associated with new development that would occur under the proposed Specific Plan was determined based on subtracting existing operational emissions from operational emissions associated with implementation of the proposed Specific Plan. The resultant net long-term operational emissions estimates are shown in Table AQ-6.

It should be noted that development under the proposed Specific Plan focuses on infill development and redevelopment, which can result in quantifiable emission reductions. A study by the EPA demonstrated that shifting 5 to 10 percent of a region's homes and jobs to infill locations was estimated to produce 2 to 5 percent less vehicle travel and a 3 to 8 percent reduction in emissions (EPA 2007). As shown in Table AQ-5 below, mobile source emissions are the most important source of total criteria air pollutant emissions. Development in areas where travel is more efficient (shorter trip distances, less reliance on private automobile travel) can help to reduce air pollutant emissions, particularly if demand for development in more efficient areas can supplant demand for development that would otherwise go to the fringes of the county that are less efficient. SACOG's Low VMT Screening Maps indicate that the Specific Plan Area is located within areas of relatively low vehicle miles traveled compared to the regional average. Based on SACOG's residential VMT per capita screening map, most of the existing Specific Plan Area falls within the 0 to 50 percent of regional average residential VMT per capita category, with the exception of the southern portion of the Specific Plan Area located between Roseville Road, Interstate 80, and Jetway Road. Similarly, SACOG's employment-based screening map shows that most of the Specific Plan Area is within approximately 85 percent of the regional average work VMT per employee, with an area between Elkhorn Boulevard and I Street falling within approximately 50 percent of the regional average (SACOG 2025b).

Nonetheless, the precise benefits in terms of mass emissions is difficult to quantify and therefore Table AQ-5 demonstrates the net change that is primarily reflective of the net increase in building development and may not entirely account for the increased efficiency of such development nor regional benefits in co-locating a range of housing options with employment opportunities, neighborhood-serving services, and transit options.

Similar to construction, in order to support the use of SMAQMD's non-zero thresholds of significance for operational PM emissions, BMPs must be implemented to reduce operational PM emissions from land use development projects. As identified by SMAQMD, the operational BMPs are generally required by existing regulations, and include compliance with SMAQMD rules that control operational PM and NO_X[5] emissions, compliance with mandatory measures in the California Building Energy Efficiency Standards and California Green Building Standards Code, and compliance with anti-idling regulations. Because these are regulatory requirements, development anticipated under the proposed Specific Plan would be required to comply with the requirements identified by SMAQMD as BMPs. Therefore, this analysis utilized the non-zero SMAQMD-recommended PM significance thresholds.

[5] Note that NOx emissions are considered PM precursors within SMAQMD and, therefore, SMAQMD rules that are applicable to NOx are also be considered PM BMPs.

Table AQ-6: Summary of Operational Emissions of Criteria Air Pollutants and Precursors

Emissions Source	ROG (lbs/day)	NO_X (lbs/day)	PM_{10} [1] (lbs/day)	$PM_{2.5}$ [1] (lbs/day)	PM_{10} [1] (tons/year)	$PM_{2.5}$ [1] (tons/year)
Baseline Operational Emissions						
Mobile	*445.41*	*304.40*	*960.05*	*245.70*	*170.82*	*43.74*
Area	*164.68*	*2.16*	*0.39*	*0.30*	*0.05*	*0.04*
Energy	*1.35*	*24.37*	*1.86*	*1.86*	*0.34*	*0.34*
Total Baseline Operational Emissions	***611.44***	***330.92***	***962.31***	***247.86***	***171.20***	***44.12***
Project Operational Emissions						
Mobile	*591.70*	*398.91*	*1,234.26*	*315.89*	*219.60*	*56.24*
Area	*404.30*	*6.39*	*0.67*	*0.50*	*0.08*	*0.06*
Energy	*2.97*	*52.27*	*4.10*	*4.10*	*0.75*	*0.75*
Total Operational Emissions	***998.97***	***457.57***	***1,239.03***	***320.49***	***220.43***	***57.05***
Total Net Operational Emissions	**387.54**	**126.65**	**276.72**	**72.64**	**49.23**	**12.93**
SMAQMD Threshold of Significance	65	65	80	82	14.6	15
Threshold Exceeded?	**Yes**	**Yes**	**Yes**	No	**Yes**	No

Notes:

BMP = best management practices; lbs/day = pounds per day; NO_X = nitrogen oxides; PM = particulate matter; PM_{10} = particulate matter less than 10 micrometers in diameter; $PM_{2.5}$ = particulate matter less than 2.5 micrometers in diameter; ROG = reactive organic gases; SMAQMD = Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District; tons/year = tons per year

[1] Development under the proposed Specific Plan would be subject to regulations identified by SMAQMD as BMPs to reduce operational PM emissions; therefore, this analysis utilized the non-zero SMAQMD recommended PM significance threshold.

Source: See Appendix AQ-1 for detailed construction assumptions and calculations.

These emissions are considered to be a conservative estimate as development is subject to market conditions, and emissions per unit of activity would decrease in future years as building energy standards continue to become more stringent, energy sources become more dependent upon renewable sources, vehicle fleets turnover with new vehicles that meet more rigorous emissions control regulations and would be electrified over time, and consumer products (area sources) are manufactured to meet more stringent ROG requirements. Mobile source emissions represent the primary source of operational emissions, which reflect regional growth. Area source emissions associated with consumer products, architectural coatings, and landscaping equipment are also a substantial contributor to ROG emissions. Area source ROG emissions are considered

to be conservative, as they are based on historical data[6], and are anticipated to be reduced over time through implementation of CARB programs and regulations, such as the Consumer Products Regulations.

As described above, infill development has been shown to demonstrate reductions in vehicle travel and associated emissions. By locating housing near existing jobs and services, the proposed Specific Plan results in lower emissions than if the same amount of development occurred in a less travel efficient (higher VMT rate) part of the county. As described in Impact AQ-5, regional plans related to air quality planning acknowledge that regional growth will occur and include strategies and programs that prioritize and promote development that fosters growth in a land-efficient manner (such as compact, infill development). County policy mirrors this approach, particularly in policies such as Policy LU-68 and LU-90:

- **LU-68**. Give the highest priority for public funding to projects that facilitate and encourage infill, reuse, redevelopment and rehabilitation, mixed-use development, particularly in Environmental Justice Communities, and that will result in per-person vehicle miles traveled lower than the County average, and the lowest priority for projects that do not comply with public facilities Master Plan phasing sequences.
- **LU-90**. Focus investment of County resources in commercial corridors to facilitate improvements to streetscapes, sidewalks, landscaping, undergrounding of utilities, and other infrastructure and public amenities to encourage and stimulate private investment.

These policies and similar General Plan policies establish that the County will prioritize resources and County investments in facilitating infill development in places such as the Specific Plan Area that will reduce travel demand and stimulate new private investment. The proposed Specific Plan implements this policy approach.

The proposed Specific Plan would implement land-efficient, compact, infill, mixed-use development that would locate residents near jobs and retail amenities with direct and convenient pedestrian and bicycle access, thereby reducing the need for motor vehicle travel and achieving associated transportation efficiencies.

Nonetheless, as shown in Table AQ-6, emissions associated with long-term operation of the proposed Specific Plan buildout would exceed SMAQMD thresholds of significance for ROG, NO_X, and PM_{10}. It is important to note that the SMAQMD-recommended operational thresholds are generally geared towards individual land use development projects, which would represent a much smaller scale of development than as presented in this analysis for the whole of new development and redevelopment within this 704-acre Specific Plan Area. It is anticipated that emissions estimated on a plan level such as the proposed Specific Plan would be higher than those of an individual land use development project. At this time, SMAQMD has not developed recommended thresholds of

[6] Consumer products, which represent the greatest contributor to operational area source ROG emissions for the proposed Specific Plan, are estimated in CalEEMod based on the 2008 CARB Consumer Product Emission Inventory.

significance applicable to the larger scale of development anticipated under a plan-level analysis. Therefore, in the absence of thresholds developed for a plan-level analysis, operation of the proposed Specific Plan is evaluated against the individual project thresholds and would exceed such thresholds. As such, operation of the proposed Specific Plan would result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of criteria air pollutants for which the region is nonattainment, and this impact would be **significant**.

Mitigation Measures

CC-1: Implement All-Electric Ready Design in New Residential and Nonresidential Development (see Impact CC-1 in Chapter 6, "Climate Change")

AQ-2: Use Low VOC Paint in County-Operated Facilities

> For County-operated facilities, the County shall require the use of super-compliant volatile organic compound (VOC) paints that meet a VOC standard of less than 10 grams per liter.

Significance after Mitigation

Long-term operation of the proposed Specific Plan would result in ROG, NO_X, and PM_{10} emissions that would exceed the SMAQMD-recommended thresholds of significance, as shown in Table AQ-6. Implementation of Mitigation Measure AQ-2 would reduce ROG emissions through use of low-VOC paints in County-operated facilities. Additionally, while primarily targeted at reducing GHG emissions, Mitigation Measure CC-1 (see Chapter 6, Climate Change), would also reduce operational emissions of ROG and NO_X by requiring residential and non-residential development to be designed and constructed as all-electric with the necessary wiring and electrical capacity, which would reduce emissions in the Specific Plan Area over time as natural gas appliances are replaced with electric appliances. The timing and scale at which application of low-VOC paints in County-operated facilities and installation of electric appliances would occur is speculative; therefore, the emissions reductions associated with implementation of Mitigation Measures AQ-2 and CC-1 are not quantified.

As detailed above, by locating housing near existing jobs and services, the proposed Specific Plan results in lower emissions than if the same amount of development occurred in a less travel efficient part of the county. Additionally, the SMAQMD-recommended operational thresholds are generally geared towards individual land use development projects and at this time, SMAQMD has not developed recommended thresholds of significance applicable to the larger scale of development anticipated under a plan-level analysis. Therefore, in the absence of thresholds developed for a plan-level analysis, operation of the proposed Specific Plan is evaluated against the individual project thresholds and would exceed such thresholds, as shown in Table AQ-6. There is no additional feasible mitigation available that would avoid this impact. The operational impact would be **significant and unavoidable**.

IMPACT AQ-3: EXPOSE SENSITIVE RECEPTORS TO SUBSTANTIAL MOBILE-SOURCE CO CONCENTRATIONS

CO is a mobile-source pollutant of localized concern. Under specific meteorological conditions, continuous engine exhaust may result in elevated localized CO concentrations near roadways and/or intersections, or "hot spots." The SMAQMD CEQA Guidance acknowledges that land use development projects do not typically have the potential to result in localized concentrations of criteria air pollutants that expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations, in part, because the predominant source of these pollutants is typically in the form of mobile-source exhaust from vehicle trips that occur throughout a network of roads and are not concentrated in a single location.

Emissions and ambient concentrations of CO have decreased substantially throughout California in the past three decades. The national statewide CO standard is attained statewide in California, and an exceedance of NAAQS or CAAQS in the region was last recorded in 1993. This is primarily attributable to requirements for cleaner vehicle emissions. CO hot spots are typically observed at heavily congested roadway intersections where a substantial number of gasoline-powered vehicles idle for prolonged durations throughout the day. Construction sites are less likely to result in localized CO hot spots due to the nature of construction activities, which normally utilize diesel-powered equipment for intermittent or short durations.

While ambient CO concentrations in the region have not exceeded the NAAQS or CAAQS in many years, localized CO concentrations could still occur, particularly at intersections of high-volume roadways. The proposed Specific Plan would not result in prolonged idling throughout the day, nor contribute substantially to regionally high-volume, congested roadways. In addition, the surrounding intersections at which vehicle trips may increase are generally not locations of typically limited vertical and/or horizontal of ambient air (e.g., tunnel, parking garage, bridge underpass, natural or urban street canyon, below-grade roadways), and therefore would not likely be subject to elevated concentrations of CO. Note that while the SMAQMD CEQA Guidelines previously contained screening criteria to determine whether project impacts of localized CO concentrations were less than significant, this has been removed, and the CEQA guidance states: *"As of June 1, 2018, the US EPA documented that transportation conformity requirements no longer apply for CO in the Sacramento region. Sacramento has demonstrated 20 years of maintenance of the federal 8-hour CO standard."* (SMAQMD 2021). While the SMAQMD CEQA Guidelines do not have a numerical threshold for the level of vehicles at which a CO hotspot would occur, some air districts within northern California have established screening levels, including the Bay Area Air District (. As a point of reference, guidance from the Bay Area Air District describes that if project-generated traffic would not increase traffic volumes at affected intersections to more than 44,000 vehicles per hour, the project would result in less-than-significant operational impacts related to CO emissions (Bay Area Air District 2022). The Bay Area Air District screening level uses intersection volume when considering CO emissions because intersections are susceptible to creating CO hotspots due to the frequency of vehicles idling when stopped. Based on the transportation analysis conducted in support of this EIR, the maximum average daily traffic within the Specific Plan Area with implementation of the proposed Specific Plan

would be approximately 30,180; therefore, hourly traffic at affected intersections throughout the Specific Plan Area would be much lower than this representative screening level. Because the maximum average daily traffic along any one roadway segment would not exceed the screening level of 44,000 vehicles per hour at any one intersection, in addition to improved vehicle emissions standards for CO and the lack of conditions that would limit dispersion of CO emissions from vehicle exhaust, the proposed Specific Plan would not violate air quality standards for CO nor have the potential to result in CO hotspots. Therefore, this impact is **less than significant.**

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required.

Impact AQ-4: Expose Sensitive Receptors to Substantial Pollutant Concentrations

As detailed in "Environmental Setting," under "Sensitive Receptors," the Specific Plan Area is generally surrounded by residential, commercial, retail, and industrial land uses. Sensitive land uses in the vicinity include residences, schools, and a hospital. Residential uses are immediately adjacent to the proposed Specific Plan Area, with the nearest residence located approximately 30 feet[7] from a parcel anticipated for development under the proposed Specific Plan. Schools in the vicinity of the proposed Specific Plan Area include Joyce Middle School, Sierra View Elementary School, Village Elementary School, and Oakdale Elementary School. The nearest school to the proposed Specific Plan Area is Joyce Middle School, located on Watt Avenue near Don Julio Boulevard immediately adjacent to the proposed Specific Plan Area and approximately 40 feet from a parcel anticipated for development under the proposed Specific Plan. McClellan Veterans Administration Clinic is located near the intersection of Palm Street and Dudley Boulevard, approximately 875 feet east of the proposed Specific Plan Area.

Asbestos and Lead-Based Paint

Due to the age of some of the on-site structures and underground pipelines, asbestos and lead-based paint could be encountered during Specific Plan-related demolition activities. Asbestos could be present in sprayed fireproofing, cement plaster finishes, floor tiles and adhesives, pipe insulation, and roofing materials, and underground transite and concrete pipes. Nearby sensitive receptors could potentially be exposed to asbestos-containing materials if not properly handled and disposed of. However, for future development projects under the Specific Plan involving demolition, project applicants must comply with SMAQMD Rule 902, Asbestos, which requires that an asbestos survey be conducted by a Certified Asbestos Consultant, and an Asbestos Renovation/Demolition Survey & Notification Form be completed by the consultant and submitted to SMAQMD. Asbestos-containing materials would be removed and properly disposed of by a licensed asbestos abatement contractor as required by SMAQMD, and all asbestos-related work would comply with requirements included in the CCR, Title 8, Sections 1529, 1532, and 341.6 through 341.14. Furthermore, contractors handling the

[7] As measured from the residential structure to the boundary of the parcel within the Specific Plan Area.

demolition of structures within the Specific Plan Area that have more than 100 square feet or 100 lineal feet of lead-based paint are required to comply with 8 CCR Section 1532.1 (Cal/OSHA's Lead in Construction Standard), which address the demolition, removal, cleanup, transportation, storage, and disposal of lead-containing material, as well as proper personal protective equipment for construction personnel. Compliance with these regulations would result in safe handling, removal, and disposal of asbestos-containing materials and lead-based paint. Therefore, impacts would be **less than significant**.

TAC Emissions – Construction

The primary TAC of concern generated during construction activities is DPM. Construction would generate DPM emissions from the use of off-road diesel-powered equipment required for site grading and excavation, paving, and other construction activities. These activities may expose nearby receptors to TACs, including surrounding residents in adjacent areas and nearby schools.

Health risk is a function of the concentration of contaminants in the environment and the duration of exposure to those contaminants. Even in intensive phases of construction, there would not be substantial pollutant concentrations, with the potential exception of the immediate vicinity of the construction site. Concentrations of mobile-source DPM emissions are typically reduced by approximately 70 percent at a distance of around 500 feet (CARB 2005). As a currently developed area and because the proposed Specific Plan would include new residential development, construction emissions could expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations in scenarios such as when proposed construction is proximate to existing or new sensitive receptors within the Specific Plan Area. Construction activities associated with transportation and infrastructure improvements would be primarily linear construction, of relatively small scale, and anticipated to occur intermittently over an approximate 5-year duration. Therefore, construction activities associated with linear transportation and infrastructure improvements would not be concentrated in any one location for an extended duration and activities potentially occurring proximate to any one sensitive receptor would be temporary and for only a discrete portion of the total duration of construction activities.

The dose to which receptors are exposed is the primary factor used to determine health risk. Dose is a function of the concentration of a substance in the environment and the extent to which a person is exposed to the substance. As described above, the primary TAC of concern generated during construction activities is DPM. For this analysis, DPM is assumed to be equivalent to exhaust-generated $PM_{2.5}$, which is a subset of the totals presented in Table AQ-4 and Table AQ-5. Unmitigated $PM_{2.5}$ emissions (inclusive of both fugitive dust and exhaust emissions) associated with onsite construction and transportation and infrastructure improvements would be a maximum of 13 pounds per day and 2 pounds per day, respectively (Table AQ-4). The maximum daily emissions are conservative estimates which assume a high-intensity level of development (i.e., 20 percent of the total Specific Plan Area and transportation and infrastructure improvements to be built out within a single year), and maximum overlap of construction phases, which would typically not occur in the same geographic proximity.

The risks estimated for an exposed individual are higher if a fixed exposure occurs over a longer period of time. Health effects from TACs are often described in terms of individual cancer risk, which is based on a 30-year lifetime exposure to TACs (OEHHA 2015). Construction of future development in the Specific Plan Area would result in intermittent, temporary emissions of DPM primarily from the exhaust of construction equipment used on-site throughout areas affected by construction under the proposed Specific Plan and along linear transportation and infrastructure improvements. While diesel-powered trucks would likely support material haul and delivery during construction, these activities would be associated with trips to and from construction sites and would not be concentrated in any one location for an extended period of time. As a result, the exposure of sensitive receptors to construction DPM emissions would be intermittent and temporary in nature and sensitive receptors in any one location would not be exposed to substantial emissions for the entire duration of construction activities.

It is important to note that emissions from construction equipment would be reduced over the planning horizon through 2050 through implementation of federal and state regulations adopted for the purposes of reducing emissions from heavy-duty diesel-fueled construction equipment. For example, California's In-Use Off-Road Diesel-Fueled Fleets Regulation was adopted to reduce PM and NO_X emissions from existing off-road diesel-fueled equipment. Recent amendments to the regulation in 2022 are estimated to reduce statewide emissions from off-road diesel-fueled vehicles by approximately 2,700 tons of PM between 2024 and 2038 compared to the previous version of the regulation as a baseline. Additionally, California's Truck and Bus Regulation requires heavy-duty diesel vehicles to reduce exhaust TAC emissions by phasing out older model year engines and upgrading to newer model year engines. As construction equipment continues to turnover and/or be retrofitted over time, DPM emissions associated with construction will continue to decrease.

Construction activities associated with transportation and infrastructure improvements would occur linearly and would not result in construction activities concentrated in one location for extended periods of time. Because of the intermittent and temporary nature of construction activities at any given location, and the dispersive properties of TACs, temporary construction activities associated with transportation and infrastructure improvements would not expose sensitive receptors to substantial TAC concentrations. Therefore, this impact would be **less than significant**.

On-site construction may be more focused in one location for any individual project and in certain areas of the proposed Specific Plan, may occur proximate to sensitive receptors, particularly in the Mixed-Use Neighborhood Zone. Much of the development under the proposed Specific Plan would be reuse of underutilized and vacant properties and potential new public and open space areas, as well as supporting streetscape improvements and new water, sewer, and drainage facilities. Such projects are not anticipated to result in substantial construction that would occur for extended durations in any given location. However, such infill development may include demolition, earth work, and use of diesel-powered construction equipment proximate to existing and future sensitive receptors. Therefore, development under the proposed Specific Plan could

expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations and this impact would be **potentially significant.**

TACs Emissions– Operations

Existing development within the Specific Plan Area is primarily commercial, with light industrial uses in the Employment Flex zone. Commercial uses represent a range of shopping and services arranged in strip centers and individual buildings extending along Watt Avenue. Increases in operational TAC emissions at existing industrial land uses is not anticipated under the proposed Specific Plan, as the proposed Specific Plan is not intended to target or promote expansion of such facilities. Therefore, this analysis focuses on the potential for new development and redevelopment to result in new sources of operational TAC emissions.

New development and redevelopment anticipated under the proposed Specific Plan would include a variety of residential, commercial, and retail uses. Residential land uses do not typically generate substantial TAC emissions. The proposed land use and urban design framework for the proposed Specific Plan has been intentionally developed to promote compact residential, commercial, and mixed-use development. Proposed zoning districts of the proposed Specific Plan include: Mixed-Use Corridor, which supports a concentration of housing, services, and employment and includes a reuse of existing buildings and incremental redevelopment of underutilized sites; Mixed-Use Neighborhood that accommodates a mix of housing types and limited compatible services such as offices and neighborhood-servicing services, where permitted, and emphasizes land use compatibility; and Employment Flex, which supports a range of light industrial, logistics, and office functions, and includes objective standards to apply compatibility tools (e.g., buffering, placement of service areas away from sensitive edges, and operational screening).

Land uses that are more likely to generate substantial TAC emissions include industrial land uses that involve stationary sources, manufacturing processes and large-scale commercial, warehousing, logistics, or other uses that could potentially attract heavy truck traffic. The County does not anticipate new development of large-scale commercial, warehousing, logistics, or other uses that could potentially attract heavy truck traffic under the proposed Specific Plan. Any such development under the proposed Specific Plan is limited to the Employment Flex Zone, and this area is mostly built out, and would not therefore accommodate new large-scale uses that could generate substantial heavy truck traffic. Zoning under the proposed Specific Plan concentrates and generally separates the Employment Flex zoning from Mixed-Use Corridor and Mixed-Use Neighborhood zoning, in which residential uses would be located. In addition, proposed Specific Plan design standards would support the separation of potentially substantial pollutant sources, such as stationary sources, on-site diesel equipment, and diesel-powered truck loading associated with Employment Flex zone allowable uses from sensitive land uses. Nonetheless, it is possible that uses developed in the Specific Plan Area, particularly within the Employment Flex zone, could generate substantial TAC emissions as a result of long-term operations.

CARB developed the *Air Quality and Land Use Handbook: A Community Health Perspective* (CARB 2005) to provide guidance on land use compatibility associated with sources of TACs. Such TAC sources include freeways and high-traffic roads, commercial distribution centers, rail yards, refineries, dry cleaners, gasoline stations, and industrial facilities. The handbook is not a law or adopted policy but offers advisory recommendations for the siting of sensitive receptors near uses associated with TACs for consideration in land use planning. The handbook indicates that land use agencies must balance other considerations, including housing and transportation needs, economic development priorities, and other quality of life issues.

The potentially relevant siting recommendations include:

- Avoid siting new sensitive land uses within 500 feet of a freeway, urban roads carrying 100,000 vehicles per day, or rural roads carrying 50,000 vehicles per day.
- Avoid siting new sensitive land uses within 1,000 feet of a distribution center (that accommodates more than 100 trucks per day, more than 40 trucks with operating transportation refrigeration units [TRUs]) per day, or where TRU unit operations exceed 300 hours per week).
- Avoid siting new sensitive land uses within 300 feet of a large gasoline station (defined as a facility with a throughput of 3.6 million gallons per year or greater). A 50-foot separation is recommended for typical gasoline dispensing facilities.
- Avoid siting new sensitive land uses within 300 feet of any dry-cleaning operation using perchloroethylene. For operations with two or more machines, provide 500 feet. For operations with three or more machines, consult the local air district. Do not site new sensitive land uses in the same building with dry-cleaning operations that use perchloroethylene.

With consideration of more recent scientific analysis, CARB published a 2017 *Technical Advisory: Strategies to Reduce Air Pollution Exposure Near High-Volume Roadways (Technical Advisory);* with careful evaluation of exposure, health risks, and affirmative steps to reduce risk, CARB outlines strategies that would allow infill development, mixed use, higher density, transit-oriented development, and/or other development types that benefit regional air quality to be compatible with protecting the health of individuals at the neighborhood level. There are many recognized benefits of compact development, such as promotion of physical activity, support of transit development and other VMT reducing design features, and facilitation of community connectivity. To attain these benefits, among others, while minimizing potential health risks due to TAC exposure, CARB's *Technical Advisory* provides a compilation of CARB-recommended strategies to reduce exposure to traffic-related pollution that are not exclusively based on maintaining minimum distances between a source and receptor.

As described above, proposed Specific Plan design standards would support the separation of potentially substantial pollutant sources from sensitive land uses. Additionally, the proposed Specific Plan zoning and allowable uses were developed with these recommendations in mind related to the siting of specific uses near sensitive receptors. There are no high-volume roads within the Specific Plan Area that meet the

definitions presented above. Traffic counts from the Sacramento County Open Data Portal indicate that from 2020-2024, the maximum 24-hour traffic count along Watt Avenue at various intersections throughout the Specific Plan Area ranged from approximately 15,000 to 41,000 vehicles. Traffic counts for Roseville Road at the intersection with Watt Avenue similarly indicate vehicle volumes below the criteria presented above, with maximum 24-hour traffic counts ranging from approximately 15,000 to 21,000 vehicles (Sacramento County 2025). Additionally, the proposed Specific Plan does not propose development within 500 feet of a freeway. New development within the proposed Specific Plan would not be anticipated to include distribution centers, gasoline stations, or dry cleaning operations that would meet the criteria outlined above, or similar TAC-generating land uses. Additionally, gasoline stations are not an allowable use under the proposed Specific Plan. Furthermore, diesel-fueled vehicles used at commercial trucking facilities or delivery/distribution areas would be subject to CARB idling limitations, thereby limiting the generation of substantial DPM concentrations. Additionally, as described above for construction-related TAC exposures, concentrations of mobile DPM emissions disperse rapidly and are typically reduced by approximately 70 percent at a distance of around 500 feet (CARB 2005). Emissions of TACs from other land uses similarly disperse and show reduced risk at distances from the source; pollutant concentrations from distribution centers are reduced by an estimated 80 percent at a distance of approximately 1,000 feet and health risks from dry cleaners with two or more machines using perchloroethylene were shown to decrease by over 85 percent at a distance of 500 feet (CARB 2005). Since the publishing of CARB's *Air Quality and Land Use Handbook,* subsequent regulations have been adopted that include increasingly stringent requirements for sources of TACs. For example, the Dry Cleaning Airborne Toxic Control Measure (ATCM), adopted in December 2007, prohibited the installation of new perchloroethylene dry cleaning machines beginning on January 1, 2008, and required removal of all remaining perchloroethylene machines by January 1, 2023. Sacramento County General Plan Policy AQ-3 would reduce potential operational impacts to sensitive receptors by requiring buffers and/or other appropriate exposure reduction measures to be established on a project-by-project basis to provide for protection of sensitive receptors from sources of air pollution.

It is possible that future commercial development could include stationary sources of TACs, such as diesel-fueled backup generators. These types of stationary sources, in addition to any other stationary sources that may emit TACs, would be subject to SMAQMD permitting requirements, rules, and regulations, including but not limited to Rule 201, General Permit Requirements, and Rule 202, New Source Review. Permits may be granted to these operations if they are constructed and operated in accordance with applicable regulations, including new-source review standards and air toxics control measures, which would ensure emissions do not exceed applicable standards and limits and do not result in significant impacts.

These existing rules and regulations, General Plan policies, and proposed Specific Plan land use planning and design standards would reduce exposure of sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations by reviewing individual development projects for potential TAC emissions and applying strategies to reduce potential impacts. While development of TAC-generating land uses is not anticipated under the proposed Specific

Plan, uses such as manufacturing and assembly, warehousing and logistics, and research and development would be allowed within the Employment Flex Zone. Therefore, because potential operational sources of TACs could occur under the proposed Specific Plan, it is conservatively assumed that certain long-term operational activities under the proposed Specific Plan could expose sensitive receptors to substantial TAC concentrations. Therefore, this impact is considered **potentially significant**.

MITIGATION MEASURES

CONSTRUCTION-RELATED TACS:

AQ-1a: Implement SMAQMD's Basic Construction Emission Control Practices (see Impact AQ-1).

AQ-1b: Reduce Off-Road Equipment Exhaust-Related Emissions (see Impact AQ-1)

AQ-4a: Use Zero-Emission Construction Equipment Where Commercially Available

This measure applies to construction activities within the Specific Plan Area that (1) are within 300 feet of the nearest property line where sensitive receptors (defined as residences, schools, daycare centers, parks and playgrounds, and medical facilities) are located, (2) would be greater than or equal to 3 acres, and (3) have an existing electrical supply to the construction site. For these circumstances, the County will require construction contractor(s) to use zero-emission construction equipment where commercially available. For the purposes of this measure, zero-emission equipment is considered commercially available if the equipment is capable of serving the intended purpose and is included in one of the below equipment inventories:

- California Air Resources Board (CARB) Advanced Clean Equipment List;
- CARB Clean Off-Road Equipment Voucher Incentive Project catalog; or
- Global Commercial Vehicle Drive to Zero Off-Road Zero-Emission Technology Inventory (ZETI) inventory.

The County shall be responsible for the final determination of commercial availability, based on all the facts and circumstances at the time the determination is made. In addition to the use of commercially available zero-emission construction equipment, all portable engines, such as generators, shall be electric. If grid electricity is not available, propane or natural gas generators shall be used.

An exemption from these requirements may be granted by the County if the County documents that equipment required under this measure is not reasonably available. Before an exemption may be considered by the County, the applicant shall be required to demonstrate that two construction fleet owners/operators in

Sacramento County were contacted and that those owners/operators confirmed electric equipment could not be located within Sacramento County.

AQ-4b: Further Reduce Potential Construction-Related Health Effects for Development within 300 Feet of Sensitive Receptors

This measure applies to construction activities within the Specific Plan Area that would include (1) construction of new development on vacant parcels, or (2) redevelopment of existing parcels that require demolition and grading activities. If such construction activities would require the use of diesel-fueled construction equipment within 300 feet of the nearest property line where sensitive receptors (defined as residences, schools, daycare centers, parks and playgrounds, and medical facilities) may be located and would be greater than or equal to 3 acres, the County shall require the construction contractor(s) to implement the below actions to reduce potential construction-related health risks:

- Establish staging areas for the construction equipment that are as far as possible from sensitive receptors;
- Use electric-powered equipment in accordance with Mitigation Measure AQ-4a; and
- For non-electric equipment, use Tier 4 Final or better equipment.

Project applicants shall provide documentation demonstrating compliance with the above actions prior to approval of subsequent Planning reviews (i.e., discretionary entitlements or non-discretionary design reviews).

If a project cannot implement the above actions, a project applicant shall prepare a site-specific construction health risk assessment, with mitigation, if necessary, to demonstrate compliance with applicable SMAQMD-recommended thresholds of significance. This assessment shall be provided to the County accompanying any application for subsequent Planning reviews (i.e., discretionary entitlements or non-discretionary design reviews). Site-specific analysis may include screening-level analysis, dispersion modeling, and/or a health risk assessment, consistent with applicable guidance from the SMAQMD. Analyses shall take into account regulatory requirements for proposed uses. If the SMAQMD does not have applicable thresholds at the time of this analysis, the thresholds will be an increased cancer risk of 10.0 in a million or more attributable to the project, and an increased non-cancer risk of 1.0 Hazard Index (chronic or acute) or more attributable to the project. If the project would exceed applicable thresholds recommended by the SMAQMD, mitigation will be required to reduce the impact to a less-than-significant level. The County will require the project applicant(s) to identify and implement feasible mitigation measures to reduce any potentially significant effect and communicate with SMAQMD to identify measures to reduce exposure of sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations to levels consistent with thresholds recommended by the SMAQMD applicable at the time

the project is proposed. Agreed upon feasible mitigation actions shall be documented as a project condition of approval and incorporated on applicable construction demolition and grading plans.

OPERATIONAL-RELATED TACS:

AQ-4c: Avoid Exposure of Sensitive Receptors to Substantial Pollutant Concentrations

The County of Sacramento shall require projects that would be located within 300 feet of the nearest property line where sensitive receptors (defined as residences, schools, daycare centers, parks and playgrounds, and medical facilities) are located and that could result in substantial operational TAC emissions directly or indirectly, such as by generating substantial truck trips (defined as 25 diesel-powered trucks or 50 one-way diesel-powered truck trips, with no more than 40 one-way truck trips having diesel-powered transportation refrigeration units, per day for any individual operations, or individual operations with a building gross floor area greater than 80,000 square feet) associated with commercial trucking facilities, delivery/distribution areas, uses that could attract heavy duty truck traffic, or heavy industrial uses that would expose sensitive receptors to substantial TAC concentrations (e.g., from stationary sources), to implement the below actions to reduce potential operational-related health risks, as applicable:

- Proposed commercial and industrial land uses that have the potential to emit TACs or host TAC-generating activity shall be located as far away as possible from existing and proposed sensitive receptors;
- Commercial facilities with truck loading areas shall be designed such that buildings or walls shield locations of truck activity from nearby residences or other sensitive land uses;
- Commercial facilities with truck loading areas that accommodate more than 100 trucks per day, or 40 trucks equipped with transportation refrigeration units (TRUs), shall be located farther than 1,000 feet away from sensitive receptors;
- Truck loading areas at proposed new and redeveloped commercial facilities shall include only electric hook-ups;
- Commercial facilities shall include on-site charging for electric on-site equipment;
- On-site cargo and material handling equipment shall be required to be all-electric for proposed new commercial and industrial businesses;
- Incorporate exhaust emission controls on mobile and/or stationary sources (e.g., filters, oxidizers); and

- Signs shall be posted at all loading docks and truck loading areas which indicate that diesel powered delivery trucks must be shut off when not in use for longer than 5 minutes on the premises to reduce idling emissions of DPM.

Project applicants shall provide documentation demonstrating compliance with the above actions prior to approval of subsequent Planning reviews (i.e., discretionary entitlements or non-discretionary design reviews).

If a project that could emit substantial operational TAC emissions, as defined above based on truck trips and building gross floor area, cannot implement the above actions, the project applicant shall prepare a project-specific operational health risk assessment, with TAC emissions reduction strategies implemented, if necessary, to demonstrate compliance with applicable SMAQMD-recommended thresholds of significance. This assessment shall be provided to the County accompanying any application for subsequent Planning reviews (i.e., discretionary entitlements or non-discretionary design reviews). Site-specific analysis may include screen level analysis, dispersion modeling, and/or a health risk assessment, consistent with applicable guidance from the SMAQMD. Analyses shall take into account regulatory requirements for proposed uses. If the SMAQMD does not have applicable thresholds at the time of this analysis, the thresholds will be an increased cancer risk of 10.0 in a million or more attributable to the project, and an increased non-cancer risk of 1.0 Hazard Index (chronic or acute) or more attributable to the project. If the project would exceed applicable thresholds recommended by the SMAQMD, TAC emissions reduction strategies will be required to reduce the impact to below this threshold. The County will require the project applicant(s) to identify and implement TAC emissions reduction strategies and communicate with SMAQMD to identify TAC emissions reduction strategies demonstrated to reduce exposure of sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations to levels consistent with thresholds recommended by the SMAQMD applicable at the time the project is proposed. TAC emissions reduction strategies shall be documented as a project condition of approval.

Significance after Mitigation

Construction

Implementation of Mitigation Measures AQ-1a, AQ-1b, AQ-4a, and AQ-4b would result in reduced TAC emissions from construction-related activities associated with the proposed Specific Plan. Implementation of Mitigation Measures AQ-1a and AQ-1b would limit the idling time for diesel powered construction equipment to two minutes and require construction equipment over 50 horsepower to meet Tier 4 Final or cleaner engine emission standards. The use of Tier 4 Final equipment as required by Mitigation Measure AQ-1b would reduce NO_X and $PM_{2.5}$ exhaust emissions by 67 percent and 80 percent, respectively. With implementation of Mitigation Measures AQ-1a, AQ-1b, potential TAC emissions from construction-related activities, particularly DPM, would be further reduced as shown in Table AQ-5, correlating to a reduction in potential exposure of sensitive receptors to TAC emissions during construction. Implementation of Mitigation Measures AQ-4a and AQ-4b would require future projects of greater than 3 acres that would include

construction activities within 300 feet of sensitive receptors to incorporate actions that would further reduce potential exposure of sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations, such as requiring the use of zero-emission construction equipment where commercially available, the establishment of staging areas as far from sensitive receptors as possible, and the use of Tier 4 Final equipment where non-electric equipment is proposed to be used.

Screening tables developed by the Bay Area Air District based on conservative construction assumptions demonstrate that residential and commercial construction projects would result in less-than-significant health risks at distances of approximately 100 meters (330 feet) for project sites smaller than approximately 3 acres (Bay Area Air District 2010). In the event that a project is not able to incorporate the above outlined actions, Mitigation Measure AQ-4b would require a project-specific analysis and implementation of TAC emissions reduction strategies to ensure that sensitive receptors are not exposed to substantial pollutant concentrations. If future projects are conditioned to demonstrate consistency with the actions outlined above, which are demonstrated to substantially reduce exposure to TAC emissions, consistent with the performance standards identified above, this would ensure any potential risk associated with possible future development within the Specific Plan Area would be mitigated to less than significant. Therefore, with incorporation of mitigation, construction activities associated with development in the Specific Plan Area and associated infrastructure improvements would not expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations and this construction impact would be **less than significant**.

OPERATIONS

Implementation of Mitigation Measure AQ-4c would reduce potential operational TAC-related effects through incorporation of siting distances and design features such as locating TAC-generating commercial land uses far away from sensitive receptors, using buildings or walls as shields, requiring electrification hook-ups for TRUs, and posting signs with idling limitations. Commercial and industrial land uses with the potential to emit TACs or host TAC-generating activities would be required to be located far enough away from sensitive receptors such that they would not result in exposure of sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations. Requiring electrification hook-ups truck loading areas would reduce the generation of DPM emissions at commercial loading docks and using buildings or walls as shields would further reduce potential exposure of sensitive receptors to TAC emissions. In the event that a project is not able to incorporate the above outlined actions, Mitigation Measure AQ-4c would require a project-specific analysis and implementation of TAC emissions reduction strategies to ensure that sensitive receptors are not exposed to substantial pollutant concentrations. Therefore, implementation of Mitigation Measure AQ-4c would ensure that future development of commercial and industrial land uses with the potential to generate TAC emissions would not result in exposure of sensitive receptors to substantial TAC concentrations. This operational impact would **be less than significant.**

IMPACT AQ-5: CONFLICT WITH AN AIR QUALITY PLAN

Air quality plans describe air pollution control strategies to be implemented by a city, county, or regional air district. The primary purpose of an air quality plan is to bring an area that does not attain the NAAQS or CAAQS into compliance with those standards, or to maintain existing compliance with those standards, pursuant to the requirements of the federal and State Clean Air Acts.

SMAQMD has adopted air quality plans pursuant to regulatory requirements under EPA and CARB for the attainment and maintenance of the NAAQS and CAAQS, as detailed above in "Regulatory Setting" under "Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District", including the Ozone Plan, the *$PM_{2.5}$ Maintenance Plan and Redesignation Request*, and the *PM_{10} Implementation/Maintenance Plan and Redesignation Request for Sacramento County*. The $PM_{2.5}$ and PM_{10} air quality plans detail how the region attained and will continue to maintain compliance with the respective NAAQS through control measures in the form of rules and regulations that are implemented by EPA, CARB, and SMAQMD. Development under the proposed Specific Plan would inherently be subject to such rules and regulations. The Ozone Plan addresses how the region will attain and maintain the federal ozone standard. As described above in "Regulatory Setting" under "Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District", the Ozone Plan emissions inventory forecasts used to demonstrate progress towards attainment accounts for various growth parameters including: forecasts for population, housing, employment, energy demand, and motor vehicle travel, along with emissions benefits from the federal, state, and local control measures. Therefore, the Ozone Plan is not prohibitive to regional growth but, rather, takes such growth into consideration while identifying control measures that allow regional growth to occur more efficiently. Additionally, to address the relationship between air quality, land use planning, greenhouse gas emissions, and transportation needs, SACOG developed the region's MTP/SCS (2025 Blueprint), which outlines planning strategies for the Sacramento region, including the prioritization of revitalizing existing commercial corridors. The Ozone Plan and the 2025 Blueprint are the applicable air quality plans for the purposes of this analysis, because they reflect the region's strategies, priorities, and goals related to air quality and land use planning.

Implementation of the proposed Specific Plan would include construction activities associated with redevelopment and infill development of vacant and underutilized parcels, as well as construction of infrastructure improvements required to serve development anticipated under the proposed Specific Plan. Construction activities associated with the proposed Specific Plan, including transportation and infrastructure improvements, would be temporary and would result in short-term emissions of criteria air pollutants and ozone precursors, including ROG, NOX, PM_{10}, and $PM_{2.5}$, the pollutants (or precursor to the pollutant [i.e., ozone]) for which the region is designated as nonattainment under either the NAAQS or CAAQS. Construction-related emissions would be generated by ground-disturbing activities (e.g., excavation, grading, and clearing); exhaust emissions from use of off-road equipment, material delivery, and construction worker commutes; building demolition and construction; asphalt paving; and application of architectural coatings. Emissions of ozone precursors (ROG and NO_x) would be associated primarily with

construction equipment and on-road mobile exhaust. The application of architectural coatings would result in evaporative emissions of ROG. Fugitive dust emissions of PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$ emissions would primarily be generated by ground-disturbing and demolition activities, as well as re-entrained roadway dust resulting from on-road vehicle travel and would vary as a function of parameters, such as soil silt content, soil moisture, wind speed, acreage of disturbance area, and the miles traveled by construction vehicles on and off site.

The proposed construction-related activities for buildout in the Specific Plan Area would be required to comply with SMAQMD rules and regulations established, in part, to ensure implementation of and consistency with strategies and actions of the applicable air quality plans, including but not limited to Rule 401, Rule 402, Rule 403, Rule 404, Rule 405, Rule 442, and Rule 902, as applicable. Compliance with these rules, as further enforced by Mitigation Measure AQ-1a (SMAQMD Basic Construction Emission Control Practices) and as discussed under Impact AQ-2, would reduce fugitive dust and ozone precursor emissions during construction. Additionally, the federal, state, and local control measures identified in the Ozone Plan for off-road equipment would primarily be implemented in the form of rules and regulations, which would result in cleaner equipment fleets over time and reduced construction emissions over buildout of the proposed Specific Plan.

The proposed Specific Plan would implement land-efficient development through compact, infill, mixed-use development that would locate residents near jobs and retail amenities with direct and convenient pedestrian and bicycle access, thereby reducing the need for motor vehicle travel and achieving associated VMT efficiencies. The Sacramento County General Plan emphasizes improving streetscapes along the North Watt commercial corridor and the proposed Specific Plan is designed to implement the General Plan for the corridor. The proposed Specific Plan would be consistent with Sacramento County General Plan objectives to integrate air quality planning with land use, transportation, and energy planning processes to provide a safe and healthy environment and to reduce vehicle emissions by decreasing trips and VMT. Specifically, the proposed Specific Plan would be consistent with Policies AQ-1 and AQ-8, which direct new development and circulation to be designed to promote pedestrian and bicycle access and alternative modes of transportation, as well as promote mixed-use development with increased density along existing and proposed transit corridors.

The control measures identified in the Ozone Plan include existing and proposed regulations related to the reduction of ozone precursors emissions from on-road vehicles (i.e., Advanced Clean Fleets Regulation), off-road equipment (i.e., Tier 5 emissions standards, In-Use Off-Road Diesel-Fueled Fleets Regulation), and other sources (i.e., Consumer Product Standards, Zero-Emission Standard for Space and Water Heaters). Operational activities associated with the proposed Specific Plan, including vehicle trips and land use operations that generate ozone precursor emissions, would inherently be reduced through compliance with applicable statewide rules and regulations. For example, as on-road vehicle standards continue to become more stringent through rule development and implementation at the State level, mobile source emissions associated with vehicle trips made by residents, employees, and visitors within the Specific Plan Area would be reduced with fleet turnover over time.

The 2025 Blueprint emphasizes revitalizing existing commercial corridors and main streets, land-efficient development (compact growth), local job opportunities, reduced traffic congestion, and investment in public transportation infrastructure (SACOG 2025a). SACOG notes that 64 percent of the new housing and 84 percent of the new jobs expected in the region by 2040 will need to be attracted to infill areas in cities, suburbs, and towns and that accommodating future housing and employment alongside existing jobs and services and leveraging the transportation system already in place in existing communities is critical for achieving air quality goals (SACOG n.d.). The proposed Specific Plan would align with and directly implement the priorities of the 2025 Blueprint by revitalizing the North Watt corridor area through accelerated infill development, public infrastructure improvements, and enhanced streetscapes, thereby supporting regional strategies and actions to reduce emissions. A key implementation activity and critical component of the 2025 Blueprint is the Green Means Go program, which is a regional effort to accelerate infill development and electrify vehicle trips in locally adopted Green Zones. Green Zones are areas identified for infill development where future residents are likely to take fewer and shorter car trips than people in the surrounding community and the region. Further, Green Zones must be planned for growth and supported by local policies and actions that support increased development and redevelopment in the area, such as a specific plan. As such, the North Watt Corridor Green Zone was established (which is inclusive of the Specific Plan Area) to accelerate infill development and implement the Green Means Go Program within the North Watt corridor area. In other words, the Specific Plan Area and immediately surrounding areas have been identified by SACOG as an area where projects that create more infill housing, increase mobility, and reduce vehicle emissions should be focused. Additionally, as noted above, the Sacramento County General Plan highlights the County's strategy to accommodate as much residential, commercial, and employment capacity as possible within existing urban areas in order to implement the SACOG's vision outlined in the Blueprint for more compact urban growth, among other land use planning goals. The proposed Specific Plan would align with the priorities and strategies of the 2025 Blueprint to reduce regional emissions by facilitating infill development and growth that is compact and efficient.

For the reasons described above, the proposed Specific Plan would align with, and support implementation of goals and strategies outlined in regional plans that address air quality. The proposed Specific Plan would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of applicable air quality plans, and this impact would be **less than significant.**

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required.

Impact AQ-6: Expose Substantial Numbers of People to Objectionable Odors

Construction

The predominant source of power for construction equipment is diesel engines. Odors from these sources would be localized and generally confined to the immediate

construction area. Exhaust odors from diesel engines and emissions associated with asphalt paving and the application of architectural coatings may be considered offensive to some individuals. Similarly, diesel-fueled trucks traveling on local roadways would produce associated diesel exhaust fumes. However, odors associated with diesel fumes, asphalt paving, and architectural coatings would be temporary and would disperse rapidly with distance from the source. Development constructed would use typical construction techniques, and the odors would be typical of most construction sites and temporary in nature. Furthermore, development within the Specific Plan Area as well as transportation and infrastructure improvements would be required to comply with SMAQMD Rules 402 (Nuisance) and 442 (Architectural Coatings), which would help to minimize potential construction odors. Therefore, this impact would be **less than significant.**

Long-Term Operations

The proposed Specific Plan would allow a mix of uses including different housing types and commercial retail and services, including restaurants and office spaces, as well as light industrial, research and development, and logistics and warehousing facilities. Residential land uses are not typically considered to be sources of objectionable odors. SMAQMD has identified facilities that are typically considered major sources of odors, including wastewater treatment and pumping facilities, chemical manufacturing facilities, sanitary landfills, fiberglass manufacturing facilities, transfer stations, painting/coating operations (e.g., auto body shops), composting facilities, food processing facilities, asphalt batch plants, rendering plants, metal smelting plants, and coffee roasters (SMAQMD 2009). The proposed Specific Plan Area includes existing auto body shops and the North Area Recovery Station (NARS), which is a transfer/processing facility for solid waste, but does not include most of the aforementioned uses that are known to generate odors, and would not allow most of these uses in the future. The EMP-Flex Zone that would allow a broader range of non-residential uses, including some of these uses, is essentially built out, and as a result, the County does not anticipate substantial development activity within this Zone under the proposed Specific Plan.

Development anticipated under the proposed Specific Plan would be similar to existing land uses in the Planning Area and would not be odorous land uses. Additionally, development standards under the proposed Specific Plan would include requirements for landscaped screening buffers between non-residential and residential development, in addition to screening of loading, service, storage, and utility areas, thereby reducing the dispersal of potential odors. Use of setbacks, site design considerations, and emission controls are typically sufficient to ensure that individuals located near odor-generating land uses would not be exposed to odorous emissions on a frequent basis. Any potential odors generated by operational activities associated with new development and existing development activities would be subject to SMAQMD Rule 402, “Nuisance”, which provides that air contaminants emitted by any person shall not cause annoyances, which would reduce emissions such as those leading to odors. Odor-sensitive uses are not allowed in the EMP-Flex Zone near the NARS. Therefore, this impact would be **less than significant.**

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required.

5 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes the environmental and regulatory setting for biological resources that are known to occur or have the potential to occur in the North Watt Avenue Specific Plan Area; identifies and analyzes impacts related to these resources from implementation of the proposed Specific Plan; and recommends mitigation measures to reduce or eliminate potentially significant impacts.

ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

The existing biological conditions presented in this section are based on results of a Biological Resources Assessment prepared by Area West Environmental, Inc. (Appendix BR-1). The Biological Resources Assessment identified biological resources with potential to occur in the Specific Plan Area via a reconnaissance survey and desktop review of available information. The reconnaissance survey was performed on August 6, 2025, to document current conditions, sensitive habitats, and vacant and underutilized sites with potential for special-status species.

The North Watt Avenue Specific Plan Area encompasses approximately 704 acres along a 4-mile segment of Watt Avenue from Antelope Road/U Street in the north to Interstate 80 (I-80) in the south within unincorporated Sacramento County. The Specific Plan Area is generally situated between the McClellan Business Park (former McClellan Air Force Base) and an area informally called “West of Watt” to the west, and single-family residential neighborhoods to the east.

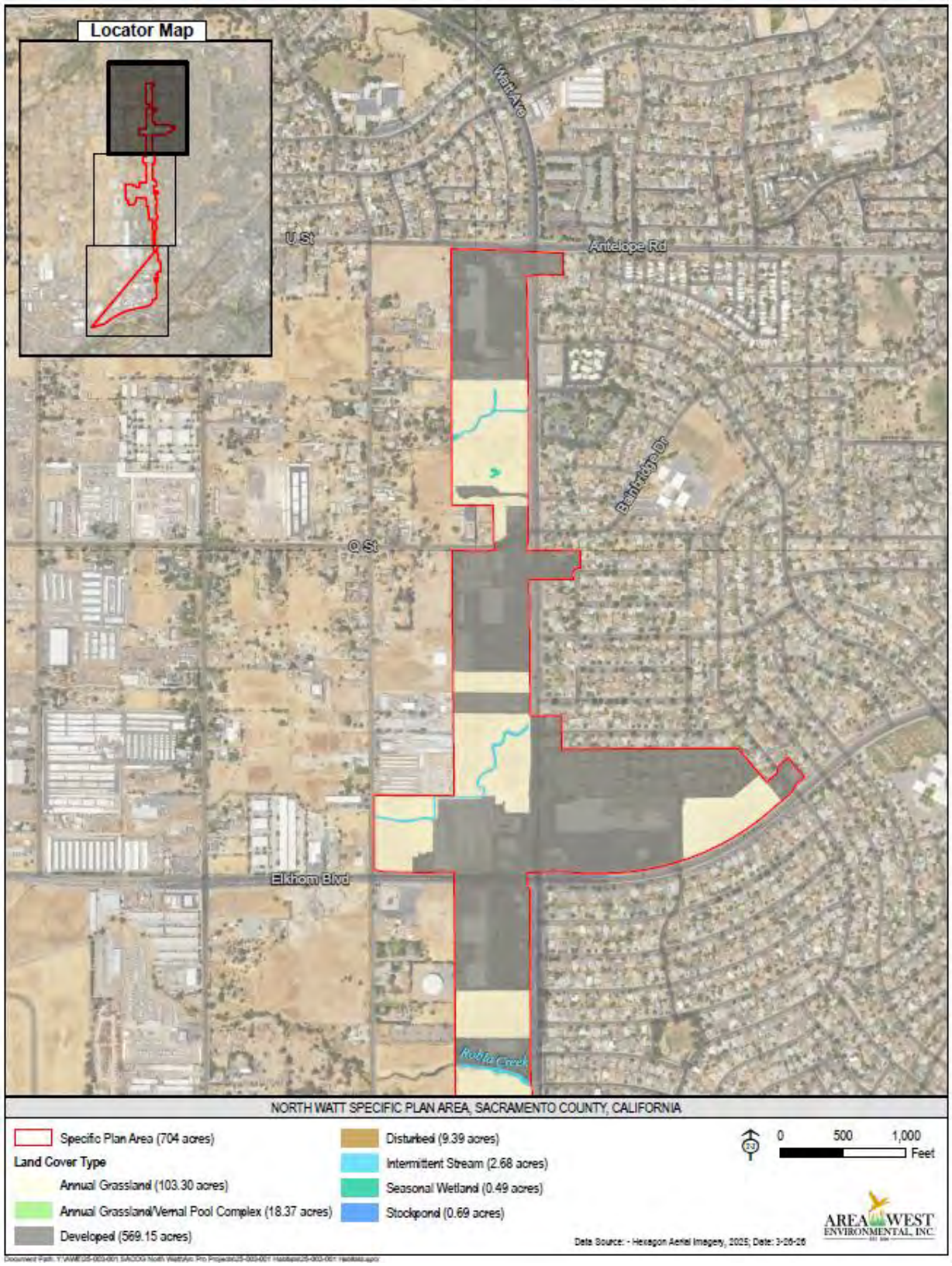
VEGETATION AND LAND COVER

The Specific Plan Area is highly urbanized, but also includes semi-rural, vacant, and underutilized areas. The vegetation communities have been subjected to extensive modifications and provide little habitat value. In developed areas, vegetation is sparse and typically consists of roadside and ornamental landscape plantings, and in vacant (undeveloped) and semi-rural areas, vegetation is dominated by non-native annual grasses and forbs. Occasional native and non-native trees are scattered throughout both developed and undeveloped areas. Vegetation communities and land cover types within the Specific Plan Area are presented in Table BR-1 and shown in Plate BR-1.

Table BR-1: Vegetation and Land Cover Types in the Specific Plan Area

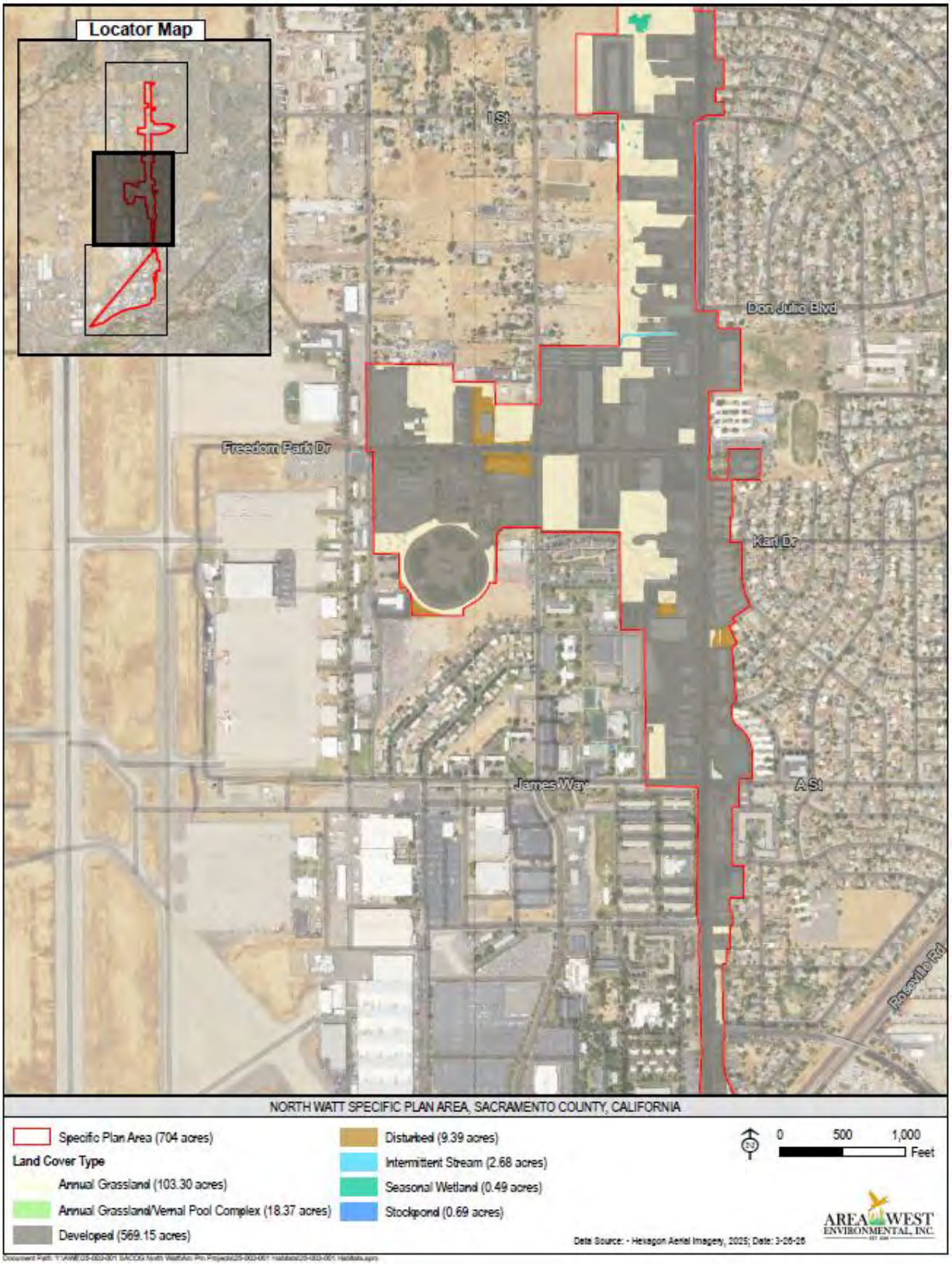
Vegetation Community/ Land Cover Type	Description	Area (acres)
Annual Grassland	Vegetation community dominated by slender wild oat (*Avena barbata*) and soft brome (*Bromus hordeaceus*). Primarily located in undeveloped lots scattered between developed areas. Most of these areas appear to be regularly maintained (e.g., tilled, mowed).	103.30
Annual Grassland/Vernal Pool Complex	Annual grassland communities intermixed with areas of vernal pool endemic species, such as eryngium (*Eryngium* sp.). Located along the railroad tracks in the southern portion of the Specific Plan Area.	18.37
Developed	Roadways, buildings, and areas landscaped with non-native and ornamental plantings.	569.15
Disturbed	Areas modified by human actions, often with a permeable gravel substrate preventing vegetation growth. Present along railroad tracks and undeveloped lots.	9.39
Intermittent Stream	Concrete-lined or soil-bottomed streams that occasionally support emergent wetland vegetation such as cattail (*Typha* sp.) and arrowhead (*Sagittaria* sp.). Run east to west through the Specific Plan Area.	2.68
Seasonal Wetland	Areas with standing water or green vegetation during summer months. Identified from desktop review of aerial imagery.	0.49
Stockpond	One seasonal stockpond that supports emergent wetland vegetation along its perimeter. Located in the southern portion of the Specific Plan Area.	0.69

Plate BR-1a: Vegetation and Land Cover Types in the Specific Plan Area



Source: Area West Environmental, Inc. (2025)

Plate BR-1b: Vegetation and Land Cover Types in the Specific Plan Area



Source: Area West Environmental, Inc. (2025)

Plate BR-1c: Vegetation and Land Cover Types in the Specific Plan Area



Source: Area West Environmental, Inc. (2025)

AQUATIC RESOURCES

Several intermittent waterways, including (from north to south) an unnamed tributary to Dry Creek, an unnamed tributary to Robla Creek, the main branch of Robla Creek, a drainage canal, and Magpie Creek, flow westward through the Specific Plan Area, and a stockpond is located adjacent to Roseville Road north of Interstate 80. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) National Wetland Inventory (NWI) identifies Robla Creek, a tributary to Robla Creek, and Magpie Creek as riverine features and the stockpond as a freshwater emergent wetland (USFWS 2025a). Each of these aquatic resources is described in more detail below.

The reconnaissance survey and desktop review also noted vernal pool endemic plant species along the railroad tracks and occasional indications of standing water or soil saturation in undeveloped lots. These areas were mapped as annual grassland/vernal pool complex and seasonal wetland, respectively (Plate BR-1). A field delineation would need to be conducted to confirm the presence and boundaries of any wetland features.

DRY CREEK TRIBUTARY

An unnamed stream flows through the northerly portion of the Specific Plan Area between Q and U Streets before joining the main branch of Dry Creek 1.5 miles to the west. Within the Specific Plan Area, the tributary to Dry Creek is an open channel that is vegetated with herbaceous species and a few scattered trees.

ROBLA CREEK AND TRIBUTARY

The headwaters of Robla Creek and its tributary are located within the residential area to the east of Watt Avenue. The unnamed tributary flows into Robla Creek 0.7 mile west of the Specific Plan Area. Within the Specific Plan Area, the northern bank of Robla Creek is lined with woody vegetation, primarily comprised of non-native ornamental trees bordering the adjacent development, and its tributary is lined with herbaceous vegetation.

DRAINAGE CANAL

A concrete drainage canal emerges from culverts southwest of the intersection of Don Julio Boulevard and Watt Avenue. It conveys water following precipitation events but remains dry for much of the year.

MAGPIE CREEK

Magpie Creek enters and exits the Specific Plan Area via culverts under Watt Avenue and Roseville Road, respectively. From the Specific Plan Area, Magpie Creek flows westerly through the McClellan Park commercial development before joining Don Julio Creek to form the Magpie Creek Diversion west of the McClellan Park. The Magpie Creek Diversion flows into Robla Creek west of Raley Boulevard.

Magpie Creek has earthen banks lined with herbaceous vegetation east of Watt Avenue and is lined with concrete and surrounded by chain-link fencing west of Watt Avenue.

STOCKPOND

A 0.7-acre stockpond is located between the McClellan Park and North Area Recovery Station along Roseville Road. The stockpond typically contains water during winter and spring before drying entirely during the summer. Wetland vegetation was observed growing along the stockpond's perimeter during the reconnaissance survey in August 2025.

SPECIAL-STATUS SPECIES

Special-status species considered in this EIR include plants and wildlife in the following categories:

- species officially listed or proposed for listing by the State of California or the federal government as endangered, threatened, or rare;
- candidates for State or federal listing as endangered or threatened;
- species identified by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) as Species of Special Concern;
- species listed as Fully Protected under the California Fish and Game Code (CFGC);
- taxa (i.e., taxonomic categories or groups) assigned a California Rare Plant Rank (CRPR) of 1A, 1B, 2A, or 2B, which are summarized as follows:
    - CRPR 1A - Plants presumed to be extinct in California;
    - CRPR 1B - Plants that are rare, threatened, or endangered in California and elsewhere;
    - CRPR 2A - Plants presumed to be extinct in California, but more common elsewhere;
    - CRPR 2B - Plants that are rare, threatened, or endangered in California, but more common elsewhere; and
- taxa that meet the criteria for listing, even if not currently included on any list, as described in Section 15380 of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines.

A list of special-status species previously recorded in the Specific Plan Area and vicinity was developed through queries of CDFW's California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB; CDFW 2025a), California Native Plant Society's (CNPS's) Rare Plant Inventory (CNPS 2025), USFWS's Information for Planning, and Consultation (USFWS 2025b), and the National Marine Fisheries Service's (NMFS's) West Coast Region Species and Habitat Application (NMFS 2025).

Table BR-2 and Table BR-3 identify special-status plants and wildlife identified by database queries, respectively, with potential to occur (i.e., classified as likely or known to occur) in the Specific Plan Area based on the availability of suitable habitat. See Appendix BR-1 for species considered but eliminated from further analysis.

In addition, special-status and protected species not identified by database queries have the potential to occur in the Specific Plan Area. These species include Species of Special Concern, such as pallid bat (*Antrozous pallidus*), Townsend's big-eared bat (*Corynorhinus townsendii*), western red bat (*Lasiurus frantzii*); other roosting bats; and nesting birds protected by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act.

Critical Habitat

USFWS and NMFS designate critical habitat for species listed as threatened or endangered under the federal Endangered Species Act (FESA). Critical habitat is defined in FESA Section 3(5)(A) as those lands (or waters) within a listed species' current range that contain the physical or biological features that are considered essential to the species' conservation, as well as areas outside the species' current range that are determined to be essential to its conservation. No critical habitat is designated within the Specific Plan Area (USFWS 2025c).

Wildlife Corridors and Nursery Sites

Potential wildlife corridors and nursery sites are limited within the Specific Plan Area given the level of urbanization and lack of intact habitat. The California Essential Habitat Connectivity Project has not mapped any large expanses of intact habitat or linkages between such habitat that provide essential movement corridors within the surrounding three miles (CDFW 2025b). Nevertheless, wildlife, particularly urban-adapted species, could follow stream corridors to access open space and higher-quality riparian habitat to the west or use undeveloped grassland or aquatic habitats for breeding. No wildlife nursery sites (e.g., heron rookeries, bat roosts) were observed during the reconnaissance survey (Appendix BR-1).

Table BR-2: Special-Status Plants with Potential to Occur in the Specific Plan Area

Common Name *Scientific Name*	Status[1] Federal/State/CRPR	Habitat Association[2]	Bloom Period[3]	Rationale for Potential to Occur in Specific Plan Area[4]
Ferris' milk-vetch *Astragalus tener* var. *ferrisiae*	--/--/1B.1	Meadows and seeps (vernally mesic) and valley and foothill grassland (subalkaline flats). Elevation (feet): 5–245.	April–May	Potentially suitable habitat in annual grassland vegetation communities.
Big-scale balsamroot *Balsamorhiza macrolepis*	--/--/1B.2	Chaparral, cismontane woodland, and valley and foothill grassland. Elevation (feet): 150–5,100.	May–June	Suitable habitat in annual grassland vegetation communities.
Spicate calycadenia *Calycadenia spicata*	--/--/1B.3	Cismontane woodland and valley and foothill grassland. Elevation (feet): 130–4,595.	May–September	Suitable habitat in annual grassland vegetation communities.
Dwarf downingia *Downingia pusilla*	--/--/2B.2	Valley and foothill grassland (mesic) and vernal pools. Elevation (feet): 5–1,460.	March–May	Suitable habitat in annual grassland vegetation communities where vernal pools are present.
Boggs Lake hedge-hyssop *Gratiola heterosepala*	--/SE/1B.2	Marshes and swamps (lake margins) and vernal pools. Elevation (feet): 35–7,790.	April–August	Suitable habitat in the stockpond and annual grassland vegetation communities where vernal pools or seasonal wetlands are present.
Woolly rose-mallow *Hibiscus lasiocarpos* var. *occidentalis*	--/--/1B.2	Found in marshes and swamps (freshwater). Elevation (feet): 0–395.	June–September	Potentially suitable habitat along intermittent stream and stockpond land cover types.
Ahart's dwarf rush *Juncus leiospermus* var. *ahartii*	--/--/1B.2	Valley and foothill grassland (mesic). Elevation (feet): 100–750.	March–May	Suitable habitat in mesic areas in annual grassland vegetation communities.
Red Bluff dwarf rush *Juncus leiospermus* var. *leiospermus*	--/--/1B.1	Chaparral, cismontane woodland, meadows and seep, valley and foothill grasslands, vernal pools, and vernally mesic. Elevation (feet): 115–4,100.	March–June	Suitable habitat in annual grassland vegetation communities.
Legenere *Legenere limosa*	--/--/1B.1	Vernal pools. Elevation (feet): 5–2,885.	April–June	Suitable habitat in annual grassland vegetation communities where vernal pools are present.

Common Name Scientific Name	Status[1] Federal/State/CRPR	Habitat Association[2]	Bloom Period[3]	Rationale for Potential to Occur in Specific Plan Area[4]
Pincushion navarretia *Navarretia myersii* ssp. *myersii*	--/--/1B.1	Vernal pools. Elevation (feet): 65–1,085.	April–May	Suitable habitat in annual grassland vegetation communities where vernal pools are present.
Slender Orcutt grass *Orcuttia tenuis*	FT/SE/1B.1	Vernal pools, gravelly (often). Elevation (feet): 115–5,775.	May–September (October)	Suitable habitat in annual grassland vegetation communities where vernal pools are present.
Sacramento Orcutt grass *Orcuttia viscida*	FE/SE/1B.1	Vernal pools. Elevation (feet): 100–330.	April–July (September)	Suitable habitat in annual grassland vegetation communities where vernal pools are present.
Sanford's arrowhead *Sagittaria sanfordii*	--/--/1B.2	Found in marshes and swamps (shallow freshwater). Elevation (feet): 0–2,135.	May–October (November)	Potentially suitable habitat in intermittent stream and stockpond land cover types.
Suisun Marsh aster *Symphyotrichum lentum*	--/--/1B.2	Marshes and swamps (brackish, freshwater). Elevation (feet): 0–10.	(April) May–November	Potentially suitable habitat along intermittent stream and stockpond land cover types.

[1] Regulatory Status Categories
-- = no listing status
Federal
FE = listed as endangered under the federal Endangered Species Act
FT = listed as threatened under the federal Endangered Species Act
State
SE = listed as endangered under the California Endangered Species Act
California Rare Plant Ranks (CRPR)
1B = Plant species considered rare or endangered in California and elsewhere (protected under CEQA, but not legally protected under ESA or CESA)
2B = Plants rare, threatened, or endangered in California but more common elsewhere.
CRPR Threat Rank Extensions:
.1 = seriously endangered in California (>80% of occurrences are threatened and/or high degree and immediacy of threat)
.2 = fairly endangered in California (20 to 80% of occurrences are threatened)
.3 = not very endangered in California (<20% of occurrences are threatened or no current threats known)

[2] California Native Plant Society habitat requirements refer to the specific environmental conditions and/or vegetation communities/land cover types necessary for the survival, growth, and reproduction of native plant species in California (CNPS 2025).

[3] Months included in parentheses are uncommon (CNPS 2025).

[4] Vegetation communities and land cover types mapped within the Specific Plan Area that may provide suitable habitat for each special-status plant species with potential to occur

Table BR-3: Special-Status Wildlife with Potential to Occur in the Specific Plan Area

Common Name *Scientific Name*	Status[1] Federal/State	Habitat Association	Rationale for Potential to Occur in Specific Plan Area
Invertebrates			
Vernal pool fairy shrimp *Branchinecta lynchi*	FT/--	Vernal pools and seasonal wetlands; also found in sandstone rock outcrop pools.	Suitable vernal pool or seasonal wetland habitat may be present. There are 18 CNDDB occurrences of this species within a 5-mile radius.
Vernal pool tadpole shrimp *Lepidurus packardi*	FE/--	Vernal pools, vernal lakes, and other seasonal wetlands. Can be found in grass-bottomed swales of unplowed grasslands and highly turbid, mud-bottomed pools.	Suitable habitat may be present in vernal pools, seasonal wetlands, or the seasonal stockpond. There are 13 CNDDB occurrences of this species within a 5-mile radius.
Monarch butterfly *Danaus plexippus*	FPT/--	California overwintering habitat includes eucalyptus (*Eucalyptus* spp.), Monterey pines (*Pinus radiata*), and Monterey cypresses (*Hesperocyparis macrocarpa*). Milkweed (*Asclepias* spp.) is the sole larval host plant.	Though milkweed was not observed during the reconnaissance survey, it may be present in annual grassland habitat. Monarch breeding has been documented within a 5-mile radius (Xerces 2025).
Crotch's bumblebee *Bombus crotchii*	--/SCE	Open grasslands and scrub habitats with abundant floral resources. Commonly visits the following plant families: Fabaceae, Apocynaceae, Asteraceae, Lamiaceae, Hydrophyllacae, Asclepiadaceae, and Boraginaceae.	Suitable nesting habitat may be present within the annual grassland habitat, and suitable foraging habitat may be present in annual grassland and ornamental plantings in developed areas. There is one CNDDB occurrence within a 5-mile radius.
Reptiles			
Northwestern pond turtle *Actinemys marmorata*	FPT/SSC	Ponds, marshes, rivers, streams and irrigation ditches, usually with aquatic vegetation, below 6,000 feet in elevation. Needs basking sites and suitable upland habitat for egg-laying (friable soil exposed to full sun) within 0.3 mile of water.	Aquatic and upland habitat are present. There are two CNDDB occurrences within a 5-mile radius.
Birds			
White-tailed kite *Elanus leucurus*	--/FP	Open grasslands, meadows, or marshes for foraging close to isolated, dense-topped trees for nesting and perching.	Suitable foraging and nesting habitat are present. There are 13 CNDDB occurrences of this species within a 5-mile radius.

Common Name Scientific Name	Status[1] Federal/State	Habitat Association	Rationale for Potential to Occur in Specific Plan Area
Swainson's hawk *Buteo swainsoni*	--/ST	Nests in grasslands with scattered trees, juniper-sage flats, riparian areas, and agricultural areas with groves of trees. Requires adjacent grasslands, irrigated pastures, or grain fields supporting rodent populations for foraging.	Scattered trees near open areas are potentially suitable for nesting, and annual grasslands are marginally suitable for foraging. More suitable riparian habitat for nesting and agricultural and grassland habitat for foraging is available to the west and north. There are 17 CNDDB occurrences of this species within a 5-mile radius.

Sources: CDFW (2025a), USFWS (2025)

Note: CNDDB = California Natural Diversity Database

[1] Regulatory Status Categories

-- = no listing status

Federal

FPT = proposed for listing as endangered under the federal Endangered Species Act

FT = listed as threatened under the federal Endangered Species Act

State

FP = designated as fully protected under the California Fish and Game Code

SCE = candidate for listing as endangered under the California Endangered Species Act

SSC = California Department of Wildlife Species of Special Concern

ST = listed as threatened under the California Endangered Species Act

REGULATORY SETTING

FEDERAL

ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT, 16 U.S.C. SECTION 1531 ET SEQ

The FESA, and subsequent amendments, provides regulations for the conservation of endangered and threatened species and the ecosystems on which they depend. USFWS (with jurisdiction over plants and resident fish and wildlife) and NMFS (with jurisdiction over marine and anadromous fish and wildlife species) oversee the FESA.

Section 9 of the FESA prohibits the take of any fish or wildlife species listed as endangered, including the destruction of habitat that prevents the species' recovery. "Take" is defined as any action or attempt to hunt, harm, harass, pursue, shoot, wound, capture, kill, trap, or collect a species. Section 9 prohibits the unlawful removal and possession, or malicious damage or destruction, of any endangered plant from federal land. Section 9 prohibits acts to remove, cut, dig up, damage, or destroy an endangered plant species in nonfederal areas in knowing violation of any state law or in the course of criminal trespass. Candidate species and species that are proposed for or under petition for listing receive no protection under Section 9.

MIGRATORY BIRD TREATY ACT, 16 U.S.C. SECTION 703, ET SEQ.

The federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) (16 United States Code [USC], Sec. 703, 1989) prohibits killing, possessing, or trading migratory birds except in accordance with regulations prescribed by the Secretary of the Interior. This act encompasses whole birds, parts of birds, bird nests, and eggs. The MBTA is administered by the USFWS, and special permits from the agency are generally required for the take of any migratory birds. This act applies to all persons and agencies in the U.S., including federal agencies.

CLEAN WATER ACT SECTIONS 401, 402, AND 404

Section 404 of the federal Clean Water Act (CWA) protects waters of the U.S., including adjacent wetlands, by requiring projects that would discharge dredge or fill material into them to obtain a permit or authorization from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE). The permitting program is designed to minimize the fill of waters of the U.S. and require compensatory mitigation when impacts cannot be avoided.

Section 401 of the CWA requires any applicant for a federal license or permit that could result in any discharge into waters of the U.S. (i.e., USACE permit to fill wetlands), to obtain water quality certification from the appropriate state agency. In California, the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) delegates the authority to grant water quality certification to the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB).

Section 402 of the CWA establishes the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES), a permitting system to prohibit the unauthorized discharge of any pollutant (except for dredged or fill material) into waters of the U.S. This permit program is

administered by the SWRCB. Sacramento County has obtained a Municipal Stormwater NPDES permit to reduce pollutants found in urban stormwater runoff to the maximum extent practicable. Sacramento County complies with this permit by developing and enforcing ordinances and requirements to reduce discharge of sediments and other pollutants in runoff. Projects must comply with the Sacramento County Land Grading and Erosion Control Ordinance.

In addition, construction sites disturbing one or more acres are required to comply with the State's General Stormwater Permit for Construction Activities. The Construction General Permit is issued by the SWRCB and enforced by the RWQCB. The Construction General Permit requires the preparation and implementation of a site-specific Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) that minimizes construction and storm water-related impacts on waterways.

STATE

CALIFORNIA ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT, CALIFORNIA FISH AND GAME CODE SECTION 2050, ET SEQ.

CDFW is the state agency responsible for the protection of endangered and threatened plants, fish, and wildlife and for the regulation of activities that could affect those species. The regulatory vehicle that protects sensitive species administered by this agency is the California Endangered Species Act (CESA). CESA directs state agencies not to approve projects that would jeopardize the continued existence of an endangered or threatened species or result in the destruction or adverse modification of habitat essential to the continued existence of a species.

CFGC Section 86 defines "take" as an activity that would or would attempt to hunt, pursue, catch, capture, or kill an individual of a species. Project-related take of CESA-listed species must be minimized and mitigated; any take incidental to otherwise lawful activities requires a permit.

FULLY PROTECTED SPECIES, CALIFORNIA FISH AND GAME CODE SECTIONS 3511, 4700, 5050, AND 5515

CFGC Sections 3511, 4700, 5050, and 5515 identify fish, amphibian, reptile, bird, and mammal species to be classified as Fully Protected. These statutes generally prohibit the take or possession of Fully Protected species, although CDFW may issue permits allowing incidental take for certain categories of projects, including transportation, water infrastructure, and renewable energy projects (CFGC Section 2081.15).

PROTECTION OF BIRD NESTS, RAPTORS, AND MIGRATORY BIRDS, CALIFORNIA FISH AND GAME CODE SECTIONS 3503 AND 3513

CFGC Sections 3503, 3503.5, and 3513 protect bird eggs and nests, raptors, and migratory birds, respectively, from take and possession. Violations of these regulations include destruction of active nests during tree removal and failure of nesting attempts resulting in loss of eggs or young due to disturbance from human activity.

Lake and Streambed Alteration Program, California Fish and Game Code Sections 1600-1610

Under CFGC Sections 1600–1610, applicants must notify CDFW prior to beginning any project that would divert or obstruct the natural flow of; substantially change or use any material from the bed, channel, or bank of; or deposit or dispose of materials into any river, stream, or lake that supports wildlife resources. CDFW may enter into a Streambed Alteration Agreement (SAA) with an applicant if the proposed project may substantially and adversely affect fish or wildlife resources. The SAA would include measures necessary to protect these resources.

Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act, California Water Code Section 13000, et seq.

The Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act (California Water Code Section 13000, *et seq.*) requires that each RWQCB prepare and periodically update a water quality control plan (i.e., basin plan). Each basin plan sets forth water quality standards for waters of the State and actions to achieve and maintain these standards. Waters of the State include "any surface water or groundwater, including saline waters, within the boundaries of the State" (California Water Code Section 13050[e]); further guidance on aquatic features, including wetlands, that qualify as waters of the State is provided in *Procedures for Discharges of Dredged or Fill Material to Waters of the State* (SWRCB 2021). In the absence of CWA Section 404 jurisdiction over isolated waters or other waters of the State, California retains authority to regulate discharges through issuance of Waste Discharge Requirements.

Local

Sacramento County General Plan

The *Sacramento County General Plan of 2005–2030* (General Plan) (Sacramento County 2011) contains numerous goals, objectives, and policies to maintain and preserve Sacramento County's natural environment and resources. The following policies related to the protection and preservation of biological resources are relevant to the proposed Specific Plan:

Policy LU-116. The County shall consult with state and federal regulatory and resource agencies during initial review of development projects to identify potential environmental conflicts and establish, if appropriate, concurrent application processing schedules.

Policy LU-117. The County will provide information to applicants with projects in potential wetland or natural resource areas and provide coordination assistance with such entities as the Army Corps of Engineers, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the California Department of **Fish** and Wildlife in order to facilitate development review and permit review processes.

Policy CO-24. Comply with the Sacramento Areawide National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Municipal Stormwater Permit (NPDES Municipal Permit) or subsequent permits, issued by the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Board) to Sacramento County, and the Cities of Sacramento, Elk Grove, Citrus Heights, Folsom, Rancho Cordova, and Galt (collectively known as the Sacramento Stormwater Quality Partnership [SSQP]).

Policy CO-30. Require development projects to comply with the County's stormwater development/design standards, including hydromodification management and low impact development standards, established pursuant to the NPDES Municipal Permit. Low impact development design and associated landscaping may serve multiple purposes including reduction of water demand, retention of runoff, reduced flooding and enhanced groundwater recharge.

Policy CO-58. Ensure no net loss of wetlands, riparian woodlands, and oak woodlands.

Policy CO-59. Ensure mitigation occurs for any loss of or modification to the following types of acreage and habitat function: vernal pools, wetlands, riparian, native vegetative habitat, and special-status species habitat.

Policy CO-70. Community Plans, Specific Plans, Master Plans and development projects shall: include the location, extent, proximity and diversity of existing natural habitats and special status species in order to determine potential impacts, necessary mitigation and opportunities for preservation and restoration; be reviewed for the potential to identify nondevelopment areas and establish preserves, mitigation banks and restore natural habitats, including those for special status species, considering effects on vernal pools, groundwater, flooding, and proposed fill or removal of wetland habitat; be reviewed for applicability of protection zones identified in this Element, including the Floodplain Protection Zone, Stream Corridor Ordinance, Cosumnes River Protection Combining Zone and the Laguna Creek Combining Zone.

Policy CO-71. Development design shall help protect natural resources by: minimizing total built development in the floodplain, while designing areas of less frequent use that can support inundation to be permitted in the floodplain; ensuring development adjacent to stream corridors and vernal pools provide, where physically reasonable, a public street paralleling at least one side of the corridor with vertical curbs, gutters, foot path, street lighting, and post and cable barriers to prevent vehicular entry; projects adjacent to rivers and streams

shall integrate amenities, such as trail connectivity, that will serve as benefits to the community and ecological function; siting of wetlands near residential and commercial areas should consider appropriate measures to minimize potential for mosquito habitation; development adjacent to steam corridors and vernal pools shall be designed in such a manner as to prevent unauthorized vehicular entry into protected areas.

Policy CO-78. Plans for urban development and flood control shall incorporate habitat corridors linking habitat sites for special status species.

Policy CO-92. Enhance and protect shaded riverine aquatic habitat along rivers and streams.

Policy CO-94. Development within the 100-year floodplain and designated floodway of Sacramento streams, sloughs, creeks or rivers shall be:

- Consistent with policies to protect wetlands and riparian areas; and
- Limited to land uses that can support seasonal inundation.

Policy CO-107. Maintain and protect natural function of channels in developed, newly developing, and rural areas.

Policy CO-115. Provide setbacks along stream corridors and stream channels to protect riparian habitat functions. A functional setback of at least 100 feet and measured from the outside edge of the stream bank should be retained on each side of a stream corridor that prohibits development or agricultural activity. This buffer is necessary to protect riparian functions by allowing for the filtering of sediment, pesticides, phosphorus and nitrogen, organic matter and other contaminates that are known to degrade water quality. This buffer also provides for the protection of vegetation along the stream bank which provides bank stability, erosion control and flood attenuation. A transitional setback of at least 50 feet in width beyond the functional buffer should be retained along all stream corridors. This buffer is necessary to protect hydrogeomorphic functions that regulate water temperature, regulate micro-climate, maintain channel complexity and retain hydrologic flow regimes. This buffer also provides corridors to facilitate the movement of wildlife. An extended setback of at least 50 feet in width beyond the transitional setback should be retained along all stream corridors. This setback will allow for recreational uses such as bike, pedestrian and/or equestrian trails and will allow for the placement of infrastructure such as water and sewer lines. Stormwater discharge ponds or other features used for improving stormwater quality may be located within

the extended or transitional setback area. However, in order to protect stream habitat and floodplain value, the width of the setback shall not be based upon the width of the pollutant discharge pond. The ponds shall be landscaped and maintained with vegetation native to the surrounding area. Detention ponds or other features implementing pollutant discharge requirements, other than approved regional stormwater quality practices that are designed and operated to complement the corridor functionally and aesthetically, are prohibited. Setback averaging within individual development projects or as otherwise specified in a County-adopted master plan will be permitted except when riparian woodland will be lost. The minimum width of setbacks cannot fall below 50 feet. Master drainage plans may provide for other standards that meet the intent of this policy.

Policy CO-121. No grading, clearing, tree cutting, debris disposal or any other despoiling action shall be allowed in rivers and streams except for normal channel maintenance, restoration activities, and road crossings.

Policy CO-124. Maintain and manage rivers and streams to encourage special status species.

Policy CO-137. Mitigate for the loss of native trees for road expansion and development consistent with General Plan policies and/or the Sacramento County Tree Preservation Ordinance.

Policy CO-138. Protect and preserve non-oak native trees along riparian areas if used by Swainson's Hawk, as well as landmark and native oak trees measuring a minimum of 6 inches in diameter or 10 inches aggregate for multi-trunk trees at 4.5 feet above ground.

Policy CO-139. Native trees other than oaks, which cannot be protected through development, shall be replaced with in-kind species in accordance with established tree planting specifications, the combined diameter of which shall equal the combined diameter of the trees removed.

Policy CO-145. Removal of non-native tree canopy for development shall be mitigated by creation of new tree canopy equivalent to the acreage of non-native tree canopy removed. New tree canopy acreage shall be calculated using the 15-year shade cover values for tree species.

Policy CO-146. If new tree canopy cannot be created onsite to mitigate for the non-native tree canopy removed for new development, project proponents (including public agencies) shall contribute to the Greenprint funding in an amount proportional to the tree canopy of the specific project.

Sacramento County Tree Preservation Ordinance

Sacramento County's Code of Ordinance Chapter 19.12.020 (Tree Preservation Ordinance) establishes basic standards and measures for the preservation and protection of trees within the County. Under the ordinance, protected trees are defined as:

- any living native oak (*Quercus* spp.) tree having at least one trunk of six inches or more in diameter measured four and one-half feet above the ground (diameter at breast height [dbh]), or a multi-trunked native oak tree having an aggregate diameter of ten inches or more, measured four and one-half feet above the ground (dbh).

The ordinance dictates that no person shall trench, grade or fill within the dripline of any tree or destroy, kill or remove any tree as defined, in the designated urban area of the unincorporated area of Sacramento County, on any property, public or private, without a tree permit, or unless authorized as a condition of a discretionary project approval by the County's Board of Supervisors, Sacramento County Planning Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals, Zoning Administrator, or Subdivision Review Committee.

Impacts and Analysis

Significance Criteria

According to Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, a significant impact related to biological resources would occur if the proposed Specific Plan would:

- have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special-status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by CDFW or USFWS;
- have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations, or by CDFW or USFWS;
- have a substantial adverse effect on State or federally protected wetlands (including but not limited to marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means;
- interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites;
- conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance; or
- conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP), natural community conservation plan, or other approved local, regional, or state HCP.

METHODOLOGY

This section analyzes potential direct, indirect, temporary, and permanent impacts on biological resources that have the potential to result from implementation of the proposed Specific Plan.

Direct impacts occur at the same time and in the same place as project activities. Direct permanent impacts refer to the physical loss of a biological resource, typically due to clearing and grading associated with project implementation (e.g., permanent removal of vegetation/wildlife habitat, injury/mortality of individual plants or wildlife, permanent interference with wildlife movement or habitat connectivity). Temporary impacts last for a short period (e.g., up to one year) and would normally be reversible (e.g., revegetation following removal of vegetation).

Indirect impacts are reasonably foreseeable effects on adjacent biological resources that occur later in time and often farther from the project footprint. For example, construction activities may alter hydrology or introduce invasive plants, thereby indirectly impacting habitat quality for plant and wildlife species.

ISSUES NOT DISCUSSED FURTHER

The Specific Plan Area is not located within an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan or Natural Community Conservation Plan. Therefore, no conflict exists and there would be **no impact**. This topic is not evaluated further in this EIR.

IMPACT BR-1: HAVE A SUBSTANTIAL ADVERSE EFFECT ON SPECIAL-STATUS SPECIES

While most development and infrastructure improvements under the Specific Plan would be located on previously disturbed properties and within existing rights-of-way, activities within annual grassland and aquatic habitats have the potential to impact special-status species (Table BR-2, Table BR-3). Ground disturbance, vegetation clearance, and use of heavy equipment during construction could result in direct injury or mortality of special-status individuals. Increased noise or vibration levels could indirectly impact special-status wildlife by causing individuals to alter behavior or abandon nests, and dust, sediment, or pollutants generated by construction activities could temporarily degrade habitat quality for special-status wildlife or reduce the vigor of special-status plants. Construction under the Specific Plan and operation of future uses anticipated under the Specific Plan could also result in temporary or permanent loss of suitable habitat for special-status species.

SPECIAL-STATUS PLANTS

Fourteen special-status plant species have the potential to occur in annual grassland or aquatic habitat within the Specific Plan Area (Table BR-2). Construction in these habitats could result in direct temporary or permanent impacts on these special-status plant species, if present, through removal or other damage (e.g., trampling); these impacts would be **potentially significant**.

The Specific Plan Area is anticipated to be developed over time by different applicants, and infrastructure improvements would be completed in different phases. Necessary mitigation measures for biological resources, including special-status plants, would vary to correspond with the location and type of construction activities. To identify whether, when, and where each measure applies, Mitigation Measure BR-1a, provided below, requires that appropriate pre-construction baseline biological resources report(s) be prepared for each phase of development in habitats with the potential for sensitive biological resources. For development project sites and infrastructure improvement areas that do not include habitats with the potential for sensitive biological resources, there would be no impact, and the below identified mitigation is not required.

Mitigation Measures BR-1a and BR-1b, provided below, include pre-construction botanical surveys in suitable habitat to identify, avoid, and, where avoidance is not possible, mitigate for impacts on special-status plant species. With implementation of these mitigation measures where applicable, the impact on special-status plants would be **less than significant**.

MITIGATION MEASURES

BR-1a: Pre-Construction Biological Resources Reports for Potentially Sensitive Sites

Appropriate pre-construction baseline biological resources reports shall be prepared for each phase of development with vegetation removal or ground disturbance in areas that (1) are mapped as annual grassland, annual grassland/vernal pool complex, or seasonal wetland, or (2) are within 300 feet of aquatic resources identified in this EIR (i.e., the tributary to Dry Creek, Robla Creek and its tributary, the drainage canal north of Elkhorn Boulevard, Magpie Creek, and the stockpond). A qualified biologist shall prepare a biological resources report documenting current land cover, including sensitive natural communities and riparian habitat; potential special-status species; potentially jurisdictional aquatic resources; and any other biological resources needed to reach a conclusion regarding which of the following mitigation measures are required for the specific project phase. If potentially jurisdictional aquatic resources are present in the construction footprint, a field delineation shall be conducted, and a preliminary jurisdictional delineation report shall be prepared.

BR-1b: Avoid, Minimize, and Mitigate for Impacts on Special-Status Plant Species

The following measures shall be implemented to avoid impacts on special-status plants:

- A pre-construction protocol-level botanical survey shall be conducted within suitable habitat for special-status plant species with potential to occur (Table BR-2) at the project site and, where access is permitted, within a 250-foot buffer of the work limits. Surveys shall be conducted by a qualified botanist in accordance with *Protocols for Surveying and Evaluating Impacts to Special Status Plant Populations and Sensitive Natural Communities* (CDFW 2018), or the most recent guidelines, including conducting surveys during appropriate bloom periods for

targeted species. If no special-status species are observed during the pre-construction survey, then no further actions or mitigation are required.

- If special-status plants are present within the work limits, a qualified biologist shall establish an adequate buffer of each population to exclude activities that would directly remove, alter the habitat of, or result in indirect adverse impacts on the special-status plants. A biologist shall oversee installation of fencing and appropriate signage to protect these occurrences from inadvertent encroachment by construction vehicles and personnel. The fencing shall be checked and maintained weekly until construction is complete.

- If special-status plants are present within the work limits, a qualified biologist shall provide training for all contractors, work crews, and on-site personnel prior to the initiation of construction. The training shall include information about the species' identification and habitat, statutory requirements and the consequences of non-compliance, and the boundaries of avoidance buffers and permitted disturbance zones.

- If direct impacts on special-status plants cannot be avoided, the project applicant shall mitigate for impacts by one or more of the following methods: (1) salvage and replant plants at the same location following construction; (2) salvage and relocate the plants to a suitable off-site location with long-term assurance of site protection; (3) collect seeds or other propagules for reintroduction at the site or elsewhere; or (4) purchase mitigation credits from an approved conservation or mitigation bank in sufficient quantities to offset the loss of occupied habitat. Restoration or compensation shall be detailed in a Mitigation and Monitoring Plan, which shall be developed prior to the start of construction and in coordination with applicable agencies.

- All necessary permits and approvals from USFWS and CDFW shall be obtained for any impacts on special-status plant species.

Special-Status Aquatic Invertebrates

Vernal pool fairy shrimp (*Branchinecta lynchi*) and vernal pool tadpole shrimp (*Lepidurus packardi*) have been documented within 5 miles of the Specific Plan Area (CDFW 2025a), and suitable vernal pool or seasonal wetland habitat may be present in annual grassland, seasonal wetlands, or the seasonal stockpond within the Specific Plan Area. Refer to the impact discussion under Impact BR-3 below for a description of potential permanent, temporary, and indirect impacts on potentially suitable habitat for these species (i.e., wetlands/other waters). Any impact on vernal pool fairy shrimp, vernal pool tadpole shrimp, or their potential habitats would be considered **potentially significant**.

Mitigation Measure BR-1a, provided above, and Mitigation Measures BR-1c and BR-3, provided below, include pre-construction delineation of wetland or vernal pool habitat, avoidance buffers during construction, and, where avoidance is not possible, compensation for any loss of aquatic habitats that could support special-status aquatic

invertebrates. With implementation of these mitigation measures where applicable, impacts on special-status aquatic invertebrates would be **less than significant**.

Mitigation Measures

BR-1a: Pre-Construction Biological Resources Reports for Potentially Sensitive Sites

BR-1c: Avoid, Minimize, and Mitigate for Impacts on Special-Status Aquatic Invertebrates

- Unless a smaller buffer is approved through consultation with USFWS, construction fencing shall be installed a minimum of 250 feet from the delineated wetland edge of any potentially suitable aquatic habitats (e.g., vernal pools, seasonal wetlands) for vernal pool fairy shrimp and vernal pool tadpole shrimp. All project activities are prohibited within this buffer area. If total avoidance is achieved, no further action is required.

- If avoidance, as described above, is not feasible, implement Mitigation Measure BR-3 to achieve the performance standard of no net loss of state and federally protected wetlands, including habitat acreage, function, and values for vernal pool fairy shrimp and vernal pool tadpole shrimp. Direct and indirect effects to on-site suitable aquatic habitats that may support federally listed vernal pool branchiopods shall be offset through on-site preservation and/or the purchase of species preservation credits from a USFWS-approved in-lieu fee program or other USFWS-approved conservation or mitigation bank. These effects and compensation shall be quantified in the Mitigation and Monitoring Plan provided by the project applicant. The mitigation ratios shall, at minimum, comply with applicable mitigation ratios in terms and conditions of a Biological Opinion issued by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service pursuant to section 7 of the Endangered Species Act.

BR-3: Avoid, Minimize, and Mitigate for Impacts on Wetlands and Waters (see Impact BR-3)

Monarch Butterfly

Monarch butterfly (*Danaus plexippus*) breeding has been documented within 5 miles of the Specific Plan Area (Xerces 2025), and suitable milkweed (*Asclepias* spp.) host plants may be present in annual grassland habitat. Vegetation clearing or use of heavy equipment during project construction activities could impact monarch butterfly eggs, larvae, adults, or habitat, if present. Impacts on any life stage of monarch butterflies or their habitat would be considered **potentially significant**.

Mitigation Measure BR-1a, provided above, and Mitigation Measure BR-1d, provided below, include surveys for all life stages of monarch prior to vegetation clearing in suitable habitat and avoidance of occupied host plants. With implementation of these mitigation measures where applicable, impacts on this species would be **less than significant**.

Mitigation Measures

BR-1a: Pre-Construction Biological Resources Reports for Potentially Sensitive Sites

BR-1d: Avoid and Minimize Impacts on Monarch Butterfly

- If vegetation clearing is scheduled between May and October, a qualified biologist shall survey suitable habitat at the work site for monarch butterfly larval host plants, specifically milkweed. If host plants are found, the biologist shall conduct surveys to determine the presence or absence of adult monarch butterflies and inspect host plants for monarch eggs, larvae, and pupae. If no life stages of monarch butterfly are observed during the pre-construction survey, then no further actions or mitigation are required.

- If monarch butterfly eggs, larvae, or pupae are documented during the pre-construction survey, a qualified biologist shall establish an adequate buffer of host plants to exclude activities that would directly remove or result in indirect adverse impacts on the host plants or monarch butterfly. A biologist shall oversee installation of fencing and appropriate signage to protect these occurrences from inadvertent encroachment by construction vehicles and personnel. The fencing shall be checked and maintained weekly until all construction is complete.

- If occupied host plants cannot be avoided by project activities, the plants may only be removed when a qualified biologist determines the plants are no longer occupied. The project applicant shall prepare and implement a mitigation plan for the County's review minimizing habitat impacts on one or more of the following methods: (1) re-establish the same milkweed species at the project site; (2) establishing milkweed plants at a suitable off-site location with long-term assurance of site protection; (3) purchase mitigation credits from an approved conservation or mitigation bank in sufficient quantities to offset the loss of occupied habitat; or (4) contribute an in-lieu fee determined through consultation with USFWS.

Crotch's Bumblebee

Crotch's bumblebee (*Bombus crotchii*) have been documented within 5 miles of the Specific Plan Area (CDFW 2025a), and suitable habitat for the species is present within the annual grassland and ornamental plantings. Ground-disturbing project construction could destroy nesting colonies or overwintering queens, if present. Impacts on any Crotch's bumblebee or their habitat would be considered **potentially significant**.

Mitigation Measure BR-1a, provided above, and Mitigation Measure BR-1e, provided below, include pre-construction surveys in suitable habitat, avoidance of active nest sites, and mitigation for impacts to nests where avoidance is not possible. With implementation of these mitigation measures where applicable, impacts on Crotch's bumblebee would be **less than significant**.

Mitigation Measures

BR-1a: Pre-Construction Biological Resources Reports for Potentially Sensitive Sites

BR-1e: Avoid and Minimize Impacts on Crotch's Bumblebee

- Prior to vegetation clearance or ground-disturbing construction activities, a qualified biologist shall conduct focused surveys for Crotch's bumblebee consistent with CDFW's *Survey Considerations for California Endangered Species Act (CESA) Candidate Bumble Bee Species* (CDFW 2023), or the most recent guidelines, in suitable habitat within the project site. Surveys shall be conducted during the Crotch's bumblebee worker flight period (i.e., approximately March through June) in each year of construction. During the surveys, the qualified biologist shall flag inactive small mammal burrows and other potential nest or overwintering sites.

- If Crotch's bumblebees are detected, the project applicant shall prepare and implement a site-specific avoidance and minimization plan for the County's review. The plan will include a description of on-site habitat, potential nest and overwintering sites present, recommendations for avoidance and minimization (such as unoccupied burrow avoidance buffers), potential identification of methods to evaluate potential nest sites for use (e.g., burrow scoping or emergence surveys), and compensatory mitigation for the loss of potential nest sites, such as incorporation of appropriate native flower resources during site revegetation to support this species throughout the flight period and promote development of queens (i.e., perennial plants) and reducing use of harmful pesticides. All the measures included in the approved plan will be implemented during project activities.

- Construction personnel shall receive worker environmental awareness training. This training shall instruct workers about any active Crotch's bumble bee nests and avoidance buffers.

Northwestern Pond Turtle

Northwestern pond turtles (*Actinemys marmorata*) could be present in aquatic habitats and adjacent uplands within the Specific Plan Area. Northwestern pond turtles or their upland nesting or aestivation sites could be impacted during project implementation if present within the construction footprint during ground disturbance or use of heavy equipment. Impacts on any northwestern pond turtles, their nests, or their habitat would be considered **potentially significant**.

Mitigation Measure BR-1a, provided above, and Mitigation Measure BR-1f, provided below, include pre-construction surveys in suitable habitat, avoidance of nest sites, and suspension of construction activities in the vicinity of northwestern pond turtles. With implementation of these mitigation measures, impacts on this species would be **less than significant**.

Mitigation Measures

BR-1a: Pre-Construction Biological Resources Reports for Potentially Sensitive Sites

BR-1f: Avoid and Minimize Impacts on Northwestern Pond Turtle

- A qualified biologist shall conduct a pre-construction survey for northwestern pond turtle within 48 hours prior to the start of ground-disturbing activities. The survey shall include suitable aquatic habitat and 1,650 feet of adjacent uplands surrounding aquatic habitat within the project area. The pre-construction survey shall include searches for nesting sites. The biologist shall establish a no-disturbance buffer around any identified nest sites with high-visibility flagging or fencing for avoidance during construction activities. The buffer distance will be determined based on environmental conditions and planned activities in the vicinity and will remain in place until the biologist has determined the nest is no longer in use.

- Construction personnel shall receive worker environmental awareness training. This training shall instruct workers how to recognize northwestern pond turtles and their habitat.

- If a northwestern pond turtle is observed during construction, construction activities shall be suspended within a 100-foot buffer. Construction may resume when the turtle leaves the work area on its own or is relocated by a qualified biologist. If the animal is injured or trapped, a qualified biologist will move the animal out of the construction area and into suitable habitat.

Swainson's Hawk

The Specific Plan Area provides marginally suitable habitat for Swainson's hawk (*Buteo swainsoni*). Project construction activities in the vicinity of nesting Swainson's hawk could cause direct or indirect disturbance of active nests that could result in nest abandonment or interference with the incubation or feeding of young. Impacts on any Swainson's hawk or their nests would be considered **potentially significant**.

Mitigation Measure BR-1g, provided below, includes pre-construction surveys for Swainson's hawk nests and protective measures for any nests identified during surveys (Swainson's Hawk Technical Advisory Committee 2000). With implementation of this mitigation measure, impacts on Swainson's hawk would be **less than significant**.

Mitigation Measures

BR-1g: Avoid and Minimize Impacts on Nesting Swainson's Hawk

In each year with project construction that includes ground-disturbing activities within 0.25 mile of trees suitable for Swainson's hawk nesting or any tree removal, the following measures will be implemented:

- A qualified biologist shall conduct a focused survey for nesting Swainson's hawk in publicly accessible habitat no later than 30 days prior to the start of construction activities during the nesting season (i.e., March 1 through September 15).

- If nesting Swainson's hawk are identified within 0.25 mile of the work area during the pre-construction survey or at any point during project construction, CDFW shall be contacted to determine the appropriate protective measures, and these measures will be implemented prior to the start of any ground-disturbing activities.

- Construction personnel shall receive worker environmental awareness training. This training shall instruct workers about any active nests and no-disturbance buffers.

- If no active nests are found during the focused survey, no further mitigation will be required.

Other Nesting Raptors and Migratory Birds, Including White-tailed Kite

The Specific Plan Area provides nesting habitat for nesting raptors and migratory birds, including white-tailed kite (*Elanus leucurus*), within undeveloped properties and ornamental plantings in developed areas. Project construction activities in the vicinity of nesting birds could cause direct or indirect disturbance of active nests that could result in nest abandonment or interference with the incubation or feeding of young. In addition, development could result in the permanent loss of nesting habitat. Impacts on any nesting birds would be considered **potentially significant**.

Mitigation Measure BR-1h, provided below, includes pre-construction surveys, avoidance buffers around active nests, and timing of tree removal to avoid nesting season, when feasible, to avoid and minimize potential impacts on nesting birds. With implementation of this mitigation measure, impacts on nesting birds would be **less than significant**.

Mitigation Measures

BR-1h: Avoid and Minimize Impacts on Nesting Birds

For project construction activities that include ground-disturbing activities within 500 feet of trees or 50 feet of undeveloped habitat (i.e., annual grassland or aquatic habitat), or any vegetation removal, the following measures will be implemented:

- A qualified biologist shall conduct a survey for nesting birds within 14 days prior to construction activities during the nesting season (i.e., February 1 through August 31).

- If any active nests are observed during the survey, a qualified biologist shall establish a suitable buffer of the nest. The buffer will be determined based on the species of bird, environmental conditions (e.g., line of sight, surrounding land use), and planned construction activities in the vicinity. The buffer shall remain in place until the biologist determines the nest is no longer active (i.e., until the young have fledged).

- Construction personnel shall receive worker environmental awareness training. This training shall instruct workers about any active nests and no-disturbance buffers.

- To the extent feasible, trees slated for removal shall be removed during the period of September through January to avoid the nesting season. Any trees that are to be removed during the nesting season, which is February through August, shall be surveyed by a qualified biologist and will only be removed if no nesting migratory birds are found.

Bats

The Specific Plan Area provides potential bat roosting habitat in trees, buildings, and bridges and foraging opportunities in annual grassland and aquatic habitats. No active bat roosts or signs of occupation were documented during the reconnaissance survey conducted on August 6, 2025. However, if bat roosts or winter hibernacula are located in or adjacent to a work area, construction activities could result in bat injury or mortality due to removal of occupied habitat or roost abandonment due to increased noise or vibrations. Impacts on any bat roosts or hibernacula would be considered **potentially significant**.

Mitigation Measure BR-1i, provided below, includes pre-construction surveys and avoidance buffers to avoid and minimize potential impacts on roosting bats. With implementation of these mitigation measures, impacts on roosting bats would be **less than significant**.

Mitigation Measures

BR-1i: Avoid and Minimize Impacts on Roosting Bats

For project construction activities that include demolition of bridges or buildings or removal or trimming of mature trees, the following measures will be implemented:

- A qualified bat biologist meeting the standards described in Caltrans Bat Mitigation: A Guide to Developing Feasible and Effective Solutions (Johnston, et al 2019) shall conduct a daytime habitat assessment at least one year in advance of any anticipated project-related disturbance, when feasible, or as much in advance as feasible to allow time for additional seasonal surveys and roost exclusions, if needed. The survey area will include all areas of anticipated disturbance and a surrounding 250-foot buffer. All structures and trees will be inspected with the naked eye, binoculars, and a flashlight, for indications of bat roosting (e.g., guano or urine staining, bats in residence, sounds or smells of bats) and for features with characteristics that could provide suitable roosting habitat (i.e., suitable physical structure, access, solar exposure, protection from predators, etc.). Such features may include trees, bridges and culverts, and other man-made structures and buildings.

- If no potential bat roosting habitat is observed, a letter report shall be prepared and provided to the project proponent to document the survey, and no additional measures are recommended.

- If potential roost features are identified, the qualified biologist shall establish a no-disturbance buffer around roost sites until the biologist determines the roosts are no longer active. The size of the no-disturbance buffer will generally follow buffer guidance in Johnston, et al. 2019, and will be determined considering the bat species and roost type (if known), environmental conditions (e.g., surrounding land use and disturbance buffers), and planned construction activities (e.g., the type of equipment used and their associated levels of disturbance).

- If use of a disturbance buffer is not feasible, the qualified biologist will conduct focused inspections of any accessible potential roost habitat to evaluate the species and numbers of bats roosting, and the season(s) that the roost is used. Focused inspections may include the use of borescopes and guano DNA analysis for species identification, as needed.

- If potential roost habitat is not accessible for focused inspection, the qualified biologist will conduct seasonal evening emergence surveys, as needed, to evaluate the species and numbers of bats roosting, and the season(s) that the roost is used. Emergence surveys will be conducted over a minimum of two nights at least two weeks apart, from one half hour before sunset to one hour after sunset. The qualified biologist will use professional grade night-vision technology and acoustic recording equipment to identify roosting bat species. Acoustic recordings will be analyzed using automated species identification software such as Sonobat, and species identifications will be manually vetted for accuracy. Focused inspections and emergence surveys shall be repeated if construction activities do not commence within three years.

- Following these focused inspections and/or emergence surveys, the qualified biologist will prepare a Bat Management Plan in consultation with CDFW that will be implemented to minimize and compensate for potential impacts to roosting bat species. This Bat Management Plan may include measures such as seasonal roost avoidance, seasonal roost exclusion in advance of project-related disturbance, seasonal tiered disturbance to discourage roosting, use of sound buffers, worker environmental awareness training, construction monitoring, and/or compensatory roost replacement, as warranted.

Significance after Mitigation

As detailed above, Mitigation Measures BR-1a, BR-1b, BR-1c, BR-3, BR-1d, BR-1e, BR-1f, BR-1g, BR-1h, and BR-1i require pre-construction surveys, and where appropriate, avoidance and protective measures, and where avoidance is infeasible, compensatory mitigation to mitigate impacts to a level of less than significant according to applicable protocols and, where necessary, in consultation with appropriate regulatory agencies. Because most bat species in California are colonial, impacts to a roosting bat colony could result in population-level impacts that could threaten local bat communities, regardless of the species' listing status. Implementation of BR-1i: Avoid and Minimize Impacts on Roosting Bats would eliminate or reduce these potential impacts to less-than-significant. The impact is **less than significant with mitigation**.

IMPACT BR-2: HAVE A SUBSTANTIAL ADVERSE EFFECT ON RIPARIAN HABITAT OR OTHER SENSITIVE NATURAL COMMUNITIES

No riparian land cover types or sensitive natural communities were mapped during the reconnaissance survey conducted on August 6, 2025. However, limited woody riparian vegetation is present in narrow bands and patches along intermittent streams within the Specific Plan Area, and sensitive natural communities may be present in mapped annual grassland or aquatic habitat. General Plan Policies CO-58, CO-59, CO-92, CO-94, CO-107, CO-115, CO-121, and CO-138 address the protection of riparian habitat that may be present along intermittent streams. Development along intermittent waterways or in grassland habitats could result in direct temporary or permanent impacts on riparian habitat and sensitive natural communities, if present, that are inconsistent with General Plan policies. If construction were to remove or otherwise damage vegetation in these communities, this impact would be **potentially significant**.

MITIGATION MEASURES

BR-1a: Pre-Construction Biological Resources Reports for Potentially Sensitive Sites

BR-2: Avoid, Minimize, and Mitigate for Impacts on Riparian Habitat

Where riparian habitat exists, as identified in the biological resource report produced per Mitigation Measure BR-1a, the proponent(s) of development within the Specific Plan Area will avoid and minimize impacts on riparian habitat consistent with County policies with the following measures:

- Riparian habitat will be avoided through project design, if feasible. Where riparian habitat must be disturbed, the minimum area of disturbance necessary for construction will be identified. If required, permits or approvals shall be sought from CDFW or other applicable agencies.

- A qualified biologist shall establish an adequate buffer of riparian habitat to be avoided by project construction to exclude activities that would directly remove or result in indirect adverse impacts on the riparian habitat. A biologist shall oversee installation of fencing and appropriate signage to protect this habitat from inadvertent encroachment by construction vehicles and personnel. The fencing shall be checked and maintained weekly until all construction is complete.

- Where disturbance to riparian habitat cannot be avoided, the natural function of the waterway will be maintained by:

    - Minimizing development within the floodplain such that uses within the floodplain can support occasional inundation

    - Providing functional setbacks on each side of the waterway equivalent to or greater than the extent of riparian vegetation prior to construction activities

  - Vegetating the setback with species native to the surrounding area and adapted to the anticipated hydrologic regime
  - Avoiding removal of mature native riparian trees unless required for channel maintenance or restoration activities

- Where permanent impacts on riparian habitat cannot be avoided, compensation shall be provided at a 1:1 ratio, or at a level agreed upon with applicable regulatory agencies. Compensation may be in the form of permanent on- or off-site creation, restoration, enhancement, or preservation of habitat; purchase of mitigation credits from an approved conservation or mitigation bank; or paying an in-lieu fee. Restoration or compensation shall be detailed in a Mitigation and Monitoring Plan, which will be developed prior to the start of construction and in coordination with applicable agencies.

BR-3: Avoid, Minimize, and Mitigate for Impacts on Wetlands and Waters (see Impact BR-3)

BR-5a: Implement Native Tree Protection (see Impact BR-5)

BR-5b: Compensate for Removal of Native Trees (see Impact BR-5)

BR-5c: Mitigate for Non-Native Tree Canopy (see Impact BR-5)

Significance after Mitigation

Mitigation Measure BR-1a, provided above, will be implemented, as applicable, to identify and map riparian habitat and sensitive natural communities, if present. Mitigation Measure BR-3 would protect any sensitive natural communities identified in grassland or wetland habitats, respectively, and mitigate for any development within them. Mitigation Measures BR-2, BR-3, BR-5a, BR-5b, BR-5c would protect riparian habitat, if present, and mitigate for development that permanently impacts this habitat. With implementation of these mitigation measures, the impact on riparian habitats and sensitive natural communities would be **less than significant**.

Impact BR-3: Have a Substantial Adverse Effect on State or Federally Protected Wetlands

Intermittent streams (2.68 acres) and a stockpond (0.69 acre) were mapped within the Specific Plan Area during the biological reconnaissance survey on August 6, 2025. Biologists also documented potential vernal pools and seasonal wetlands in annual grassland habitat. General Plan Policies LU-117, CO-24, CO-30, CO-58, CO-59, CO-70, CO-92, CO-94, CO-107, and CO-115 address the protection of wetlands and other waters. Future development within the Specific Plan Area may impact identified streams, wetlands, and other potential aquatic resources not mapped during the reconnaissance survey. Permanent impacts would result from the permanent modification of protected wetlands or other waters such as from either the direct filling of wetlands/waters or destruction of the duripan supporting wetland hydrology. Temporary impacts on protected

wetlands or other waters could result from water quality impacts due to erosion or spills of hazardous materials during project construction. Standard BMPs required by the Central Valley RWQCB and the SWPPP for each development phase are designed to prevent accidental spills of hazardous materials, reduce erosion and sediment transport, and enable immediate cleanup following an accidental spill. Permanent modification of protected wetlands and adverse impacts on water quality would be inconsistent with General Plan policies and would be considered **potentially significant**.

MITIGATION MEASURES

BR-1a: Pre-Construction Biological Resources Reports for Potentially Sensitive Sites (see Impact BR-1)

BR-2: Avoid, Minimize, and Mitigate for Impacts on Riparian Habitat (see Impact BR-2)

BR-3: Avoid, Minimize, and Mitigate for Impacts on Wetlands and Waters

- The project will be designed to avoid, to the extent feasible, work within wetlands and waters under the jurisdiction of USACE, the Central Valley RWQCB, and CDFW.
- Prior to approval of grading permits or improvement plans and where wetlands, vernal pools, or other surface waters are present on candidate sites, the applicant shall obtain all applicable permits from regulatory agencies, including:
    - Section 1600 Streambed Alteration Agreement from CDFW
    - CWA Section 404 permit from USACE
    - CWA Section 401 water quality certification from the RWQCB
- Where permanent impacts on wetlands or other waters cannot be avoided, compensation shall be provided at a 1:1 ratio, or at a level agreed upon with applicable agencies. Compensation may be in the form of permanent on- or off-site creation, restoration, enhancement, or preservation of habitat; purchase of mitigation credits from an approved conservation or mitigation bank; or paying an in-lieu fee. Restoration or compensation shall be detailed in a Mitigation and Monitoring Plan, which will be developed prior to the start of construction and in coordination with applicable agencies.
- The applicant shall implement all conditions of the permits, including any performance monitoring and reporting, if required.
- ~~**Mitigation Measures BR-1a and BR-2, provided above, and BR-3 will be implemented, as applicable, to identify and map the boundaries of wetlands and other waters, if present in proposed work areas; avoid and minimize impacts on these resources; and mitigate for any development resulting in their fill or removal. With implementation of these mitigation measures, the**~~

~~**impact on state or federally protected wetlands would be less than significant.**~~

Significance after Mitigation

Mitigation Measures BR-1a and BR-2, provided above, and BR-3 will be implemented, as applicable, to identify and map the boundaries of wetlands and other waters, if present in proposed work areas; avoid and minimize impacts on these resources; and mitigate for any development resulting in their fill or removal. With implementation of these mitigation measures, the impact on state or federally protected wetlands would be **less than significant**.

Impact BR-4: Interfere Substantially with the Movement of Any Native Resident or Migratory Species or Impede the Use of Native Wildlife Nursery Sites

Although much of the Specific Plan Area is urbanized, undeveloped grassland and aquatic habitats have the potential to provide nursery (e.g., nest) sites and migratory habitat for common wildlife species. Development within or adjacent to these habitats could impede movement through or use of these areas by common wildlife species. Impacts on the movement of native wildlife species, including their access to nursery sites, would be considered **potentially significant**.

Mitigation Measures

BR-1a: Pre-Construction Biological Resources Reports for Potentially Sensitive Sites (see Impact BR-1)

BR-1h: Avoid and Minimize Impacts on Nesting Birds

BR-1i: Avoid and Minimize Impacts on Roosting Bats

BR-2: Avoid, Minimize, and Mitigate for Impacts on Riparian Habitat (see Impact BR-2)

BR-3: Avoid, Minimize, and Mitigate for Impacts on Wetlands and Waters (see Impact BR-3)

Significance after Mitigation

Mitigation Measures BR-1a**, BR-1h, BR-1i**, BR-2, and BR-3 will be implemented, as applicable, to identify and map habitats with the potential to provide nursery sites or movement corridors, protect riparian corridors, and mitigate for any development within these habitats. With implementation of these mitigation measures, impacts on wildlife movement and access to nursery sites would be **less than significant**.

IMPACT BR-5: CONFLICT WITH ANY LOCAL POLICIES OR ORDINANCES PROTECTING BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES, SUCH AS A TREE PRESERVATION POLICY OR ORDINANCE

Sacramento County's Tree Preservation Ordinance and General Plan Policies CO-137 through CO-139, CO-145, and CO-146 address the protection of native oak trees, landmark and heritage trees, other native trees, and non-native tree canopy. Some native and non-native trees in vacant, semi-rural, and landscaped portions of the Specific Plan Area are protected by these policies. Development in vegetated areas or construction activities in landscaped areas have the potential to result in damage to or removal of trees protected by the County. Absent measures to protect such trees, this impact would be **potentially significant**.

MITIGATION MEASURES

BR-5a: Implement Native Tree Protection

Prior to any ground-disturbing activities, a certified arborist shall prepare a report if native trees (as defined by the General Plan) will be impacted by development. The report shall include the species, diameter, dripline, and health of the trees. The report shall include an exhibit that shows the trees and their dripline in proximity to subsequent development improvements. The report shall identify any tree that will be removed and quantify the dripline encroachment from subsequent development.

With the exception of the native trees removed and compensated for through Mitigation Measure BR-5b, all healthy native trees that are 6 inches dbh or larger on a work site, all portions of adjacent off-site healthy native trees that are 6 inches dbh or larger which have driplines that extend onto a work site, and all off-site healthy native trees that are 6 inches dbh or larger which may be impacted by utility installation and/or improvements associated with subsequent development, shall be preserved and protected as follows:

1. A circle with a radius measurement from the trunk of the tree to the tip of its longest limb shall constitute the dripline protection area of each tree. Limbs must not be cut back in order to change the dripline. The area beneath the dripline is a critical portion of the root zone and defines the minimum protected area of each tree. Removing limbs that make up the dripline does not change the protected area.

2. Any protected trees on the site that require pruning shall be pruned by a certified arborist prior to the start of construction work. All pruning shall be in accordance with the American National Standards Institute A300 pruning standards and the International Society of Arboriculture "Tree Pruning Guidelines."

3. Prior to initiating construction, temporary protective fencing shall be installed at least one foot outside the driplines of the protected trees within

100 feet of construction related activities, in order to avoid damage to the tree canopies and root systems. Where encroachment occurs, temporary high-visibility protective fencing shall be installed a maximum of one foot outside the work areas to minimize damage to the tree canopies and root systems.

4. Any removal of paving or structures (i.e., demolition) that occurs within the dripline of a protected oak tree shall be done under the direct supervision of a certified arborist. To the maximum extent feasible, demolition work within the dripline protection area of the oak tree shall be performed by hand. If the certified arborist determines that it is not feasible to perform some portion(s) of this work by hand, then the smallest/lightest weight equipment that will adequately perform the demolition work shall be used.

5. No signs, ropes, cables (except those which may be installed by a certified arborist to provide limb support) or any other items shall be attached to the protected trees. Small metallic numbering tags for the purpose of preparing tree reports and inventories shall be allowed.

6. No vehicles, construction equipment, mobile home/office, supplies, materials or facilities shall be driven, parked, stockpiled or located within the driplines of protected trees.

7. No grading (grade cuts or fills) shall be allowed within the driplines of protected trees, except for the minimum required for construction and streetscape improvements.

8. Drainage patterns on the site shall not be modified so that water collects or stands within, or is diverted across, the dripline of any protected tree.

9. No trenching shall be allowed within the driplines of protected trees. If it is absolutely necessary to install underground utilities within the dripline of a protected tree, the utility line shall be bored and jacked under the supervision of a certified arborist.

10. The construction of impervious surfaces within the driplines of protected trees shall be stringently minimized. When it is absolutely necessary, a piped aeration system per County standard detail shall be installed under the supervision of a certified arborist.

11. All portions of any masonry wall that will encroach into the dripline protection area of any protected tree shall be constructed using grade beam wall panels and posts set no closer than 10 feet on center. Any wrought iron fencing shall be similarly installed, with posts set no closer than 10 feet on center. Posts shall be spaced in such a manner as to maximize the separation between the tree trunks and the posts in order to reduce impacts to the trees.

12. Trunk protection measures, per Sacramento County standards, shall be used for all protected trees where development/construction activity, including installation of any masonry wall and wrought iron fence, occurs within 10 feet of the trunk of a tree.

13. No sprinkler or irrigation system shall be installed in such a manner that sprays water or requires trenching within the driplines of protected trees. An above ground drip irrigation system is recommended.

14. Landscaping beneath oak trees may include non-plant materials such as bark mulch, wood chips, boulders, etc. Landscape materials shall be kept two (2) feet away from the base of the trunk. The only plant species which shall be planted within the driplines of oak trees are those which are tolerant of the natural semi-arid environs of the trees. A list of such drought-tolerant plant species is available with Planning and Environmental Review (PER). Limited drip irrigation approximately twice per summer is recommended for the understory plants.

BR-5b: Compensate for Removal of Native Trees

To the maximum extent feasible, all on-site healthy native trees shall be protected and preserved. Any substantial (>20%) encroachment and/or removal of native trees shall be compensated by planting native trees (as defined by the General Plan), equivalent to the dbh inches lost, based on the ratios listed below. On-site preservation of native trees that are less than 6 inches (<6 inches) dbh, may also be used to meet this compensation requirement. Encroachment of over 20 percent within the dripline radius of native trees will require compensatory mitigation based on the percentage of encroachment multiplied by the dbh. Encroachment over 50 percent will require compensation for the entire tree.

Equivalent compensation based on the following ratio is required:

- one preserved native oak tree < 6 inches dbh on-site = 1 inch dbh
- one depot seedling (40 cubic inches or larger) = 1 inch dbh
- one 15-gallon tree = 1 inch dbh
- one 24-inch box tree = 2 inches dbh
- one 36-inch box tree = 3 inches dbh

Replacement tree planting shall be completed prior to the issuance of building permits or a bond shall be posted by the applicant in order to provide funding for purchase, planting, irrigation, and 3-year maintenance period, should the applicant default on replacement tree mitigation. The bond shall be in an amount equal to the prevailing rate of the County Tree Preservation Fund.

Prior to the approval of Improvement Plans or building permits, a Replacement Native Tree Planting Plan shall be prepared by a certified arborist or licensed landscape architect and shall be submitted to the Environmental Coordinator for approval. The Replacement Native Tree Planting Plan(s) shall include the following minimum elements:

- Species, size and locations of all replacement plantings and <6-inch dbh trees to be preserved;
- Method of irrigation;
- The Sacramento County Standard Tree Planting Detail L-1, including the 10-foot deep boring hole to provide for adequate drainage;
- Planting, irrigation, and maintenance schedules;
- Identification of the maintenance entity and a written agreement with that entity to provide care and irrigation of the trees for a 3-year establishment period, and to replace any of the replacement oak trees which do not survive during that period.
- Designation of 20-foot root zone radius and landscaping to occur within the radius of oak trees <6-inch dbh to be preserved on-site.

No replacement tree shall be planted within 15 feet of the driplines of existing oak trees or landmark size trees that are retained on-site, or within 15 feet of a building foundation or swimming pool excavation. The minimum spacing for replacement oak trees shall be 20 feet on center. Examples of acceptable planting locations are publicly owned lands, common areas, and landscaped frontages (with adequate spacing). Generally unacceptable locations are utility easements (sewer, storm drains), under overhead utility lines, private yards of single-family lots (including front yards), and roadway medians.

Native trees <6-inch dbh to be retained on-site shall have at least a 20-foot radius suitable root zone. The suitable root zone shall not have impermeable surfaces, turf/lawn, dense plantings, soil compaction, drainage conditions that create ponding, utility easements, or other overstory tree(s) within 20 feet of the tree to be preserved. Trees to be retained shall be determined to be healthy and structurally sound for future growth, by a certified arborist.

If native tree replacement plantings are demonstrated to be infeasible for any or all trees removed, then compensation shall be through payment into the County Tree Preservation Fund. Payment shall be made at the prevailing rate at the time payment into the fund is made.

BR-5c: Mitigate for Non-Native Tree Canopy

> Removal of non-native tree canopy for development will be mitigated by creation of new tree canopy equivalent to the acreage of non-native tree canopy removed. New tree canopy acreage will be calculated using the Sacramento County Department of Transportation's 15-year shade cover values for tree species. Preference is given to on-site mitigation. If on-site mitigation is infeasible, funding will be contributed to the Sacramento Tree Foundation's Greenprint program in an amount proportional to the tree canopy lost, as determined by the 15-year shade cover calculations for the tree species to be planted with the funding.

Significance after Mitigation

Mitigation Measures BR-5a, BR-5b, and BR-5c will be implemented to ensure consistency with local policies for the protection of native oak trees, landmark and heritage trees, riparian trees, other native trees, and non-native tree canopy. These mitigation measures include actions to protect native trees during construction, such as use of appropriate pruning techniques and avoidance of construction or landscaping activities in areas that may impact native trees, and to compensate for any unavoidable tree removal. With implementation of these mitigation measures, the Specific Plan would comply with local policies and ordinances protecting biological resources, and the impact with respect to conflicts with policies and ordinances would be **less than significant**.

6 CLIMATE CHANGE

INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides background information about greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and climate change and an analysis of potential impacts associated with GHG emissions from implementation of the proposed Specific Plan.

Emissions of GHGs have the potential to adversely affect the environment because such emissions contribute cumulatively to global climate change. Implementation of the proposed Specific Plan would not, by itself, contribute significantly to climate change; however, cumulative emissions from many projects and plans all contribute to global GHG concentrations and the climate system. Therefore, this section considers the proposed Specific Plan's contribution to the significant cumulative impact of climate change.

ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS AND CLIMATE CHANGE

Certain gases in the earth's atmosphere, classified as GHGs, play a critical role in determining the earth's surface temperature. Solar radiation enters the earth's atmosphere from space. A portion of the radiation is absorbed by the earth's surface, and a smaller portion of this radiation is reflected back toward space through the atmosphere. However, infrared radiation is selectively absorbed by GHGs in the atmosphere. As a result, infrared radiation released from the earth that otherwise would have escaped back into space is instead "trapped," resulting in a warming of the atmosphere. This phenomenon, known as the "greenhouse effect," is responsible for maintaining a habitable climate on Earth. Anthropogenic (e.g., human caused) emissions of GHGs lead to atmospheric levels in excess of natural ambient concentrations and have the potential to adversely affect the environment because such emissions contribute, on a cumulative basis, to global climate change.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) concluded that variations in natural phenomena, such as solar radiation and volcanoes, produced most of the warming of the earth from pre-industrial times to 1950. Some variations in natural phenomena also had a small cooling effect. From 1950 to the present, increasing GHG concentrations resulting from human activity, such as fossil fuel burning and deforestation, have been responsible for most of the observed temperature increase (IPCC 2021).

During the same period that increased global warming has occurred, many other changes have occurred in other natural systems. Sea levels have risen; precipitation patterns throughout the world have shifted, with some areas becoming wetter and others drier;

snowlines have increased elevation, resulting in changes to the snowpack, runoff, and water storage; and numerous other conditions have been observed.

Although it is difficult to prove a definitive cause-and-effect relationship between global warming and other observed changes to natural systems, there is a high level of confidence in the scientific community that these changes are a direct result of increased global temperatures caused by the increased presence of GHGs in the atmosphere (IPCC 2021).

Principal Greenhouse Gases and Sources

GHGs are present in the atmosphere naturally, are released by both natural and anthropogenic sources, and are formed from secondary reactions taking place in the atmosphere. Natural sources of GHGs include the respiration of humans, animals, and plants; decomposition of organic matter; volcanic activity; and evaporation from the oceans. Anthropogenic sources include the combustion of fossil fuels by stationary and mobile sources, waste treatment, and agricultural processes. The following are the principal GHGs that contribute to climate change and their primary emission sources:

- **Carbon Dioxide (CO_2):** Natural sources of CO_2 include decomposition of dead organic matter; respiration of bacteria, plants, animals, and fungus; and evaporation from oceans. Anthropogenic sources include burning of coal, oil, natural gas, and wood.
- **Methane (CH_4):** CH_4 is emitted during the production and transport of coal, natural gas, and oil. CH_4 emissions also result from livestock and other agricultural practices and by the decay of organic waste in solid waste landfills.
- **Nitrous Oxide (N_2O):** N_2O is produced by both natural and human-related sources. Primary human-related sources of N_2O are agricultural soil management, sewage treatment, mobile and stationary combustion of fossil fuel, adipic acid production, and nitric acid production. N_2O is also produced naturally from a wide variety of biological sources in soil and water, particularly microbial action in wet tropical forests.
- **Fluorinated gases:** These gases are attributed to anthropogenic sources and are typically emitted in smaller quantities, but because they are potent greenhouse gases, they are sometimes called High Global Warming Potential (High GWP) gases. High GWP gases include:
    - **Chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs):** These GHGs are used for refrigeration, air conditioning, packaging, insulation, solvents, or aerosol propellants.
    - **Perfluorinated Chemicals (PFCs):** PFCs are emitted as by-products of industrial processes and are also used in manufacturing.
    - **Sulfur hexafluoride (SF_6):** This is a strong GHG used primarily as an insulator in electrical transmission and distribution systems.
    - **Hydrochlorofluorocarbons (HCFCs):** These have been introduced as temporary replacements for CFCs and are also GHGs.

- **Hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs):** These were introduced as alternatives to ozone-depleting substances in serving many industrial, commercial, and personal needs. HFCs are GHGs emitted as by-products of industrial processes and are also used in manufacturing.

GHGs are not monitored at local air pollution monitoring stations and do not represent a direct impact to human health. Rather, GHGs generated locally contribute to global concentrations of GHGs, which result in changes to the climate and environment.

GLOBAL WARMING POTENTIAL

Global Warming Potential (GWP) is a concept developed to compare the ability of each GHG to trap heat in the atmosphere relative to another gas. GWP is based on several factors, including the relative effectiveness of a gas to absorb infrared radiation and the length of time the gas remains in the atmosphere (its "atmospheric lifetime"). The GWP of each gas is measured relative to CO_2. Therefore, CO_2 has a GWP of 1. GHGs with lower emissions rates than CO_2 may still contribute to climate change because they are more effective at absorbing outgoing infrared radiation than CO_2 (i.e., high GWP). For example, SF_6, while comprising a relatively small fraction of the total GHGs emitted annually worldwide, has a GWP of 22,800, meaning that 1 ton of SF_6 has the same contribution to the greenhouse effect as approximately 22,800 tons of CO_2. This concept of CO_2 equivalence (CO_2e) is used to account for the different GWP potentials of GHGs. GHG emissions are typically measured in terms of pounds or tons of CO_2e and are often expressed in metric tons (MT) CO_2e.

POTENTIAL EFFECTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE

Emissions of GHGs have the potential to adversely affect the environment because such emissions contribute cumulatively to global climate change. GHGs have long atmospheric lifetimes (1 year to several thousand years), or long enough to be dispersed around the globe.

Although climate change is driven by global atmospheric conditions, climate change impacts are felt locally. A scientific consensus confirms that climate change is already affecting California. As noted in the Sacramento Valley Regional Report of the California's Fourth Climate Change Assessment (Houlton and Lund 2018), climate change is expected to make the Sacramento region hotter, drier, and increasingly prone to extremes like megadroughts, flooding, and large wildfires. These changing conditions are likely to affect water and energy availability, agricultural systems, plants and wildlife, public health, housing, and quality of life.

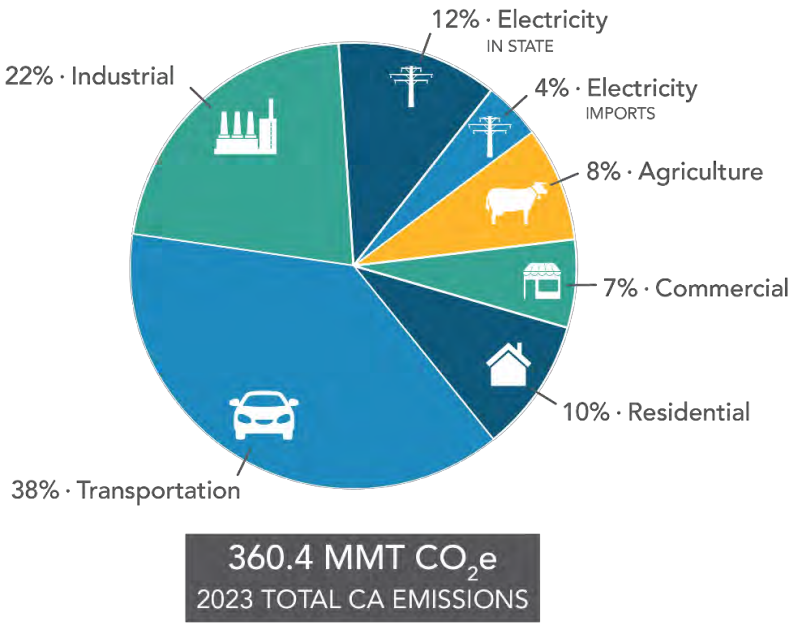
In Sacramento County, potential hazards (or exposures) related to climate change have been analyzed as part of the Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment for the Sacramento County Climate Action Plan (Communitywide CAP) (County of Sacramento 2017a). The primary effects of climate change identified for Sacramento County include

increased temperature, changes in precipitation patterns, and sea level rise.[1] Secondary consequences, which could occur as result of one or a combination of these primary effects, include increased frequency, intensity, and duration of extreme heat days and heat waves/events; loss of snowpack and decreased water supplies; increased wildfire; and increased flooding.

State Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory and Trends

The California Air Resources Board (CARB) prepares an annual inventory of statewide GHG emissions. GHGs are typically analyzed by sector, a term that refers to the type of activity. As shown in Plate CC-1, 360.4 million MT CO_2e were generated in 2023. The transportation sector represents the single largest source of California's GHG emissions in 2023, accounting for 38 percent of total GHG emissions. Transportation was followed by industrial sources, which accounted for 22 percent, and then by the electricity sector (in-state sources and imported electricity), which accounted for 16 percent of total GHG emissions (CARB 2025).

Plate CC-1: 2023 California Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory by Sector



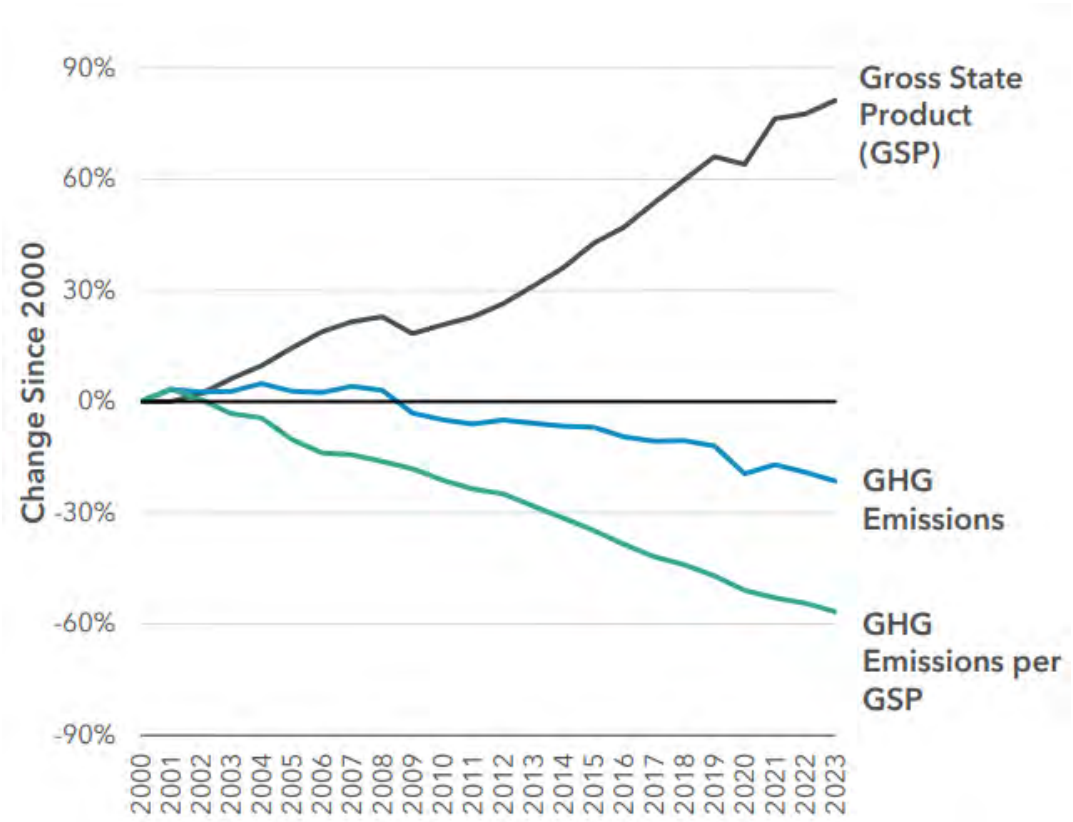
Source: CARB 2025

California has implemented several programs and regulatory measures to reduce GHG emissions. Plate CC-2: demonstrates California's progress in reducing statewide GHG emissions. Since 2007, California's GHG emissions have been declining, with the

[1] The southeastern portion of Sacramento County near the Sacramento-San Joaquin River Delta is vulnerable to the influences of sea level rise.

exception of 2021[2], even as population and gross state product (GSP) have increased, demonstrating that the carbon intensity of California's economy (the rate of GHG emissions per million dollars of GSP) is declining. From 2000 to 2023, the carbon intensity of California's economy decreased by 56.6 percent while the GSP increased by 81.2 percent. California's GSP increased 2.1 percent from 2022 to 2023. Emissions per GSP declined by 5.0 percent from 2022 to 2023.

Plate CC-2: Trends in California Greenhouse Gas Emissions (Years 2000 to 2023)



Source: CARB 2025

EXISTING CONDITIONS

SACRAMENTO COUNTY EMISSIONS

As part of the Sacramento County Climate Action Plan (CAP), the County established a baseline and forecasted GHG emissions inventory for the unincorporated community and government operations. The total unincorporated community-wide GHG emissions for baseline year 2021 was 4,159,600 MT CO_2e, while the forecasted GHG emissions for 2030 is 4,784,900 MT CO_2e (County of Sacramento 2024). As with the state,

[2] Both the 2019 to 2020 decrease and the 2020 to 2021 increase in emissions are likely due in large part to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Emissions levels in 2020 are anomalous to the long-term trend, and the one-year increase from 2020 to 2021 should be considered in the broader context of the pandemic and subsequent economic recovery that took place over 2021 (CARB 2023).

transportation is the top source of GHG emissions for Sacramento County with 44 percent of the total. In the County's inventory, transportation emissions are followed by building energy (residential and commercial/industrial) with 35 percent.

North Watt Avenue Specific Plan Area

The Specific Plan Area is in unincorporated Sacramento County along a 4-mile segment of Watt Avenue north of Interstate 80. The approximately 705-acre area includes mostly developed property with commercial, residential, light-industrial, and institutional uses, as well as some vacant and undeveloped parcels. Existing development includes one-story and multi-story commercial structures, surface parking areas, multi-family housing, single-family residential neighborhoods and employment uses. The portion of the Specific Plan Area formerly known as the North Highlands Town Center, located along Freedom Park Drive between Watt Avenue and 32nd Street, consists of the approximately 20-acre Freedom Park, several vacant parcels and a mix of residential, commercial uses, and County landmarks, including the Aerospace Museum of California. The southern portion of the Specific Plan Area, south of the Union Pacific Railroad Main Line and west of Watt Avenue, encompasses the McClellan Industrial Park and consists of light industrial and office uses and the North Area Recovery Station.

Existing sources of GHG emissions within the Specific Plan Area include emissions associated with residential and commercial building energy consumption; on-road and off-road vehicles; the supply and treatment of water to serve the Specific Plan Area; and the transport, treatment, and processing of wastewater and solid waste generated by land uses within the Specific Plan Area.

Regulatory Setting

While most do not directly inform proposed Specific Plan implementation or impact determination, federal, state, regional, and local GHG-related plans, policies, and regulations are helpful for understanding the overall context for GHG emissions impacts and strategies to reduce GHG emissions.

Federal

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is the federal agency responsible for implementing the federal Clean Air Act (CAA). On April 2, 2007, the U.S. Supreme Court held that the EPA must consider regulation of motor vehicle GHG emissions. In *Massachusetts v. Environmental Protection Agency et al.,* 12 states and cities (including California) along with several environmental organizations sued to require EPA to regulate GHGs as pollutants under the CAA (127 S. Ct. 1438 [2007]). The Supreme Court ruled that GHGs fit within the CAA's definition of a pollutant and that EPA had the statutory authority to regulate GHGs. On February 12, 2026, in a final rule issued by the EPA, the EPA "concluded that it lacks statutory authority to regulate GHG emissions in response

to global climate change concerns under CAA section 202(a)(1)".[3] Litigation challenging this rulemaking is ongoing.

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency "Endangerment" and "Cause or Contribute" Findings

On December 7, 2009, the EPA Administrator signed two distinct findings regarding GHGs under Section 202(a) of the CAA:

- *Endangerment Finding:* The current and projected concentrations of the six key GHGs—CO_2, CH_4, N_2O, HFCs, PFCs, and SF_6—in the atmosphere threaten the public health and welfare of current and future generations.
- *Cause or Contribute Finding:* The combined emissions of these GHGs from new motor vehicles and new motor vehicle engines contribute to the GHG pollution that threatens public health and welfare.

On February 12, 2026, the EPA rescinded the Administrator's 2009 findings of contribution and endangerment. Litigation challenging the rescission is ongoing.

Fuel Economy Standards for Light-Duty and Heavy-Duty Vehicles

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) regulates vehicle emissions through the Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFE) Standards, which were first published in 2010 for passenger cars and light-duty trucks. In addition to the standards for light-duty vehicles, the U.S. Department of Transportation and EPA adopted complementary standards to improve the fuel efficiency of heavy-duty trucks and buses on September 15, 2011. The Phase 1 standards together form a comprehensive heavy-duty national program for all on-road vehicles rated at a gross vehicle weight at or above 8,500 pounds for model years 2014 through 2018. The standards were phased in with increasing stringency in each model year from 2014 through 2018. Building on the success of the Phase 1 standards, EPA and NHTSA finalized Phase 2 standards for medium- and heavy-duty vehicles through model year 2027. On May 2, 2022, the NHTSA finalized CAFE Standards for model years 2024 through 2026. The final rule established standards that would require an industry-wide fleet average of approximately 49 miles per gallon for passenger cars and light trucks in model year 2026, by increasing fuel efficiency by 8 percent annually for model years 2024 and 2025, and 10 percent annually for model year 2026 (NHTSA 2022).

On June 24, 2024, NHTSA published a final rule for CAFE standards for passenger cars and light trucks built in model years 2027 through 2032, and new fuel efficiency standards for heavy-duty pickup trucks and vans built in model years 2030 through 2035. The final rule requires an industry fleet-wide average of approximately 50.4 miles per gallon for passenger cars and light trucks in model year 2031. For heavy-duty pickup trucks and

[3] Final Rule: Rescission of the Greenhouse Gas Endangerment Finding and Motor Vehicle Greenhouse Gas Emission Standards Under the Clean Air Act. 91 Fed. Reg. 7686 (February 18, 2026).

vans, the proposal would increase fuel efficiency by 10 percent year over year for model years 2030 through 2032 and 8 percent for model years 2033 through 2035.

On December 5, 2025, NHTSA published a notice of proposed rulemaking for Safer Affordable Fuel-Efficient Vehicles Rule III for passenger cars and light trucks with model years 2022-2031 to amend the maximum feasible fuel economy standards to align with the Energy Policy and Conservation Act of 1975, the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007, and other applicable laws. NHTSA projects that the amended standards would correspond to the industry fleetwide average for all light-duty vehicles of roughly 34.5 miles per gallon in model year 2031.

STATE

The legal framework for the State's GHG emission reductions has come about through Executive Orders (EOs), legislation, and regulations. The major components of California's climate change initiatives are outlined below.

GREENHOUSE GAS REDUCTION TARGETS

EXECUTIVE ORDER S-3-05

EO S-3-05, issued in recognition of California's vulnerability to the effects of climate change, set forth the following target dates by which statewide GHG emissions would be progressively reduced: by 2010, reduce GHG emissions to 2000 levels; by 2020, reduce GHG emissions to 1990 levels; and by 2050, reduce GHG emissions to 80 percent below 1990 levels.

ASSEMBLY BILL 32

In 2006, California passed the California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 (Assembly Bill [AB] 32; California Health and Safety Code Division 25.5, Sections 38500, et seq.). AB 32 put into law the mid-term GHG reduction target established in Executive Order S-3-05: reduce GHG emissions below 1990 levels by 2020. AB 32 also identified CARB as the State agency responsible for the design and implementation of emissions limits, regulations, and other measures to meet the target. With the approval of the First Update to the Scoping Plan on May 22, 2014, CARB approved 431 million metric tons (MMT) CO_2e as the 2020 emission limit, described in more detail below. In 2014, statewide GHG emissions dropped below the 2020 GHG limit and have remained below the limit since that time (CARB 2025).

EXECUTIVE ORDER B-30-15, SENATE BILL 32, AND ASSEMBLY BILL 197

EO B-30-15, signed in 2015, established a statewide GHG reduction goal of 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030. This emission reduction goal serves as an interim goal between the AB 32 target to achieve 1990 emission levels by 2020 and the long-term goal set by EO S-3-05 to reduce statewide emissions 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050. In addition, the executive order aligned California's 2030 GHG reduction goal with the European Union's 2030 reduction target that was adopted in October 2014.

Senate Bill (SB) 32 signed into law the emissions goal of EO B-30-15, extending the provisions of AB 32 from 2020 to 2030 with the target of 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030. The companion bill to SB 32, AB 197, provides additional direction to CARB on adoption of strategies to reduce GHG emissions.

EXECUTIVE ORDER B-55-18 AND ASSEMBLY BILL 1279

EO B-55-18, signed in 2018, established a new statewide goal to achieve carbon neutrality as soon as possible, but no later than 2045, and to achieve and maintain net negative emissions thereafter. The order states that this new goal is in addition to the existing statewide targets for reducing GHG emissions.

AB 1279, the California Climate Crisis Act, was signed September 16, 2022, codifying EO B-55-18. It requires statewide anthropogenic GHG emissions be reduced to at least 85 percent below 1990 levels by 2045.

STATE CLIMATE CHANGE SCOPING PLAN

In December 2008, CARB adopted the Climate Change Scoping Plan (Scoping Plan), which contains the main strategies California will implement to achieve the required GHG reductions required by AB 32 (CARB 2008). The Scoping Plan also includes CARB-recommended GHG reductions for each emissions sector of California's GHG inventory. CARB acknowledges that land use planning decisions will have large impacts on the GHG emissions that will result from the transportation, housing, industry, forestry, water, agriculture, electricity, and natural gas emissions sectors. The Scoping Plan details the regulations, alternative compliance mechanisms, and voluntary actions and incentives proposed to meet the target emission reduction levels.

CARB is required to update the Scoping Plan at least once every five years to evaluate progress and develop future inventories that may guide this process. The most current update, the *2022 Scoping Plan for Achieving Carbon Neutrality* (2022 Scoping Plan), was approved by CARB in December of 2022. The 2022 Scoping Plan lays out a path to achieve carbon neutrality by 2045 or earlier, outlining a technologically feasible, cost-effective, and equity-focused path to achieve the state's climate target. This plan extends and expands upon earlier plans with a target of reducing anthropogenic emissions to 85 percent below 1990 levels by 2045, as directed by AB 1279 (described above).

As described in Appendix D of the 2022 Scoping Plan, since local governments have authority over land use and other elements of the built environment, including transportation facilities, they play a critical role in the state's ability to meet GHG reduction legislative mandates by, for example, working to "promote residential and commercial development that supports transit, bicycling, and walking" (CARB 2022). Priority GHG reduction strategies include: reducing vehicle miles traveled (VMT); reducing or eliminating minimum parking standards; implementing complete streets policies and investments; increasing access to public transit by increasing density of development near transit; increasing public access to clean mobility options by planning for and investing in electric shuttles, bike share, car share, and walking; implementing parking pricing or transportation demand management pricing strategies; and enabling mixed-use, walkable, transit-oriented, and compact infill development.

Transportation Sector Regulations to Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Executive Order B-16-12

EO B-16-12 orders State entities under the direction of the Governor including CARB, the California Energy Commission (CEC), and Public Utilities Commission to support the rapid commercialization of zero emission vehicles (ZEV). It directs these entities to achieve various benchmarks related to ZEV, including:

- Infrastructure to support up to one million ZEV by 2020;
- Widespread use of ZEV for public transportation and freight transport by 2020;
- Over 1.5 million ZEV on California roads by 2025;
- Annual displacement of at least 1.5 billion gallons of petroleum fuels by 2025; and
- A reduction of GHG emissions from the transportation sector equaling 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050.

Executive Order S-01-07 (Low Carbon Fuel Standard)

EO S-01-07 (California Code of Regulations, Title 13, Section 95480 et seq.) requires the State to achieve a 10 percent or greater reduction by 2020 in the average fuel carbon intensity for transportation fuels in California regulated by CARB. CARB identified the Low Carbon Fuel Standard (LCFS) as a discrete early action item under AB 32, and the final CARB resolution (No. 09-31) adopting the LCFS was issued on April 23, 2009. CARB re-adopted LCFS in 2015. The LCFS was amended in 2018 to further reduce the carbon intensity to 20 percent or greater by 2030 to align with the 2030 GHG reduction target enacted through SB 32.

Executive Order N-79-20

Signed September 23, 2020, EO N-79-20 sets the goal to transition to 100 percent ZEVs for in-state sales of new passenger cars and trucks by 2035 and for medium-and heavy-duty vehicles by 2045. In addition, EO N-79-20 sets the goal for California to transition to 100 percent zero-emission off-road vehicles and equipment by 2035. While in-state sales of electric vehicles (EVs) will increase through 2045, the State does not have legislation which will restrict or preclude the use of fossil-fueled vehicles by or after 2045.

CARB Advanced Clean Cars Program/Zero Emission Vehicle Program

AB 1493 (Chapter 200, Statutes of 2002), also known as the Pavley regulations, required CARB to adopt regulations by January 1, 2005, that would result in the achievement of the “maximum feasible” reduction in GHG emissions from vehicles used in the state primarily for non-commercial, personal transportation.

In January 2012, CARB approved a new emissions-control program for model years 2017 through 2025. The program combines the control of smog, soot, and global warming gases and requirements for greater numbers of ZEV into a single package of standards called Advanced Clean Cars (California Code of Regulations, Title 13, Sections 1962.1

and 1962.2). The Advanced Clean Cars requirements include GHG standards for model year 2017 to 2025 vehicles.

The Advanced Clean Cars Program also includes the Low Emission Vehicle (LEV) III amendments to the LEV regulations (California Code of Regulations, Title 13, Section 1900 et seq.); ZEV Program and the Clean Fuels Outlet Regulation. The ZEV Program is designed to achieve California's long-term emission reduction goals by requiring manufacturers to offer specified numbers of ZEVs for sale. The Clean Fuels Outlet regulation ensures that fuels, such as electricity and hydrogen, are available to meet the needs of the new advanced technology vehicles as they come to market. In June 2022, in support of EO N-79-20, CARB proposed the Advanced Clean Cars II Regulations requiring manufacturers of light-duty passenger cars, trucks, and sport utility vehicles to transition to electric ZEV beginning with model year 2026 and phasing in of increasingly stringent requirements through 2035. By 2035, under the proposed Advanced Clean Cars II Regulations, all new passenger vehicles sold within the state would be zero emission.[4]

SENATE BILL 375

Signed in September 2008, SB 375 aligns regional transportation planning efforts, regional GHG reduction targets, and land use and housing allocations. SB 375 requires Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) to adopt a Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS), which will prescribe land use allocations in that MPO's Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). CARB adopted regional GHG targets for passenger vehicles and light trucks for 2020 and 2035 for the 18 MPOs in California. If the combination of measures in the SCS would not meet the regional targets, the MPO must prepare a separate "alternative planning strategy" to meet the targets.

Energy Sector Regulations to Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions

SENATE BILL 1078 (2002), SENATE BILL 100 (2021) – CALIFORNIA RENEWABLES PORTFOLIO STANDARD

Established in 2002 by SB 1078, California's Renewables Portfolio Standard (RPS) requires electricity providers (i.e., utilities, cooperatives, and community choice aggregators) to provide a specified minimum portion of their electricity supply from eligible renewable resources by milestone target years. Since 2002, state legislative actions have modified and accelerated the RPS several times, resulting in one of the most ambitious renewable energy standards in the country. As of December 2021, per SB 100, the RPS requires retail sellers of electricity to serve 60 percent of their electric load with renewable energy by 2030 with interim targets of 44 percent by 2024 and 52 percent by 2027, as well as requiring that all of the state's electricity come from carbon-free resources (not only RPS-eligible ones) by 2045.

[4] On May 22, 2025, the U.S. Senate voted to revoke three waivers of preemption issued by the EPA for CARB to implement the Advanced Clean Cars II regulation, the Advanced Clean Trucks regulation, and the Heavy-Duty Low NO_X Omnibus Regulation. In June 2025, the State of California filed a lawsuit against the federal government challenging the revocation of the waivers.

CALIFORNIA CODE OF REGULATIONS TITLE 20 AND TITLE 24

New buildings constructed in California must comply with the standards contained in California Code of Regulations, including Title 20, Energy Building Regulations, and Title 24, Energy Conservation Standards.

Title 20 standards range from power plant procedures and siting to energy efficiency standards for appliances. California's 2009 Appliance Efficiency Regulations (California Code of Regulations Title 20 Sections 1601–1608) were adopted by the CEC on December 3, 2008, and approved by the California Office of Administrative Law on July 10, 2009.

Title 24 is California's Building Standards Code and includes the Energy Code requirements in Title 24, Part 6, and the California Green Building Standards Code (CALGreen) in Title 24, Part 11. The Energy Code requires the design of building shells and building components to conserve energy. This includes the heating, ventilation, and air conditioning system; water heating; and some fixed lighting. Non-building energy use, or "plug-in" energy use, is not covered by Title 24. CALGreen is intended to enhance the design and construction of buildings by using building concepts that benefit the environment and public health. The provisions of the code apply to the planning, design, construction, use and occupancy of all newly constructed buildings and structures throughout California. Some key provisions of the code include, but are not limited to, requirements related to the installation of EV charging infrastructure in residential and nonresidential developments, establishment of maximum fixture water use rates to reduce indoor water use consumption, diversion of 65 percent of construction and demolition waste from landfills, and mandatory use of low-pollutant emitting interior finish materials such as paints, carpet, and flooring. CALGreen first became effective on January 1, 2011 as part of the California Building Standards Code and as the first of its kind in the country.

The standards are updated on an approximately three-year cycle to allow for consideration and possible incorporation of new energy efficiency technologies and methods.[5] The most recent update was in 2025 and took effect January 1, 2026. In addition to strengthening standards, updates allow consideration and possible incorporation of new energy-efficient technologies and methods. Energy efficient buildings require less electricity; therefore, increased energy efficiency reduces fossil fuel consumption and decreases GHG emissions. The 2025 Energy Code updates focus on expanding the use of heat pumps for space conditioning and water heating, encouraging electric-ready buildings, updating standards for photovoltaic and battery energy storage systems in high-rise multifamily and nonresidential buildings, updating space conditioning system control standards for nonresidential buildings, and updating ventilation requirements in multifamily buildings to improve indoor air quality (CEC 2025). Through

[5] The Residential Code Freeze (AB 130) from 2025–2026 Regular Session of the California Legislature, signed into law in 2025, suspends the next statewide residential energy and building code update cycle, which was originally scheduled for 2028, to reduce the cost of and encourage residential construction.

iterative updates to the Building Standards Code, increasingly stringent requirements are implemented which reduce energy consumption from new development over time.

The Building Standards Code is enforced through the local plan check and building permit process. Local government agencies may adopt and enforce additional energy standards for new buildings as reasonably necessary related to local climatologic, geologic, or topographic conditions, provided that these standards exceed those provided in the Building Standards Code.

Regional and Local

Sacramento Area Council of Governments

The Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG) serves as the MPO for the Sacramento region, maintaining the regional Metropolitan Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (MTP/SCS) in coordination with each of the local 28 member cities and counties, including Sacramento County. SACOG plays a central role in transportation infrastructure planning for the region, while also serving as a forum for the study, planning, and resolution of other planning issues facing the local member governments.

The MTP/SCS for the SACOG region is the 2025 Blueprint, which lays out a plan for the region through 2050 that links land use planning, air quality, GHG emissions, and transportation needs and addresses State climate goals (SACOG 2025). The 2025 Blueprint emphasizes revitalizing existing commercial corridors and main streets, land-efficient development (compact growth), local job opportunities, reduced traffic congestion, and investment in public transportation infrastructure.

A key implementation activity and critical component of the 2025 Blueprint is the Green Means Go program, which is a regional effort to accelerate infill development and electrify vehicle trips in locally adopted Green Zones. Green Zones are areas identified for infill development where future residents are likely to take fewer and shorter car trips than people in the surrounding community and the region. Further, Green Zones must be planned for growth and supported by local policies and actions that support increased development and redevelopment in the area, such as a specific plan.

The Specific Plan Area is within a Green Zone (SACOG 2026).

Sacramento County General Plan

The following policies from the Air Quality, Circulation, Energy, and Land Use Elements of the Sacramento County General Plan (County of Sacramento 2022a, 2022b, 2017b, 2022c) may be applicable to the proposed Specific Plan:

Policy AQ-1. New development shall be designed to promote pedestrian/bicycle access and circulation to encourage community residents to use alternative modes of transportation to conserve air quality and minimize direct and indirect emission of air contaminants.

Policy AQ-2. Support Regional Transit's efforts to secure adequate funding so that transit is a viable transportation alternative. Development shall pay its fair share of the cost of transit facilities required to serve the project.

Policy AQ-4. Developments which meet or exceed thresholds of significance for ozone precursor pollutants, and/or GHGs as adopted by the Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District (SMAQMD), shall be deemed to have a significant environmental impact. An Air Quality Mitigation Plan and/or a Greenhouse Gas Reduction Plan shall be submitted to the County of Sacramento prior to project approval, subject to review and recommendation as to technical adequacy by the Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District.

Policy AQ-5. Reduce emissions associated with vehicle miles travelled and evaporation by reducing the surface area dedicated to parking facilities; reduce vehicle emissions associated with "hunting" for on-street parking by implementing innovative parking solutions including shared parking, elimination of minimum parking requirements, creation of maximum parking requirements, and utilize performance pricing for publicly owned parking spaces both on- and off-street, as well as creating parking benefit districts.

Policy AQ-6. Provide incentives for the use of transportation alternatives, including a program for the provision of financial incentives for builders that construct ownership housing within a quarter mile of existing and proposed light rail stations.

Policy AQ-8. Promote mixed-use development and provide for increased development intensity along existing and proposed transit corridors to reduce the length and frequency of vehicle trips.

Policy AQ-10. Encourage vehicle trip reduction and improved air quality by requiring development projects that exceed the SMAQMD's significance thresholds for operational emissions to provide on-going, cost-effective mechanisms for transportation services that help reduce the demand for existing roadway infrastructure.

Policy AQ-11. Encourage contractors operating in the county to procure and to operate low-emission vehicles, and to seek low emission fleet status for their off-road equipment.

Policy AQ-16. Prohibit the idling of on-and off-road engines when the vehicle is not moving or when the off-road equipment is not performing work for a period of time greater than five minutes in any one-hour period.

Policy AQ-19. Require all feasible reductions in emissions for the operation of construction vehicles and equipment on major land development and roadway construction projects.

Policy AQ-20. Promote Cool Community strategies to cool the urban heat island, reduce energy use and ozone formation, and maximize air quality benefits by encouraging four main strategies including, but not limited to: plant trees, selective use of vegetation for landscaping, install cool roofing, and install cool pavements.

Policy AQ-22. Reduce greenhouse gas emissions from County operations as well as private development.

Policy CI-40. Whenever possible, the applicant/developer of new and infill development projects shall be conditioned to fund, implement, operate and/or participate in transportation systems management (TSM) programs to manage travel demand associated with the project.

Policy CI-41. Consider TSM programs that increase the average occupancy of vehicles and divert automobile commute trips to transit, walking, and bicycling.

Policy CI-67. When feasible, incorporate lighter colored (higher albedo) materials and surfaces, such as lighter-colored pavements, and encourage the creation of tree canopy to reduce the built environment's absorption of heat to reduce the urban "heat island" effect.

Policy EN-5. Reduce travel distances and reliance on the automobile and facilitate increased use of public transit through appropriate land use plans and regulations.

Policy LU-24. Support private development requests that propose pedestrian- and transit-friendly mixed use projects in commercial corridors, town centers, and near existing or proposed transit stops.

Policy LU-37. Provide and support development of pedestrian and bicycle connections between transit stations and nearby residential, commercial, employment or civic uses by eliminating physical barriers and providing linking facilities, such as pedestrian overcrossings, trails, wide sidewalks and safe street crossings.

Policy LU-40. Employ appropriate traffic calming measures in areas where pedestrian travel is desirable but made unsafe by a high volume or excessive speed of automobile traffic. Preference shall be given to measures that slow traffic and improve pedestrian safety while creating the least amount of conflict with emergency responders.

Policy LU-68. Give the highest priority for public funding to projects that facilitate and encourage infill, reuse, redevelopment and rehabilitation, mixed-use development, particularly in Environmental Justice Communities, and that will result in per-person vehicle miles traveled lower than the County average, and the lowest priority for projects that do not comply with public facilities Master Plan phasing sequences.

Policy LU-115. It is the goal of the County to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to 1990 levels by the year 2020. This shall be achieved through a mix of State and local action.

Policy EJ-20. The County will continue to support walking and bicycling by requiring smart growth streets (bike lanes, and sidewalks separated from the roadway with trees and planted landscaping) in transit priority areas, in Environmental Justice Communities and in new communities and developments wherever practicable.

Policy EJ-21. Provide safe, low stress, interesting and convenient environments for pedestrians and bicyclists, including inviting and adequately lit streetscapes, networks of trails, paths, parks, and open spaces that connects residences with key destinations, and encourages regular exercise and the reduction of vehicular emissions.

Sacramento County Climate Action Plan

The CAP, adopted on November 6, 2024, sets goals to reduce emissions, outlines policies and actions to achieve these goals, assesses vulnerabilities to climate change impacts, and identifies strategies to adapt to potential impacts.

The CAP is a CEQA-qualified GHG reduction plan that provides potential tiering and streamlining of GHG analyses for subsequent projects that are consistent with the County's General Plan and the CAP.

The baseline inventory of communitywide sources, including on-road transportation, building energy, solid waste, off-road vehicles and equipment, water supply, and wastewater treatment, was prepared for 2021. The CAP identifies GHG emissions reduction targets for 2030 and 2045; the 2030 target aligns with the 2022 Scoping Plan (excluding industrial stationary sources) and exceeds the statewide target of 40 percent below 1990 levels pursuant to SB 32. The 2045 target was developed in alignment with the statewide target of 85 percent below 1990 levels by 2045 pursuant to AB 1279. The CAP also includes GHG emission reduction measures associated with community activities within the unincorporated County only, and County facilities and operations that occur within both the unincorporated area and incorporated city boundaries (County of Sacramento 2024).

IMPACTS AND ANALYSIS

SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA

GHG emissions have the potential to adversely affect the environment because such emissions contribute cumulatively to global climate change. It is unlikely that a single project will contribute significantly to climate change, but cumulative emissions from many projects could affect global GHG concentrations and the global climate system. Therefore, impacts are analyzed within the cumulative context of the project's potential contribution to the significant impact of global climate change.

Based on Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, implementation of the proposed Specific Plan would result in a cumulatively considerable contribution to the significant impact of climate change if it would:

- generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment, or
- conflict with an applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases.

Section 15064.4(b) of the CEQA Guidelines states that a lead agency may consider the following three factors in assessing the significance of impacts from GHG emissions:

- The extent to which the project may increase or reduce GHG emissions as compared to the existing environmental setting.
- Whether the project emissions exceed a threshold of significance that the lead agency determines applies to the project.
- The extent to which the project complies with regulations or requirements adopted to implement a statewide, regional, or local plan for the reduction or mitigation of GHG emissions. Such regulations or requirements must be adopted by the relevant public agency through a public review process and must include specific requirements that reduce or mitigate the project's incremental contribution of GHG emissions.

Addressing GHG emissions impacts requires an agency to make a determination as to what constitutes a significant impact. The California Supreme Court's decision in *Center for Biological Diversity, et al. v. California Department of Fish and Wildlife* reinforced that there are multiple potential pathways for evaluating GHG emissions consistency with CEQA. Various thresholds that have been established by air quality management districts and lead agencies for the purpose of evaluating impacts of GHG emissions under CEQA include the use of numerical thresholds (e.g., a bright-line or efficiency-based threshold), performance-based standards, compliance with a qualified GHG reduction strategy, or compliance with Cap-and-Trade (applicable to projects directly regulated under the Cap-

and-Trade program).[6] In this decision, the California Supreme Court noted that lead agencies have several options for evaluating GHG emissions including analyzing a project's compliance with regulatory programs designed to reduce GHG emissions from particular activities; utilizing previously adopted local plans, such as a GHG reduction plan or climate action plan, created to evaluate GHG emissions for the relevant area; or relying on existing numerical thresholds of significance for GHG emissions, such as those adopted by local air districts for the relevant area.

The 2022 Scoping Plan establishes California's statewide framework for reducing GHG emissions. It identifies sector-specific actions necessary to achieve carbon neutrality by 2045 or earlier and reduce anthropogenic emissions to 85 percent below 1990 levels by 2045, consistent with AB 1279.

Regional and local plans have also been adopted for the purposes of reducing GHG emissions, including SACOG's 2025 Blueprint and the County's CAP. The 2025 Blueprint is consistent with SB 375, which requires SACOG to adopt an SCS that outlines policies to reduce per capita GHG emissions from automobiles and light trucks. The 2025 Blueprint notes that integrated transportation and land use planning is one of three broader categories that encompass factors that influence how much people drive. The 2025 Blueprint identifies several strategies related to transportation and land use planning, including prioritizing new growth in existing developed areas, revitalizing commercial corridors, and optimizing existing roadways. The County's CAP demonstrates a community-wide emissions reduction strategy consistent with statewide GHG reduction goals prescribed in SB 32 and AB 1279. The CAP establishes GHG emissions reduction targets for 2030 and 2045 that were developed to align with the statewide emissions reduction targets for 2030 and 2045 established in the 2022 State Scoping Plan and AB 1279 and considering emissions sectors relevant to the County. The targets are intended to demonstrate the County's fair-share contribution towards meeting statewide GHG reduction targets, in alignment with the statewide strategies outlined in the 2022 Scoping Plan. The CAP sets forth a package of strategies, measures, and implementing actions and presents analysis demonstrating that their collective implementation would achieve the 2030 and 2045 targets established in the CAP. The

[6] This landmark ruling suggests that lead agencies evaluate whether a proposed project "incorporates efficiency and conservation measures sufficient to contribute its portion of the overall greenhouse gas reductions necessary" for the State to achieve its own mandates (*Center for Biological Diversity, et al. v. California Department of Fish and Wildlife, the Newhall Land and Farming Company*, California Supreme Court, Case No. 5217763). If a project or plan demonstrates that the rate of GHG emissions is efficient enough to provide its share of state emissions reduction targets, the impact is not cumulatively considerable (*Center for Biological Diversity, et al. v. California Department of Fish and Wildlife*, page 12; Crockett 2011). The GHG emissions efficiency of a project or development plan is measured as the amount of emission per a specified unit of measurement. For development projects and plans, an appropriate metric is service population. Service population is the sum of residential population and employment. When dividing total GHG emissions by service population, a community is able to evaluate its overall growth and conservation plans and consider whether emissions will decrease on a per-unit basis in a way that is consistent with the State of California's GHG emissions reduction mandates.

CAP also identifies how, if these measures were implemented on a project-by-project basis, the measures collectively would achieve the 2030 and 2045 targets.

Having established the State policy and regulatory framework for assessing the cumulative significance of GHG emissions, this analysis answers the two checklist questions in CEQA Guidelines Appendix G in a single impact assessment. The California Supreme Court has expressly held that evaluating a project's GHG emissions based on its consistency with statewide climate goals is a "permissible significance criterion" under CEQA (*Center for Biological Diversity v. Dept. of Fish & Wildlife* [2015] 62 Cal.4th 204, 220–223). Therefore, a project may be found to have a less-than-significant cumulative GHG impact if it would not impede, and would reasonably contribute to, achievement of the State's legislatively established GHG reduction targets.

Whether or not the proposed Specific Plan would generate GHG emissions that would result in a substantial contribution to the significant impact of climate change or conflict with an applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purposes of reducing GHG emissions depends on whether the proposed Specific Plan would be consistent with California's long-term, science-based GHG reduction framework, as evaluated through the proposed Specific Plan's consistency with the 2022 Scoping Plan, 2025 Blueprint and the County's CAP.

METHODOLOGY AND ASSUMPTIONS

As described above, the proposed Specific Plan was reviewed for consistency with the 2022 Scoping Plan, 2025 Blueprint and the County's CAP. Nonetheless, for the purposes of illustrating how the GHG efficiency of the Specific Plan Area would change from existing conditions with implementation of the proposed Specific Plan, construction-related and operational GHG emissions were estimated using the same methods and assumptions as those described in Chapter 4, "Air Quality," of this EIR. In addition to criteria air pollutants, CalEEMod also estimates GHG emissions associated with construction and operational activities. For construction, GHG emissions were estimated for off-road construction equipment, material delivery trucks, haul trucks, and construction worker vehicles. Construction-related emissions account for on-site development and transportation and infrastructure improvements. For operational activities, GHG emissions were estimated for energy consumption (i.e., electricity and natural gas), transportation, waste, and water and wastewater.

Operational GHG emissions are distinguished by direct and indirect GHG emissions. Direct GHG emissions are generated at the location of consumption or use. For example, mobile-source emissions are direct because GHG emissions are generated as a vehicle begins to move. Indirect emissions occur at a different time or location from the point of consumption or use. Electricity-related GHG emissions are indirect because although a consumer uses electricity at their home, the fuel combustion and emissions associated with creating that electricity likely occurred off-site or at a different time.

To demonstrate changes in emissions and operational efficiency of the proposed Specific Plan, operational scenarios inclusive of existing and future development within the

Specific Plan Area were modeled. For GHG emissions associated with existing land uses within the Specific Plan Area, existing parcels were categorized by their respective land use type, and inputs for acreage and building square footage were summarized and modeled in CalEEMod. GHG emissions associated with future land uses, which account for existing land uses that would remain, existing land uses that would be demolished or redeveloped, and new development, were modeled in CalEEMod based on the anticipated land use types and sizes, including lot acreages and building square footage.

CalEEMod default inputs for operational activities including energy and water consumption, and waste generation were used. VMT and trip generation estimates attributable to development within the Specific Plan Area were modeled for three operational scenarios: (1) existing 2020 conditions within the Specific Plan Area and 2020 Sacramento region conditions; (2) future 2050 conditions in the Sacramento region with no development and no land use change within the Specific Plan Area; and (3) future 2050 conditions in the Sacramento region with implementation of new development accommodated under the proposed Specific Plan.

The 2020 existing conditions scenario represents a baseline year of 2020 to estimate GHG emissions associated with existing development within the Specific Plan Area.[7], The 2050 future conditions with no Specific Plan scenario assumes regional development within the Sacramento region and no development within the Specific Plan Area. The 2050 future conditions with Specific Plan scenario captures changes in VMT and trip generation that would occur due to regional development outside of the Specific Plan Area, as well as GHG reductions that are independent of the proposed Specific Plan. Such factors that would reduce GHG emissions independent of the proposed Specific Plan include, but are not limited to, increased fuel efficiency, fleet turnover, and the rise in use of ZEV. The analysis compares future 2050 conditions with no Specific Plan to future 2050 conditions with the proposed Specific Plan in order to isolate the impacts of the proposed Specific Plan and not “give credit” to the Specific Plan for external regulations that will reduce GHG emissions from baseline conditions.

See Appendix AQ-1 of this Draft EIR for model details, assumptions, inputs, and outputs.

IMPACT CC-1: GENERATE GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS, EITHER DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY, THAT MAY HAVE A SIGNIFICANT IMPACT ON THE ENVIRONMENT AND CONFLICT WITH AN APPLICABLE PLAN, POLICY, OR REGULATION ADOPTED FOR THE PURPOSES OF REDUCING GHG EMISSIONS

The analysis under this impact (1) demonstrates consistency with the CARB Scoping Plan; (2) demonstrates consistency with the SACOG 2025 Blueprint; (3) evaluates consistency with the Sacramento County CAP reduction measures; and (4) quantifies

[7] The baseline year of 2020 is consistent with the existing conditions transportation modeling conducted in support of this Draft EIR.

GHG emissions and demonstrates the GHG efficiency associated with the proposed Specific Plan.

CARB 2022 Scoping Plan Consistency

As described in the 2022 Scoping Plan, the State's climate goals depend on action by local governments, which have authority over planning, zoning, infrastructure investments, and related actions – particularly related to the most important source of emissions: the transportation sector.

The 2022 Scoping Plan further describes in Appendix D, "Local Actions", that residential and mixed-use projects with all key project attributes identified in Table 3 of Appendix D to the 2022 Scoping Plan "should accommodate growth in a manner consistent with State GHG reduction and equity prioritization goals" (CARB 2022). Accordingly, Table CC-1 below evaluates consistency of the proposed Specific Plan with the key project attributes identified in Table 3 of Appendix D to the 2022 Scoping Plan.

Table CC-1: 2022 Scoping Plan Consistency Evaluation

Sector	Scoping Plan Project Attribute	Project Consistency
Transportation Electrification	Provides EV charging infrastructure that, at a minimum, meets the most ambitious voluntary standard in the California Green Building Standards Code at the time of project approval.	**Not Included.** Future development projects under the proposed Specific Plan would comply with mandatory CALGreen (Title 24, Part 11) requirements related to the provision of EV charging infrastructure. Implementation of voluntary standards for EV charging infrastructure within the Specific Plan Area would add costs to development projects. Such projects are necessary for the proposed Specific Plan to achieve GHG emission reductions associated with compact, infill development in a low-VMT area. Therefore, implementation of this measure would conflict with the objectives of the proposed Specific Plan and the goal of reducing GHG emissions within an area identified to accommodate infill development and reduce regulatory and economic barriers to infill development.
VMT Reduction	Is located on infill sites that are surrounded by existing urban uses and reuses or redevelops previously undeveloped or underutilized land that is presently served by existing utilities and essential public services (e.g., transit, streets, water, sewer).	**Consistent.** The purpose of the proposed Specific Plan is to facilitate and expedite infill development and investment in the existing, urbanized North Watt Avenue commercial corridor. The proposed Specific Plan includes standards and strategies necessary to realize infill development, including reuse of underutilized and vacant parcels within the Specific Plan Area, which is served with all necessary infrastructure. As demonstrated by SACOG modeling, the proposed Specific Plan Area is a low-VMT area, with projected VMT per capita that is 50 to 85 percent less than the regional average in 2040 (SACOG 2019). Additionally, as discussed further in the 2025 Blueprint discussion below, the Specific Plan Area and immediately surrounding areas have been identified by SACOG as an area where projects that create more infill housing, increase mobility, and reduce vehicle emissions should be focused. As an existing urbanized area, the Specific Plan Area is presently served by existing utilities and essential services. Improvements to roadways and utility infrastructure within the Specific Plan Area would include County-initiated improvements, improvements consistent with the Hybrid Urban Boulevard Alternative of the Re-Imagine North Watt Corridor Plan, improvements under the County's Active Transportation Plan, and frontage improvements implemented in coordination with private development and/or private property owners. Therefore, the proposed Specific Plan would be consistent with this attribute.
VMT Reduction	Does not result in the loss or conversion of natural and working lands.[a]	**Consistent.** As discussed in Chapter 19 of this EIR, "Summary of Impacts and Their Disposition," the Specific Plan Area is located in the urbanized North Highlands community and the proposed Specific Plan is an urban reuse and redevelopment project that includes new transit-oriented development with improved bicycle, pedestrian, and bus facilities, new landscaping, and infrastructure (including stormwater drainage, water supply, and wastewater conveyance). The Specific Plan Area does not contain any forest land and is primarily designated as "Urban and Built-Up Land", as described in Chapter 19 of this EIR. Landscaping, including green spaces and tree canopies, would be provided as outlined in the proposed Specific Plan's Development and Design Standards. Therefore, the proposed Specific Plan would be consistent with this attribute.

Sector	Scoping Plan Project Attribute	Project Consistency
VMT Reduction	Consists of transit-supportive densities (minimum of 20 residential dwelling units per acre) or is in proximity to existing transit stops (within a half mile) or satisfies more detailed and stringent criteria specified in the region's SCS.	**Consistent.** The proposed Specific Plan promotes higher-density, transit-supportive development with densities of up to 50 units per acre for the Mixed-Use Neighborhood Zone and 100 units per acre for the Mixed-Use Corridor Zone. While the proposed Specific Plan does not set the minimum allowable density at 20 units/acre in order to avoid introducing a constraint in a still-challenged environment for construction costs and an area that has lacked investment under a previous zoning scheme that did set higher minimum densities, the County has received applications at well above 20 units/acre in the area, and anticipates that most or all housing development under the proposed Specific Plan would be at least 20 units/acre. The County's Re-Imagine North Watt Corridor Plan design identifies potential improvements to transit stops and access. Sacramento Regional Transit provides bus service to the Specific Plan Area, and just south of the Specific Plan Area is the Watt/I-80 light rail station. Therefore, the proposed Specific Plan is consistent with this attribute.
VMT Reduction	Reduces parking requirements by eliminating parking requirements or including maximum allowable parking ratios (i.e., the ratio of parking spaces to residential units or square feet) or providing a residential parking supply at a ratio of less than one parking space per dwelling unit or, for multi-family residential development, requiring parking costs to be unbundled from costs to rent or own a residential unit.	**Consistent.** The proposed Specific Plan development standards outline that no new off-street vehicle parking is required for proposed projects within the Specific Plan Area. If off-street parking is proposed, it must meet relevant County standards from Zoning Code Section 5.9.3 for parking space and driveway size, design, orientation, configuration, parking space types, maneuvering, and access. Therefore, any proposed off-street parking would be subject to County standards, but there are no requirements to meet a certain minimum number of parking spaces for any new development. Therefore, the proposed Specific Plan is consistent with this attribute.

Sector	Scoping Plan Project Attribute	Project Consistency
VMT Reduction	At least 20 percent of units included are affordable to lower-income residents.	**Consistent.** Much of the recent multi-family development in the County and in the Sacramento region has been deed-restricted, income-restricted, subsidized affordable housing. The proposed Specific Plan would accommodate subsidized affordable housing, as well as market-rate, multi-family housing, both for-sale and for-rent in this low-VMT area. Understanding that tax credits for subsidized affordable housing projects are competitive and finite, the County is also pursuing strategies that promote housing construction, including housing types and designs that can be made relatively more affordable through design and a reduction in overall development costs. While the proposed Specific Plan does not include an inclusionary housing requirement for these reasons, the Specific Plan allows subsidized affordable housing projects, and does not conflict with this Scoping Plan attribute.
VMT Reduction	Results in no net loss of existing affordable units.	**Consistent.** Planned development under the proposed Specific Plan would primarily involve vacant properties and underutilized non-residential properties. Therefore, the proposed Specific Plan would be consistent with this attribute.
Building Decarbonization	Uses all-electric appliances without natural gas connections and does not use propane or other fossil fuels for space heating, water heating, or indoor cooking.	**Consistent with Mitigation.** The California Energy Code (Title 24 Part 6) contains requirements for electric-ready design for residential units and commercial kitchens. Planned development under the proposed Specific Plan would be subject to such requirements. Additionally, Mitigation Measure CC-1 is included and would require all nonresidential development to be designed and constructed as all-electric ready. Implementation of Mitigation Measure CC-1 allows for new development projects to use all-electric appliances by providing adequate wiring and electrical capacity. Therefore, with mitigation, the proposed Specific Plan would be consistent with this attribute.

Notes:

[a] The 2022 Scoping Plan describes natural and working lands as “forests, grasslands, shrublands and chaparral, croplands, wetlands, sparsely vegetated lands, and the green spaces in urban and built environments” (CARB 2022).

SACOG 2025 Blueprint Consistency

As described above, the 2025 Blueprint identifies several strategies related to land use and transportation planning, including prioritizing future development in existing cities, revitalizing commercial corridors, and optimizing existing roadways (to make the most efficient use of existing facilities and avoid unnecessarily adding to the backlog of existing road repair liabilities). The proposed Specific Plan would align with and directly implement these strategies by revitalizing the North Watt Avenue Specific Plan Area, accelerating infill development by prioritizing public investments in this area, including enhanced streetscapes, thereby supporting regional strategies and actions to reduce GHG emissions.

Integrated land use and transportation planning can decrease mobile source GHG emissions by increasing the share of bicycle, walking, and transit use and by shortening vehicle trips. The 2025 Blueprint notes that this is accomplished through compact development with greater density of homes and a mix of jobs and housing. As described above in the Regulatory Setting, an implementation activity and critical component of the 2025 Blueprint is the Green Means Go program. To accelerate infill development and implement the Green Means Go Program within the North Watt corridor area (which is inclusive of the Specific Plan Area), the North Watt Corridor Green Zone was established. In other words, the Specific Plan Area and immediately surrounding areas have been identified by SACOG as an area where local jurisdictions will promote infill development, reduce regulatory and economic barriers to infill, and support new transportation options as part of the Green Means Go program in order to reduce GHG emissions and achieve the region's climate goals. Additionally, as noted above, the Sacramento County General Plan highlights the County's strategy to accommodate as much residential, commercial, and employment capacity as possible within existing urban areas in order to implement the SACOG's vision outlined in the 2025 Blueprint for more compact urban growth, among other land use planning goals.

The proposed Specific Plan would align with and exemplify the priorities and strategies of the 2025 Blueprint to reduce regional emissions by facilitating infill development and growth that is compact and efficient. Therefore, the proposed Specific Plan is consistent with and would not conflict with implementation of the 2025 Blueprint.

Sacramento County CAP Consistency

The CAP includes community GHG reduction measures that will reduce emissions in the unincorporated county, which are grouped into eight policy focus areas. For discretionary projects, the CAP includes a Consistency Checklist for use by eligible projects to demonstrate consistency with the CAP and ensure that specified GHG reduction measures applicable to discretionary projects and associated performance standards are met. As the proposed Specific Plan is not a discretionary **development** project, **but instead an implementation of the General Plan,** the CAP Consistency Checklist is not **directly** applicable for the purposes of this analysis.

To demonstrate the proposed Specific Plan's support of and consistency with the CAP, the proposed Specific Plan's intent, design features, and development standards are evaluated against relevant elements of the nine policy focus areas of the CAP.

INCREASE CARBON SEQUESTRATION IN THE URBAN FOREST AND NATURAL AND WORKING LANDS

The proposed Specific Plan includes development standards for Parking Lot Shade, which require tree planting for proposed new surface parking areas that specify the number of trees depending on the number of proposed parking stalls, or an equivalent design that provides a minimum of 50 percent canopy coverage. Proposed development projects that would result in the removal of trees would be subject to the requirements of County Zoning Code Section 5.2.4, which include requirements for tree replacements. Additionally, while primarily targeted at potential biological resources impacts, Mitigation Measures BR-5a and BR-5b, which include actions to protect native trees during construction, such as use of appropriate pruning techniques and avoidance of construction or landscaping activities in areas that may impact native trees, and to compensate for any unavoidable tree removal, would further support carbon sequestration associated with the proposed Specific Plan.

DECARBONIZE THE ENERGY SUPPLY

As described in Section 8, Energy, of this EIR, the proportion of SMUD-delivered electricity for all customers generated from GHG-free energy sources is anticipated to increase to 100 percent by 2030 based on SMUD's 2030 Zero Carbon Plan (SMUD 2021). Additionally, the CAP requires the County to coordinate with SMUD to identify opportunities and potential sites for installing renewable energy resources and battery storage projects, in addition to encouraging and streamlining the permitting of rooftop solar and battery storage projects for existing buildings. Implementation of these County-initiated actions would occur separately from the proposed Specific Plan, but would support implementation of this measure on a County-wide basis.

IMPROVE ENERGY EFFICIENCY AND DECARBONIZE BUILDINGS

New residential and nonresidential development constructed under the proposed Specific Plan would be required to be constructed to meet all applicable energy efficiency standards at the time of construction and would be required to comply with the current energy performance standards of Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations, including the Building Energy Efficiency Standards (Title 24, Part 6) and CALGreen (Title 24, Part 11). Subsequent updates to the Building Energy Efficiency Standards (California Code of Regulations Title 24, Part 6) over time would include increasingly stringent requirements such that future development would inherently be more efficient than buildings constructed in accordance with the 2022 Title 24, Part 6 requirements. Additionally, Measure CC-1 would require all nonresidential projects to be designed and constructed as all electric ready beyond the Building Energy Efficiency Standard requirements, thereby reducing non-electricity related GHG emissions and supporting building decarbonization.

DECARBONIZE EQUIPMENT

In accordance with measures identified by CARB as necessary to meet the state's GHG reduction targets[8], the proportion of zero-emissions equipment in construction equipment fleets is anticipated to increase over time. Therefore, as buildout of the Specific Plan Area progresses over time, development projects would inherently use increased levels of zero-emissions construction equipment. Additionally, while primarily targeted at reducing potential air quality impacts, Mitigation Measure AQ-4a, which requires development projects to use zero-emission construction equipment as commercially available, would reduce construction-related GHG emissions and support the CAP's goal of equipment decarbonization. Similarly, Mitigation Measure AQ-1a would require implementation of best management practices, such as minimizing idling time and maintaining construction equipment in accordance with manufacturer's specifications, which would further reduce construction-related GHG emissions.

INSTITUTIONALIZE LOW-CARBON TRANSPORTATION

The CAP focuses on measures to support the widespread adoption of hybrid and EVs in order to institutionalize low-carbon transportation. Future development projects under the proposed Specific Plan would comply with CALGreen (Title 24, Part 11) requirements related to the provision of EV chargers.

REDUCE VEHICLE MILES TRAVELED AND VEHICLE TRIPS

The proposed Specific Plan would implement compact, infill, mixed use development that would locate residents near jobs and retail amenities with direct and convenient pedestrian and bicycle access, thereby reducing the need for motor vehicle travel and achieving associated VMT efficiencies. The proposed Specific Plan is located within an area that is projected to generate VMT per capita at a rate that is 50 to 85 percent less than the regional average in 2040 (SACOG 2019). As further described in Chapter 16, "Transportation" of this EIR, implementation of the proposed Specific Plan would result in a reduction in VMT per capita. Additionally, the proposed Specific Plan is located within the North Watt Corridor Green Zone, which has been identified as an area where projects that create more infill housing, increase mobility, and reduce vehicle emissions should be focused. The proposed Specific Plan has been developed specifically to achieve transportation and VMT efficiencies through the compact, infill development that would be implemented through the proposed Specific Plan.

The proposed Specific Plan supports transit-oriented and pedestrian-friendly development along a major transportation corridor and in proximity to existing transit services, consistent with policies encouraging transit-supportive land use patterns and multimodal accessibility, consistent with County General Plan Policies LU-24, LU-37, LU-38, LU-92, and AQ-8. Additionally, the proposed Specific Plan land use mix would inherently encourage transit use by providing residential and employment-related development in proximity to existing and planned transit. Watt Avenue (where the Specific Plan Area is located) is an existing corridor with existing access to transit and proposed

[8] The 2022 Scoping Plan identifies an action for the construction equipment sector of electrifying 25 percent of energy demand by 2030 and 75 percent by 2045.

future improvements to transit facilities, which provides opportunities for alternative transportation modes to passenger vehicle travel, thereby supporting a reduction in vehicle trips and VMT. Sacramento Regional Transit (SacRT) provides bus services to the Specific Plan Area with stops located along Watt Avenue near locations of potential future development projects, and there is an existing light rail station just south of the Specific Plan Area. SacRT has identified the Specific Plan Area for priority transit investments, such as in the 2021 Sacramento Regional Transit District High-Capacity Bus Service Study, which identified Watt Avenue as a suitable candidate for high-capacity bus service, as well as in the 2023 Sacramento Regional Transit Bus Stop Improvement Plan, which identified the Watt Avenue Corridor through North Highlands as a "High Priority" Corridor in most need of improvement. As described in Section 3, "Circulation and Public Realm" of the proposed Specific Plan, bus stop improvements may be included as a part of the County-initiated, likely phased implementation of the Re-Imagine North Watt Corridor Concept Plan. Additionally, as further described in Chapter 16, "Transportation" of this EIR, the proposed Specific Plan maintains and reinforces pedestrian infrastructure requirements, including continuous sidewalks, enhanced crossings, and pedestrian-oriented design within district centers. Future development projects within the Specific Plan Area would be required to construct frontage improvements consistent with adopted standards, including bicycle accommodations where applicable.

INCREASE INFILL DEVELOPMENT

The purpose of the proposed Specific Plan is to facilitate and expedite infill development and investment in the existing, urbanized North Watt Avenue commercial corridor. The proposed Specific Plan includes standards and strategies necessary to realize infill development, including reuse of underutilized and vacant parcels within the Specific Plan Area, which is served with all necessary infrastructure. As outlined in Chapter 2, "Project Description", the objectives of the proposed Specific Plan are focused in increasing infill development, such as by accelerating private investment, including infill development that will add housing near jobs and services; identifying and implementing public infrastructure improvements necessary to support infill development; and removing regulatory constraints and increasing opportunities for by-right approval of infill development. As discussed above for the 2025 Blueprint, the Specific Plan Area is part of the North Watt Corridor Green Zone, which was identified by SACOG as an area where local jurisdictions will promote infill development, reduce regulatory and economic barriers to infill, and support new transportation options.

To further support infill development, the CAP focuses on influencing parking policies and behaviors. The proposed Specific Plan development standards outline that no new off-street vehicle parking is required for proposed projects within the Specific Plan Area. If off-street parking is proposed, it must meet relevant County standards from Zoning Code Section 5.9.3 for parking space and driveway size, design, orientation, configuration, parking space types, maneuvering, and access.

MINIMIZE WASTE AND RECOVER MATERIALS FROM THE WASTE STREAM

Future development projects under the proposed Specific Plan would comply with regulatory requirements related to waste minimization and material recovery, including

requirements in accordance with CALGreen (Title 24, Part 11), SB 1383 (Short-Lived Climate Pollutant Reduction Strategy), AB 1201 (Compostable Product Standards Act), SB 54 (Plastic Pollution Prevention and Packaging Producer Responsibility Act), and AB 1276 (Single-Use Foodware Accessories and Standard Condiments). In accordance with these regulatory requirements, waste minimization and material recovery would be achieved through measures including, but not limited to, organics collection services, increased use of compostable and recyclable food service ware, provision of educational materials and training by the County, and performance of container audits.

GROWTH MANAGEMENT

CAP measures related to growth management are specific to future development projects proposed outside of the County's Urban Policy Area and/or Urban Services Boundary. As the Specific Plan Area is located entirely within the unincorporated County, the proposed Specific Plan would not result in inconsistencies with the CAP related to growth management.

Quantified Analysis Demonstrating GHG Efficiency Associated with Proposed Specific Plan

Implementation of the proposed Specific Plan, including future development within the Specific Plan Area, along with required transportation, water, sewer, and drainage improvements, would result in the generation of GHG emissions due to construction of the anticipated development and operation of new uses.

During construction, exhaust GHG emissions would be generated from a variety of sources such as heavy-duty construction equipment, haul trucks, material delivery trucks, and construction worker vehicles. Construction would be temporary, with development of discrete land uses occurring over the buildout horizon of the Specific Plan, which would be subject to market conditions, but is assumed to be approximately 23 years for the purposes of this EIR (2027-2050). GHG emissions generated by these sources were quantified using emission factors and methodologies described in the previous section, "Methodology and Assumptions." To provide a more comprehensive assessment of cumulative GHG emissions, construction-related GHG emissions that would result from full buildout of the proposed Specific Plan were amortized over an estimated 30-year operational lifetime.

Long-term operational emissions would be generated by the day-to-day activities associated with existing and future uses throughout the Specific Plan Area. Operational GHG emission sources would include energy consumption (i.e., electricity and natural gas), transportation, the supply and treatment of water to serve the Specific Plan Area, and the transport, treatment, and processing of wastewater and solid waste generated by land uses within the Specific Plan Area.

Table CC-2 presents the estimated construction emissions, annual operational emissions by sector, and operational emissions per service population for these scenarios:

(1) existing 2020 conditions within the Specific Plan Area and 2020 Sacramento region conditions;

(2) future 2050 conditions in the Sacramento region with no development and no land use change within the Specific Plan Area; and

(3) future 2050 conditions in the Sacramento region with implementation of new development accommodated under the proposed Specific Plan.

For the purposes of illustrating how the GHG efficiency of the Specific Plan Area would change from existing conditions with implementation of the proposed Specific Plan, long-term operational GHG emissions associated with the existing and future land uses within the Specific Plan Area were modeled and divided by the projected service population under each scenario.[9] As shown in Table CC-2, annual total operational emissions associated with future land uses within the Specific Plan Area would increase compared to existing development. However, the proposed new development anticipated under the Specific Plan would result in a 79-percent improvement in GHG efficiency (emissions per service population) compared to existing conditions within the Specific Plan Area and a 74-percent improvement in efficiency compared to 2050 conditions without implementation of the proposed Specific Plan. Furthermore, the improvement in GHG efficiency that would result from the proposed Specific Plan would exceed the GHG efficiencies achieved through implementation of the CAP, which was estimated to result in a 63 percent improvement in GHG efficiency in Sacramento County[10].

Summary

The proposed Specific Plan would facilitate compact and efficient infill development and growth in the Specific Plan Area, which has been identified by the County and SACOG as a targeted area for accelerating infill development and removing barriers to development, thereby reducing GHG emissions in alignment with state, regional, and local GHG emissions reductions and climate planning strategies. As discussed in Table CC-1, mitigation is included to ensure the proposed Specific Plan's consistency with the 2022 Scoping Plan. Additionally, as discussed above, the proposed Specific Plan would be consistent with strategies outlined in the 2025 Blueprint and County CAP. As shown in Table CC-2 above, implementation of the proposed Specific Plan would result in a substantial improvement in GHG efficiency compared to existing conditions within the Specific Plan Area.

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[9] The total service population is calculated based on the estimate of residents and local employees accommodated under existing conditions and with implementation of the proposed Specific Plan, as applicable to the respective scenarios.

[10] In order to achieve the CAP's target GHG emissions levels in the 2045 CAP horizon year (724,800 MT CO_2e per year) a 63 percent improvement in GHG efficiency (i.e., emissions per service population) is required to reduce emissions from the Adjusted Business As Usual emissions (1,962,500 MT CO_2e) based on the estimated population (844,761) and employment (356,105) projections in 2045 (County of Sacramento 2024).

Table CC-2: Existing and Future Specific Plan Area Emissions and GHG Efficiency

Proposed Specific Plan Emissions Source	Existing Development GHG Emissions (2020) (MT CO_2e)	Existing Development (No Specific Plan) GHG Emissions (2050) [a] (MT CO_2e)	Future (Existing + New under Specific Plan) GHG Emissions (2050) (MT CO_2e)
Total Potential Construction Emissions	--	--	23,578
Annual Construction Amortized over 30 years	**--**	**--**	**786**
Annual Operational Mobile Activity	171,050	141,470	182,201
Annual Operational Area Sources	111	111	260
Annual Operational Energy Sources [b]	15,664	4,859	10,695
Annual Operational Water Use	892	510	752
Annual Operational Waste Generation	3,278	3,278	4,986
Annual Operational Refrigerant Use	2,348	2,348	2,119
Total Annual Operational Emissions	**193,342**	**152,575**	**201,013**
Specific Plan Employees	4,275	4,275	6,478
Specific Plan Residents	2,687	2,687	28,566
Total Service Population Associated with Specific Plan Area (Employees + Residents)	**6,962**	**6,962**	**35,044**
GHG Efficiency (MT CO_2e per service population)	**27.77**	**21.92**	**5.74**
Improvement in GHG Efficiency from Existing Development (2020 and 2050 with no Specific Plan) [c]	**--**	**--**	**2020: 79%** **2050 No Specific Plan: 74%**

CO_2e = carbon dioxide equivalents; GHG = greenhouse gas; MT = metric tons

Notes:

[a] The scenario examining 2050 conditions with no development within the Specific Plan Area is used so that factors that would reduce emissions, but that are independent of the proposed Specific Plan, are not reflected in the net emissions estimate. Such factors include, but are not limited to, increased fuel efficiency, fleet turnover, and the rise in use of zero-emissions vehicles.

[b] Emissions for analysis year 2050 assume compliance with the Renewable Portfolio Standards for emissions in 2050, which require utilities to provide carbon-free electricity by 2045.

[c] Calculated based on the decrease in emissions (MT CO_2e) per service population between existing development (2020 and 2050 with no Specific Plan) and future (existing + new under Specific Plan) development.

Nonetheless, without inclusion of mitigation, the proposed Specific Plan could conflict with the objectives of the 2022 Scoping Plan. The impact is **potentially cumulatively considerable**.

Mitigation Measures

Construction

AQ-1a: Implement SMAQMD's Basic Construction Emission Control Practices (see Impact AQ-1 in Chapter 4, "Air Quality")

AQ-4a: Use Zero-Emission Construction Equipment Where Commercially Available (see Impact AQ-4 in Chapter 4, "Air Quality")

Operations

BR-5a: Implement Native Tree Protection (see Impact BR-5 in Chapter 5, "Biological Resources")

BR-5c: Mitigate for Non-Native Tree Canopy (see Impact BR-5 in Chapter 5, "Biological Resources")

CC-1: Implement All-Electric Ready Design in New Mixed-Use and Nonresidential Development

The County shall require new mixed-use and nonresidential development projects within the Specific Plan Area to be designed and constructed as all-electric ready with the necessary wiring and electrical capacity. Compliance shall be verified by the County prior to the issuance of building permit(s).

Significance after Mitigation

As presented in the discussion above, the proposed Specific Plan would be consistent with regional and local plans and policies adopted to reduce GHG emissions but could conflict with the 2022 Scoping Plan. Mitigation Measure CC-1 would require new mixed-use and nonresidential buildings to be designed and constructed as all-electric ready beyond current Building Energy Efficiency Standard requirements, providing adequate wiring and electrical capacity to support building decarbonization measures and reducing GHG emissions from building operations. While primarily targeted at reducing potential air quality impacts, Mitigation Measure AQ-4a, which requires development projects of a certain size located in proximity to sensitive receptors to use zero-emission construction equipment as commercially available, would reduce construction-related GHG emissions. Additionally, Mitigation Measure AQ-1a would require implementation of best management practices, such as minimizing idling time and maintaining construction equipment in accordance with manufacturer's specifications, which would further reduce construction-related GHG emissions. Similarly, while primarily targeted at potential biological resources impacts, Mitigation Measures BR-5a and BR-5b, which include actions to protect native trees during construction, such as use of appropriate pruning techniques and avoidance of construction or landscaping activities in areas that may impact native trees, and to compensate for any unavoidable tree removal, would further support carbon sequestration associated with the proposed Specific Plan. Finally, as

shown in Table CC-2, would result in a substantial increase in GHG efficiency. Therefore, this impact would be **less than cumulatively considerable.**

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7 CULTURAL AND PALEONTOLOGICAL RESOURCES

INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes the environmental and regulatory setting for cultural resources and paleontological resources[1] in the North Watt Avenue Specific Plan Area, identifies and analyzes impacts related to cultural resources and paleontological resources from implementation of the proposed Specific Plan, and recommends mitigation measures to reduce or eliminate significant impacts.

Tribal cultural resources (TCRs) are separate and distinct from cultural resources, and are discussed separately in Chapter 16, "Tribal Cultural Resources." In addition, because future construction in the Specific Plan Area may have significant effects on unique paleontological resources, the paleontology analysis has been included in this EIR chapter.

Discussion of cultural resources in this chapter is based on, and contains portions of, the *Cultural Resources Study of the North Watt Corridor Planning Area, North Highlands, Sacramento County, California*, February 2010, prepared by PAR Environmental Services, Inc. (PAR) (PAR 2010) and reported in the "Cultural Resources" chapter of the *Final Environmental Impact Report North Watt Avenue Corridor Plan*, April 2012, prepared by the County of Sacramento Community Planning and Development Department (Sacramento County 2012).

ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

The Specific Plan Area is positioned along an approximate four (4)-mile segment of Watt Avenue north of Interstate-80 to Antelope Road/U Street within the North Highlands community of unincorporated Sacramento County. The Specific Plan Area is generally situated between the McClellan Park commercial development (former McClellan Air Force Base) and an area informally called "West of Watt" to the west, and single-family residential neighborhoods to the east. The environment has been extensively altered by military and urban development. It is highly developed with residential, commercial, and recreational uses that have been paved, graded, filled, and landscaped, and/or contain buildings and structures.

The region surrounding the Specific Plan Area would have been near the nexus of Plains Miwok and Nisenan tribal territories. See Chapter 16, "Tribal Cultural Resources," for additional information.

[1] Because construction of the proposed project may have significant effects on unique paleontological resources, the paleontology analysis has been included in this EIR chapter rather than with Geology in Chapter 20, "Summary of Impacts and Their Disposition."

PRECONTACT SETTING

The following text has been extracted and edited from the Cultural Resources chapter of the *Final Environmental Impact Report North Watt Avenue Corridor Plan*, April 2012 (Sacramento County 2012).

One of the earliest clearly dated contexts for human occupation in north central California is from site CA-SHA-475 located north of Redding, where a charcoal based C-14 date suggests initial Native American presence within this area around 6,500 years ago. Continuous use of the region is indicated on the basis of evidence from this and other regional sites, particularly within the Farmington area and along the Truckee River drainage east of Sacramento within the Sierra Nevada. Most of the artifactual material dating to this early time period suggests cultural affiliation with the Borax Lake area—the presence of large wide-stemmed projectile points and manos and metates being the most prominent and distinctive artifact types represented. The possibility exists that this early culture represents Hokan-speaking peoples who were also ancestral to those who subsequently expanded into the southern Cascade, the southern Klamath, the North Coast Range, and the lower reaches of the Sierra Nevada near Folsom and Sacramento.

Sometime around AD 200-400, the first major disruption of this early California culture is believed to have occurred. Arriving ultimately from Southern Oregon and the Columbia and Modoc Plateau region and proceeding down the major drainage systems (including the Feather, Yuba and American Rivers), Penutian-speaking peoples began arriving in the area and soon occupied much of the Sacramento Valley floor and the margins of the Sacramento River. Presumably introduced by these later arrivals were more extensive use of bulbs and other plant foods, animal and fishing products more intensively processed with mortars and pestles, and perhaps the bow and arrow and associated small stemmed- and corner-notched projectile points. In the northernmost Sacramento Valley, the so-called Shasta (archaeological) Complex represents the material culture record of the local Penutian speakers. Generally similar archaeological expressions also define the Penutian-speaking occupants of the northern Sierra Nevada around Grass Valley and Nevada City, and the Nisenan ancestors who occupied the area in the foothills above and valley margins around Sacramento, Folsom, Orangevale, and Citrus Heights.

CULTURAL RESOURCES SETTING

EARLY SETTLEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT

The Specific Plan Area is within the boundaries of the historic Rancho Del Paso, a land grant encompassing 30 square miles awarded to Eliab Grimes by the Mexican government in 1844. By 1849, the Rancho was owned by Samuel Norris, who spent the next decade defending his claim to ownership in U.S. Courts. By the time Norris was recognized legally as the owner, he was deeply in debt and eventually lost the rancho to his lawyers, James Ben Ali Haggin and Lloyd Tevis.

Haggin had a passion for horses and in 1873 hired John Mackley, a horse trainer, to run the rancho. Under Mackey's guidance, backed by Haggin's considerable wealth, Rancho

del Paso became synonymous with well-trained, thoughtfully bred racehorses. Haggin racehorses dominated the racing world for nearly 20 years. In 1891, Haggin retired from racing, although he continued to breed and sell horses until 1905.

Haggin and Tevis sold Rancho del Paso in 1910 to the Sacramento Valley Colonization Company for 1.5 million dollars. The new owners immediately divided the land into 20-acre lots and began a nationwide campaign to entice people to California. The ads invited potential farmers to experience a “Garden of Eden” promising that “the table will be kept supplied with fresh fruit of some variety or other every day of the year.” In reality, the lack of water and difficulty of transporting goods and produce to and from Sacramento inhibited the success of the new colony, and most of the former Rancho was occupied only by jackrabbits, grasshoppers, and the occasional turkey into the 1930s.

McClellan Air Force Base

In the early 1930s, the Army was actively searching for an air depot site capable of expanding with the military’s increased reliance on aviation. Although several California sites were considered, including Mather Field in Sacramento, most were unsuitable or lacked adequate space for future growth. With the assistance and lobbying of Arthur Dudley, Secretary Manager of the Sacramento Chamber of Commerce, a 1,200-acre site was selected within the old Rancho del Paso and money was appropriated by Congress to purchase the property.

The site of the future McClellan AFB was ideal for several reasons. First, there were less than two dozen landowners, most of whom were willing to sell their unproductive farms and move elsewhere. Second, the land was primarily vacant, providing a blank slate for base designers. Third, the site was close to the Sacramento River and adjacent to the Southern Pacific Railroad mainline, meeting the Army’s transportation needs. Title to all parcels passed to the federal government in October 1936, although the official groundbreaking ceremony was held a month earlier, on September 8, 1936. Construction of the new depot took several years, partially because of the size of the immense hangers and warehouses, designed to accommodate the largest bombers used by the military at that time.

Dedication of the installation occurred on April 29, 1939. At that time, the depot had been operating for several months. Initially, the new base was called the Sacramento Air Depot. On December 1, 1939, the War Department officially changed the name to McClellan Field to honor Major Hezekiah McClellan, an Army aviation expert who lost his life testing a new aircraft.

When the base was dedicated in 1939, it employed about 350 civilian workers, who transferred to McClellan AFB from Rockwell Field in San Diego. The workers moved to Sacramento in small groups, since housing in Sacramento was not readily available. With the outbreak of World War II, the base expanded rapidly. By 1943, nearly 22,000 military and civilian workers were employed on the base. Space was at a premium, and housing was difficult to find and obtain. With the end of the war, the base began reducing its task force from 21,902 in 1943 to 4,780 by June 1947. The reduction only lasted a few years,

however. The growth of the base in response to hostilities in Korea, was instrumental to the development of the surrounding area.

North Highlands

In 1950, McClellan AFB began gearing up for war, facing action in Korea. At that time, Watt Avenue, built as part of the initial base development, ended at Gate 1; beyond that point, it was a two-track dirt lane. The land surrounding the base was open, although a few housing developments had occurred. Southwest of the base, across the railroad tracks in “Splinter City,” several trailer parks provided housing for military and civilian families. Small houses were present in the Plane Haven subdivision, built across Watt Avenue from Gate 1 soon after the completion of the base. A new elementary school, Fruitvale, was built in 1949 to serve children whose military and civilian parents worked on base. Most civilians and military, however, drove into base from Sacramento locations, creating traffic bottlenecks and lengthy commutes.

In August 1950, Jeŕe Strizek, a local developer, envisioned planned communities around the base to house its growing employee base. Strizek was an American of East European descent, educated in Prague and Vienna. He had successfully completed subdivisions in Tracy and Sacramento prior to World War II. In 1945, he designed and built Town and Country Village, a shopping center at Fulton Avenue and Marconi. By 1950, he had completed subdivisions around his shopping center and was searching for new opportunities. In 1950, he purchased 2,000 acres east of Watt Avenue near McClellan AFB and, with the encouragement of Air Force officials, began work. North Haven Subdivision contained 351 homes built in the “Town and Country Modern Style” and the first resident moved in 1951. At the same time, he developed The Highlands Subdivision, with 181 homes. He sold part of his holdings to other developers to accelerate residential construction in the area in response to the increasing Air Force demand. The North Highlands Post Office opened in 1952, officially launching the new community.

By 1955, the Sacramento Union reported that North Highlands was the most rapidly growing suburb in the region. Besides the two original subdivisions, eight more were under construction or planned. The largest, Larchmont Tract in the 6500 block of Watt Avenue, had 3,400 housing sites. In 1955, North Highlands had seven churches, six schools, seven doctors, and 52 other businesses. Two community parks, Strizek and Larchmont, were planned. By 1960, the number of churches had doubled, as had the number of businesses. The nine schools in the new community served 10,000 students, a substantial increase compared to the 250 students enrolled in 1950. Fire stations and parks and recreational facilities also developed and then expanded between 1952 and 1960.

Through the years, North Highlands’ success and community growth has been hampered by the lack of a more diversified housing base. The developers of the 1950s and 1960s strove to create housing for the average blue-collar worker and to keep costs reasonable for military and civilians working on base. While the houses were affordable, the lack of higher-end or larger homes created an economically sterile community with no

opportunity or room for upward mobility. As families grew, the houses became too small, forcing the families to find new homes outside of the North Highlands community.

Subsequent to the end of the Cold War, McClellan AFB fell victim to a nationwide divestiture of military installations as part of the Base Closure and Realignment Act. The base was officially closed in 2001. Withdrawal of the military occurred over a five-year period, and the base was slowly relinquished to private enterprises. McClellan Business Park operates today as an aviation maintenance and repair facility, in addition to a suite of other businesses and has 3,500 people working at the former base, with a goal of 35,000. Former military housing and apartments are offered for rent to encourage workers to live at the site.

When McClellan closed around 2000, the population in North Highlands began declining. By 2000, the population was down to 44,187 and many businesses closed. By 2005, however, the pace began to pick up, aided by a large influx of Ukrainian and Russian immigrants into the community. By 2007, the population stood at nearly 50,000 and many new businesses were operating, designed to serve the needs of the immigrants. Today, the unincorporated area is rich in culture, with Asian markets existing next to Russian restaurants, churches and music stores. North Highlands is once more becoming a vibrant community.

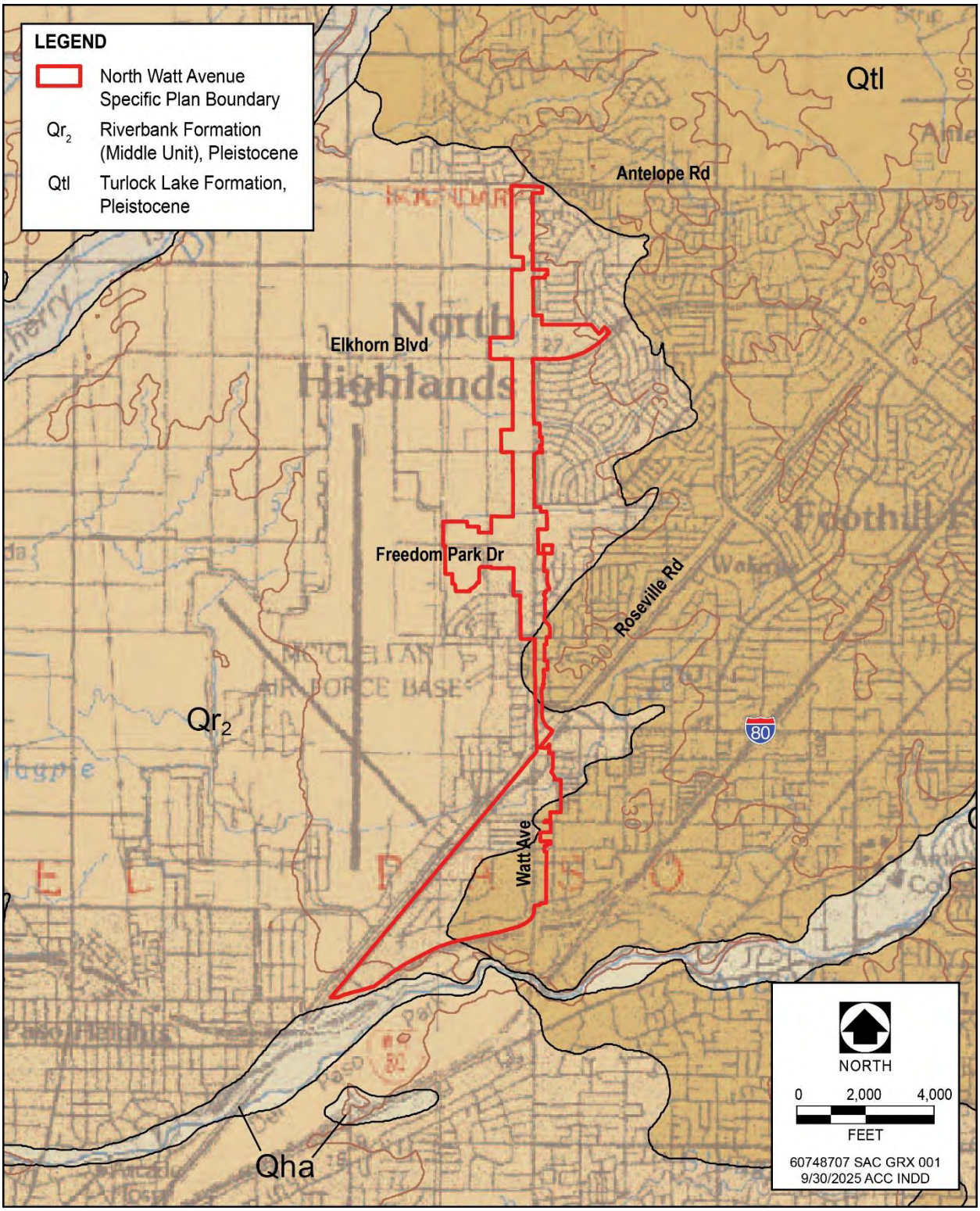
PALEONTOLOGICAL RESOURCES

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GEOLOGY

The Specific Plan Area is situated in the center of the Sacramento Valley within the Great Valley geomorphic province. The Sacramento Valley forms the northern third of the Great Valley, which includes approximately 33,000 square miles and fills a northwest-trending structural depression bounded on the west by the Great Valley Fault Zone and the Coast Ranges, and on the east by the Sierra Nevada and the Foothills Fault Zone. The Great Valley is composed of thousands of feet of sedimentary deposits that have undergone periods of subsidence and uplift over millions of years. During the Jurassic and Cretaceous Periods of the Mesozoic era (206–144 million years Before Present [B.P.]), the Great Valley existed in the form of an ancient ocean. By the end of the Mesozoic era (144 million years B.P.), the northern portion of the Great Valley began to fill with sediment as tectonic forces caused uplift of the basin. By the time of the Miocene epoch, approximately 24 million years B.P., sediments deposited in the Sacramento Valley were mostly of terrestrial origin. Most of the surface of the Great Valley is covered with Holocene (11,700 years B.P. to present day) and Pleistocene (11,700–2.6 million years B.P.) alluvium. This alluvium is composed of sediments from the Sierra Nevada to the east and the Coast Ranges to the west that were carried by water and deposited on the valley floor. Siltstone, claystone, and sandstone are the primary types of sedimentary deposits. Older Tertiary deposits underlie the Quaternary alluvium in the Great Valley.

Based on a review of regional geologic maps (Guterriez 2011, Helley and Harwood 1985), the Specific Plan Area is underlain by the Riverbank and Turlock Lake Formations, as shown in Plate CR-1.

Plate CR-1: Geologic Formations



Source: Gutierrez 2011

Paleontological Sensitivity Assessment Criteria

A paleontologically sensitive geologic formation is one that is rated high for potential paleontological productivity (i.e., the recorded abundance and types of fossil specimens, and the number of previously recorded fossil sites) and is known to have produced unique, scientifically important fossils. Exposures of a specific geologic formation at any given project site are most likely to yield fossil remains representing particular species or quantities similar to those previously recorded from that geologic formation in other locations. Therefore, the paleontological sensitivity determination of a rock formation is based primarily on the types and numbers of fossils that have been previously recorded from that formation.

In its standard guidelines for assessment and mitigation of adverse impacts on paleontological resources, the Society of Vertebrate Paleontology (SVP 2010) established four categories of sensitivity for paleontological resources: high, low, no, and undetermined. Areas where fossils have been previously found are considered to have a high sensitivity and a high potential to produce fossils. Areas that are not sedimentary in origin and that have not been known to produce fossils in the past typically are considered to have low sensitivity. Areas consisting of high-grade metamorphic rocks (e.g., gneisses and schists) and plutonic igneous rocks (e.g., granites and diorites) are considered to have no sensitivity. Areas that have not had any previous paleontological resource surveys or fossil finds are considered to be of undetermined sensitivity until surveys are performed. After reconnaissance surveys, a qualified paleontologist can determine whether the area of undetermined sensitivity should be categorized as having high, low, or no sensitivity. In keeping with the SVP significance criteria, all vertebrate fossils are generally categorized as being of potentially significant scientific value.

Paleontological Sensitivity Assessment

Table CR-1 presents the results of the paleontological sensitivity assessment based on a review of regional geologic maps, a literature review, and a paleontological resources records search performed at the University of California, Berkeley Museum of Paleontology (UCMP) on September 24, 2025.

Table CR-1. Paleontological Sensitivity Assessment

Formation Name and Age	Composition	Fossils	Sensitivity
Riverbank Formation (Middle Unit), Pleistocene, Between 130,000 and 450,000 years B.P.	Weathered reddish gravel, sand, and silt forming alluvial terraces and dissected alluvial fans along streams. The upper, middle, and lower units of the Riverbank Formation form terraces that increase in topographic position with age. The hardpans formed in soils within the middle unit are thicker and more strongly cemented, and the soil profiles have a more reddish color and are richer in clay, as compared to the upper unit.	Jefferson (1991a, 1991b) lists a variety of different fossils localities in the Sacramento and San Joaquin Valleys that are referable to the Riverbank Formation. For example, the Teichert Gravel Pit, along State Route 16 in Sacramento, yielded specimens of broad-footed mole, Harlan's ground sloth, rabbit, California ground squirrel, Botta's pocket gopher, pocket mouse, groove-toothed harvest mouse, woodrat, vole, coyote, dire wolf, mammoth, horse, western camel, deer, antique bison, fish (carps and minnows), frog, snake, Pacific pond turtle, and the family Anatidae (ducks, geese, and swans). Other fossil localities in the Riverbank Formation in Sacramento County include Pleistocene-age mammoth remains that were discovered in 2004 during excavation of a Sacramento Municipal Utility District trench in Elk Grove (Kolber 2004). UCMP locality V-74086, located in south Sacramento at Ehrhardt Avenue, also contained fossilized Rancholabrean-age mammoth remains. The other UCMP sites in Sacramento—localities V-6747, V-6846, V-68141, V-69129, and V-75126—contained remains of Rancholabrean-age bison, camel, coyote, horse, Harlan's ground sloth, mammoth, woodrat, fish, mole, snake, and gopher. Pleistocene-age fossils were recovered from the Riverbank Formation at the ARCO Arena site (Hilton et al. 2000); those fossils included remains of Harlan's ground sloth, bison, coyote, horse, camel, squirrel, antelope or deer, and mammoth. Several localities near the cities of Davis and Woodland have yielded the remains of Rancholabrean-age rodents, snakes, horses, antelope, Harlan's ground sloth, mammoth, and saber-toothed tiger from sediments referable to the Riverbank Formation (Hay 1927; UCMP 2025). Fossil specimens from the Riverbank Formation have been reported by Marchand and Allwardt (1981) near the type locality in the city of Riverbank. Fossil specimens from sediments referable to the Riverbank Formation have been reported at several other locations in the San Joaquin Valley (UCMP 2025), including Lathrop, Modesto, Stockton, Tracy (along the Delta-Mendota Canal), Manteca, and Merced, along with a variety of different fossils localities in the Sacramento and San Joaquin Valleys that are referable to the Riverbank Formation.	High

Formation Name and Age	Composition	Fossils	Sensitivity
Turlock Lake Formation, Pleistocene, 450,000 to 780,000 years B.P.	Arkosic[1] deeply weathered and dissected gravels with minor resistant metamorphic rock fragments and quartz pebbles; sand and silt.	The Fairmead Landfill Fossil locality represents the largest single deposit of fossils from the Turlock Lake Formation in California (Dundas et al., 1996). The Fairmead Landfill site, located in Chowchilla, contains Irvingtonian-age fossils that were originally discovered in 1993 during excavation activities for a new Madera County landfill. Since 1993, more than 15,000 fossil specimens from over 35 different species have been recovered from the Fairmead site, including mammoth, ground sloth, giant short-faced bear, saber tooth cat, wolf, deer, camel, horse, antelope, rodents, birds, reptiles, fish, and prehistoric vegetation. Plant fossils have also been recovered from several localities in the Turlock Lake Formation in Fresno County (UCMP 2025). Marchand and Allwardt (1981) reported that several vertebrate fossils were recovered near Friant, also in Fresno County. Hansen (2008) reported that excavations for the California Department of Transportation's State Route 180 West Freeway project uncovered fossil specimens from a Pleistocene-age camel in sediments of the Turlock Lake Formation in Fresno County. Jefferson (1991b) reported two vertebrate fossil localities from Roseville and Rocklin, likely from the Turlock Lake Formation based on geologic mapping.	High

Notes: B.P. = Before Present
[1] Having a high percentage of feldspar.
Sources: Dundas et al. 1996, Gutierrez 2011, Hansen 2008, Hay 1927, Helley and Harwood 1985, Hilton et al. 2000, Jefferson 1991a and 1991b, Kolber 2004, Marchand and Allwardt 1981, UCMP 2025

REGULATORY SETTING

FEDERAL

SECTION 106 OF THE NATIONAL HISTORIC PRESERVATION ACT, 1966

Federal regulations for cultural resources are governed primarily by Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) of 1966 (as amended). Section 106 of the NHPA requires Federal agencies to take into account the effects of their undertakings on historic properties and affords the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP) a reasonable opportunity to comment on such undertakings. The ACHP's implementing regulations are the "Protection of Historic Properties" 36 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 800. The Federal agency first must determine whether it has an undertaking that is a type of activity that could affect historic properties. Historic properties are those that meet the criteria for or are listed in the NRHP.

National Register of Historic Places

"Historic properties," as defined by the ACHP, include any "prehistoric or historic district, site, building, structure, or object included in, or eligible for inclusion in the NRHP maintained by the Secretary of the Interior" (CFR Section 800.16(l)). Eligibility for inclusion in the NRHP is determined by applying the following criteria, developed by the National Park Service in accordance with the NHPA:

> The quality of significance in American history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, and culture is present in districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association, and:
>
> A. That are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; or
>
> B. That are associated with the lives of persons significant in our past; or
>
> C. That embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or
>
> D. That have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Integrity is defined in NRHP guidance as "the ability of a property to convey its significance. To be listed in the NRHP, a property must not only be shown to be significant under the NRHP criteria, but it also must have integrity" (National Parks Service 1995). NRHP guidance further asserts that properties must have been completed at least 50 years before evaluation to be considered for eligibility. Properties with construction completed fewer than 50 years before evaluation must be proven to be "exceptionally important" (criteria consideration G) to be considered for listing.

State

California Environmental Quality Act and the California Register of Historical Resources

Under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), lead agencies must consider the effects of their projects on historical resources. CEQA defines a "historical resource" as a resource listed in, or determined to be eligible for listing in, the CRHR, a resource included in a local register of historical resources, and any object, building, structure, site, area, place, record, or manuscript which a lead agency determines to be historically significant (Section 15064.5[a] of the Guidelines). Sacramento County does not currently have a local register. Public Resources Code Section 5024.1 requires that any properties that can be expected to be directly or indirectly affected by a proposed project be evaluated for CRHR eligibility. According to Public Resources Code Section 5024.1(c)(1–

4), a resource may be considered historically significant if it retains integrity and meets at least one of the following criteria. A property may be listed in the CRHR if the resource:

1. Is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of California's history and cultural heritage;

2. Is associated with the lives of persons important in our past;

3. Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region or method of installation, or represents the work of an important creative individual, or possesses high artistic values; or

4. Has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

To be considered eligible, a resource must meet one of the above stated criteria and retain integrity. Integrity has been defined by the National Park Service as consisting of seven elements: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

Impacts to historical resources that materially impair those characteristics that convey historical significance and justify inclusion or eligibility for the NRHP or CRHR are considered a significant effect on the environment (CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5).

In addition to historically significant resources, which can include archaeological resources that meet the criteria listed above, an archeological site may meet the definition of a “unique archeological resource” as defined in Public Resources Code Section 21083.2(g):

An archaeological artifact, object, or site about which it can be clearly demonstrated that, without merely adding to the current body of knowledge, there is a high probability that it meets any of the following criteria:

(1) Contains information needed to answer important scientific research questions and that there is a demonstrable public interest in that information.

(2) Has a special and particular quality such as being the oldest of its type or the best available example of its type.

(3) Is directly associated with a scientifically recognized important prehistoric or historic event or person.

If it can be demonstrated that a project will cause damage to a unique archaeological resource, the lead agency may require reasonable efforts to be made to permit any or all of these resources to be preserved in place or left in an undisturbed state. To the extent that they cannot be left undisturbed, feasible mitigation measures are required (Public Resources Code Section 21083.2 (a), (b) and (c)). CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5, subdivision (e), requires that excavation activities be stopped whenever human remains are uncovered and that the county coroner be called in to assess the remains. If the

county coroner determines that the remains are those of Native Americans, the Native American Heritage Commission must be contacted within 24 hours. At that time, the lead agency must consult with the appropriate Native Americans, if any, as timely identified by the Native American Heritage Commission. Section 15064.5 directs the lead agency (or applicant), under certain circumstances, to develop an agreement with the Native Americans for the treatment and disposition of the remains.

Public Resources Code, Section 5097.5

Public Resources Code Section 5097 specifies the procedures to follow in the event of the unexpected discovery of human remains on public land. Public lands are defined to include land owned by or under the jurisdiction of the state or any city, county, district, authority, or public corporation, or any agency thereof. The disposition of Native American burial falls within the jurisdiction of the Native American Heritage Commission. Public Resources Code Section 5097.5 also applies to paleontological resources, and states the following:

No person shall knowingly and willfully excavate upon, or remove, destroy, injure, or deface any historic or prehistoric ruins, burial grounds, archaeological or vertebrate paleontological site, including fossilized footprints, inscriptions made by human agency, or any other archaeological, paleontological or historical feature, situated on public lands, except with the express permission of the public agency having jurisdiction over such lands. Violation of this section is a misdemeanor.

Public Resources Code, Section 5097.98

Public Resources Code Section 5097.98 states that, whenever the Native American Heritage Commission receives notification of Native American human remains from a county coroner, the Native American Heritage Commission shall immediately notify the most likely descendant. The most likely descendant may, with permission from the owner of the land in which the human remains were found, inspect the site and recommend to the owner or the responsible party conducting the excavation work a means for treating and/or disposing of the human remains and any associated grave goods. The most likely descendant is required to complete their site inspection and make their recommendation within 48 hours of their notification from the Native American Heritage Commission.

California Health and Safety Code, Section 7052 and 7050.5

Section 7052 of the Health and Safety Code states that the disturbance, mutilation, or removal of interred human remains is a felony if the remains are within a dedicated cemetery and a misdemeanor if interred outside of a dedicated cemetery. Section 7050.5 requires that construction or excavation be stopped in the vicinity of discovered human remains until the coroner examines the find and determines whether the remains are subject to various laws, including recognizing whether the remains are or may be those of a Native American. If determined to be Native American, the coroner must contact the Native American Heritage Commission.

California Health and Safety Code

California law protects Native American burials, skeletal remains, and associated grave goods, regardless of their antiquity, and provides for the sensitive treatment and disposition of those remains. Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 requires that if human remains are discovered in any place other than a dedicated cemetery, no further disturbance or excavation of the site or nearby area reasonably suspected to contain human remains can occur until the county coroner has examined the remains (Section 7050.5b). Public Resources Code Section 5097.98 also outlines the process to be followed in the event that remains are discovered. If the coroner determines or has reason to believe the remains are those of a Native American, the coroner must contact the California Native American Heritage Commission within 24 hours (Section 7050.5c). The Native American Heritage Commission will notify the most likely descendant. With the permission of the landowner, the most likely descendant may inspect the site of discovery. The inspection must be completed within 48 hours of notification of the most likely descendant by the Native American Heritage Commission. The most likely descendant may recommend means of treating or disposing of, with appropriate dignity, the human remains, and items associated with Native Americans.

California Government Code Section 6254.10

Nothing in this chapter requires disclosure of records that relate to archaeological site information and reports maintained by, or in the possession of, the Department of Parks and Recreation, the State Historical Resources Commission, the State Lands Commission, the Native American Heritage Commission, another State agency, or a local agency, including the records that the agency obtains through a consultation process between a California Native American tribe and a State or local agency.

Local

Sacramento County General Plan

Cultural Resources

The Conservation Element of the General Plan provides goals, objectives, and policies to inventory, protect, and interpret Sacramento County's archaeological and historic resources (Sacramento County 2011, as updated in 2017). Policies related to archaeological and historic resources that apply to the proposed Specific Plan are provided below:

Policy CO-150. Utilize local, state and national resources, such as the North Central Information Center (NCIC), to assist in determining the need for a cultural resources survey during project review.

Policy CO-154. Protection of significant prehistoric, ethnohistoric and historic sites within open space easements to ensure that these resources are preserved in situ for perpetuity.

Policy CO-156. The cost of all excavation conducted prior to completion of the project shall be the responsibility of the project developer.

Policy CO-157. Monitor projects during construction to ensure crews follow proper reporting, safeguards, and Policy procedures.

Policy CO-158. As a condition of approval of discretionary permits, a procedure shall be included to cover the potential discovery of archaeological resources during development or construction.

PALEONTOLOGICAL RESOURCES

The *Sacramento County General Plan of 2005–2030* (Sacramento County 2011, as updated in 2017) Conservation Element includes the following policies related to paleontological resources that apply to the proposed Specific Plan:

Policy CO-161. As a condition of approval for discretionary projects, require appropriate mitigation to reduce potential impacts where development could adversely affect paleontological resources.

Policy CO-162. Projects located within areas known to be sensitive for paleontological resources, should be monitored to ensure proper treatment of resources and to ensure crews follow proper reporting, safeguards and procedures.

Policy CO-163. Require that a certified geologist or paleoresources consultant determine appropriate protection measures when resources are discovered during the course of development and land altering activities.

IMPACTS AND ANALYSIS

SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA

CULTURAL RESOURCES

The significance criteria used to evaluate the impacts of the proposed Specific Plan to cultural resources under CEQA are based on Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines. According to Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, a significant impact related to cultural resources would occur if the proposed Specific Plan would:

- cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to Section 15064.5.

- cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to Section 15064.5.

- disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of dedicated cemeteries.

Paleontological Resources and Unique Geologic Features

Based on Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, the proposed Specific Plan would have a significant impact on paleontological resources or unique geologic features if it would:

- directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature.

A “unique paleontological resource or site” is one that is considered significant under the following professional paleontological standards. An individual vertebrate fossil specimen may be considered unique or significant if it is identifiable and well preserved, and it meets one of the following criteria:

- a type specimen (i.e., the individual from which a species or subspecies has been described);
- a member of a rare species;
- a species that is part of a diverse assemblage (i.e., a site where more than one fossil has been discovered) wherein other species are also identifiable, and important information regarding life history of individuals can be drawn;
- a skeletal element different from, or a specimen more complete than, those now available for its species; or
- a complete specimen (i.e., all or substantially all of the entire skeleton is present).

The value or importance of different fossil groups varies, depending on several factors: the age and depositional environment of the rock unit that contains the fossils; their rarity; the extent to which they have already been identified and documented; and the ability to recover similar materials under more controlled conditions (such as for a research project). Marine invertebrates generally are common, the fossil record is well developed and well documented, and they would generally not be considered a unique paleontological resource. Identifiable vertebrate marine and terrestrial fossils are generally considered scientifically important because they are relatively rare.

Unique geologic features consist of outstanding natural landforms such as mountain peaks, deep scenic canyons and gorges, scenic rock formations, large waterfalls, volcanic cinder cones, lava fields, or glaciers.

METHODOLOGY

CULTURAL RESOURCES

Review of the *Cultural Resources Study of the North Watt Corridor Planning Area*, prepared by PAR in 2010, the results of a new records search, and Native American consultation undertaken by the County were conducted to establish what cultural resources are known, or may be present, within the Specific Plan Area and, furthermore, may be impacted as a result of the implementation of the proposed Specific Plan.

Likewise, the impact analysis for archaeological resources, built environment resources, and human remains is partially based on the findings and recommendations of the 2010 *Cultural Resources Study of the North Watt Corridor Planning Area*, prepared by PAR, results of a new records search, Native American consultation undertaken by the County, and two CRHR reevaluations prepared in 2025. The analysis is also informed by the provisions and requirements of federal, state, and local laws and regulations that apply to cultural resources.

REVIEW OF 2012 NORTH WATT AVENUE CORRIDOR PLAN EIR

NCIC RECORDS SEARCH

A records search that covers the majority of the Specific Plan Area[2] was completed on September 22, 2009 as part of the North Watt Avenue Corridor Plan EIR. No previously recorded archaeological resources were identified in the search and only one built environment resource was identified which was the Central Pacific Railroad/Southern Pacific Railroad corridor, now the Union Pacific Railroad (CA-SAC-478H/P-34-000505).

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY AND RESULTS

The publicly accessible areas of the majority of the Specific Plan Area were subjected to a pedestrian survey conducted by a qualified archaeologist from PAR in November 2009. The North Watt Avenue corridor in the Specific Plan Area is highly developed with residential, commercial and recreational uses that have been paved, graded, filled and landscaped, or contain structures. PAR was not able to gain access to private property; thus, pedestrian survey was limited to examination of road sides, visible cuts, and views of yards adjacent to public rights-of-way. Where possible, exposed ground surfaces and road cuts were carefully inspected for evidence of historical use such as fragments of ceramics, metal, and glass, and for indications of prehistoric use such as chipped stone artifacts and debitage, ground stone artifacts, bone fragments, and soil color changes. Boot scuffs and trowel scrapes were also employed to expose soil where possible.

[2] Note: The current Specific Plan Area supersedes the North Watt Corridor Plan Area (Sacramento County 2012) and North Highlands Town Center (Sacramento County 2008).

No archaeological sites or resources were identified in the majority of the Specific Plan Area during the 2010 survey.

Built Environment Survey

The architectural survey consisted of a cultural resource specialist from PAR walking the majority of the Specific Plan Area and documenting and photographing buildings and structures 50 years or older (1960 and older) in November 2009. Extensively modified buildings that no longer retain their historical mass, detailing, or appearance were not recorded. Results of the survey were reported on 44 California Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) 523 forms with eligibility evaluations for listing in the CRHR, see Table CR-2.[3]

Table CR-2. Built Environment Resources Recorded and Evaluated in 2010

Primary Number	Address	Built Date	Use	Status Code
P-34-004093	0 Roseville Rd	ca. 1955	Pumphouse	6Z
P-34-004094	Roseville Rd and Watt Ave	ca. 1955	Concrete Enclosure	6Z
P-34-004077^	3829 Stephen Dr	1957	Strizek Park	6Z
P-34-004076	3430 Freedom Park Dr	1959	Apartments	6Z
P-34-004075	3448 Freedom Park Dr	1959	Apartments	6Z
P-34-004074	3449 Freedom Park Dr	1952	Residential/ Commercial	6Z
P-34-004078^	3800 Boliver Ave	1955	School	6Z
P-34-004079^	3801 Boliver Ave	1955	Church	6Z
P-34-004098	4810 Watt Ave	ca. 1940	Commercial	6Z
P-34-004099	4900 Watt Ave	ca. 1940	Commercial	6Z
P-34-004095*	5025 Roseville Rd	ca. 1940	Residential	6Z
P-34-004096^	5050 Roseville Rd	ca. 1940	Commercial / Trailer Park	6Z
P-34-004097^	5070 Roseville Rd	ca. 1950	Commercial	6Z
P-34-004092	5140 Poplar Ave	ca. 1940	Residential	6Z
P-34-004091	5404 Watt Ave	ca. 1940	Residential/ Commercial	6Z
P-34-004090	5408 Watt Ave	ca. 1940	Residential/ Commercial	6Z
P-34-004089	5416 Watt Ave	ca. 1940	Residential/ Commercial	6Z
P-34-004088	5420 Watt Ave	ca. 1940	Residential/ Commercial	6Z
P-34-004087	5508-5514 Watt Ave	ca. 1953	Commercial	6Z
P-34-004083^	5708 Karen Way	1951	Residential	6Z
P-34-004086	5811-5817 Watt Ave	ca. 1953	Commercial	6Z
P-34-004085	5829 Watt Ave	1959	Church	6Z
P-34-004084	5849 Watt Ave	ca.1955	Auto sales	6Z
P-34-004082	5910-5950 Watt Ave; 3600 Karl Way	1951	Apartments	3CS
P-34-004081	5935-5953 Watt Ave; 3516 Freedom Park	1953	Commercial	6Z
P-34-004080^	6050 Watt Ave	1949-1955	School	3CS
P-34-004073	6099 Watt Ave	1960	Commercial	3CS
P-34-004072	6115 Watt Ave	1959	Commercial	6Z
P-34-004071	6125 Watt Ave	1957	Church	6Z
P-34-004070	6139-6149 Watt Ave	ca. 1958	Commercial	6Z

[3] The number of DPR 523 forms prepared and reporting tables list 44 properties while the summary text stated 45 properties.

Primary Number	Address	Built Date	Use	Status Code
P-34-004069	6201 Watt Ave	1955	Church	6Z
P-34-004068	6227 Watt Ave	1958	Commercial	6Z
P-34-004067	6253 Watt Ave	ca. 1955	Commercial	6Z
P-34-004066	6331 Watt Ave	1955	Commercial/ Church	6Z
P-34-004062	6400 Watt Ave	ca. 1951	Residential/ Commercial	6Z
P-34-004061	6412 Watt Ave	ca. 1951	Residential/ Commercial	6Z
P-34-004060	6416 Watt Ave	ca. 1952	Residential/ Commercial	6Z
P-34-004059	6421 Watt Ave	ca. 1955	Commercial	6Z
P-34-004058	6424 Watt Ave	ca. 1952	Residential/ Commercial	6Z
P-34-004054	6428 Watt Ave	ca. 1952	Residential/ Commercial	6Z
P-34-003907	7140 Watt Ave	ca. 1956	Church	6Z
P-34-004065	6900 Thomas Dr	1957	Fire Station	6Z
P-34-004065	6536 Clara Way	ca. 1951	Residential	6Z
P-34-004064	6539 Grattan Way	ca. 1951	Residential	6Z

Source: Sacramento County 2012; Primary numbers added by AECOM in 2025 from NCIC records search results.
3CS = Appears eligible for CRHR as an individual property through survey evaluation.
6Z = Found ineligible for NRHP, CRHR or Local designation through survey evaluation.
* = No longer extant.
^ = Outside Specific Plan Area.

PAR identified three properties as eligible for listing in the CRHR:

6099 WATT AVENUE (P-34-004073)

This single-story former restaurant building was constructed in 1960 and features an asymmetrical gable parapet. The southern-facing façade has five rock-covered columns that extend up past the eave line and rock veneer is also present on the east side and wraps around onto a small portion of the north side. Vertical boards are also on the east façade. Fenestration consists of metal-sash plate glass windows. The glass and metal double entry doors were boarded over.

PAR found the building eligible for listing in the CRHR under Criterion 3 because the "architecture exhibited in this building is striking in the use of the asymmetrical gable parapet, cantilevered roof elements, and rock pillars. The building clearly reflects the passion for futuristic-oriented and modern designs evident in the early 1960s. It is the only one of its kind in North Highlands or the surrounding area south of I-80 and is architecturally unique." Therefore, the building at 6099 Watt Avenue was recommended as a historical resource for the purposes of CEQA in the 2012 North Watt Avenue Corridor Plan EIR (PAR 2009a). This property is within the Specific Plan Area.

SANTA RITA GARDEN APARTMENTS – 5910-5950 WATT AVENUE AND 3600 KARL AVENUE (P-34-004082)

The Santa Rita Garden Apartments (now Woodfield Apartment Homes) were completed in 1953 and spread over portions of two blocks. There are six Contemporary-style buildings at the 5950 address and eight facing Karl Avenue. Each of the 14 residential buildings contains four units. Every two buildings face one another and have reversed designs.

The June 3, 1953, issue of the *Sacramento Bee* noted their completion, calling the complex "an unusual development…designed to give apartment dwellers the widest possible enjoyment of outdoor living." According to the *Bee*, each of the 108 units had two bedrooms, a hall, bath, kitchen and living/dining room. One special feature was an enclosed, cemented patio, meant for use as a children's play area or relaxation. The patios, low profile, and surrounding trees and grass were one reason the apartments were advertised as the complex "where the outdoors comes inside." The apartments were located on five[4] separate blocks along Watt Avenue and shopping centers were interspersed halfway between the four blocks. Only the two northern groups of apartments are within the prior plan area were recorded and evaluated in 2010.

PAR found the apartments eligible for listing in the CRHR under Criterion 3 because they "were the first multi-family units in North Highlands and reflect a Contemporary architectural style. The architects designed a series of low buildings surrounded by trees and shrubs, with a plan to create an outdoor feel to the complex. The use of the ladder design elements, separation of front doors by a utility room to create more privacy, diagonal support posts and stall dividers in the car ports are all characteristic of the 1950s style or of the designers' intent to create the outdoor, private feel to the units. With the exception of replacement of a few windows, the units have not been altered significantly and retain the sense of time and place." Therefore, the apartment buildings at 5910-5950 Watt Avenue and 3600 Karl Avenue were recommended as historical resources for the purposes of CEQA in the 2012 North Watt Avenue Corridor Plan EIR (PAR 2009b). This property is within the Specific Plan Area.

FRUITVALE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL (F.C. JOYCE SCHOOL), 6050 WATT AVENUE (P-34-0004080)

The Fruitvale Elementary School (now F. C. Joyce Elementary) opened in 1949 and went through two expansions by 1955. The school was constructed to educate the 250 students living in the Plane Haven Subdivision next to McClellan AFB. The completion of the North Havens Subdivision after World War II, quickly followed by other housing tracts, created an explosion of school age children in the area. As the only school in the newly formed community of Norh Highlands, Fruitvale Elementary was rapidly expanded. Additional grammar schools were built in the community by 1955, halting the continued expansion of Fruitvale.

PAR found the school property eligible for listing in the CRHR under Criterion 1 "for the role it played in the educational development of North Highlands" because it "reflects the desire by the County, with the full support of the military, to create educational opportunities for families of military and civilian personnel living on or near McClellan AFB….As the first school (and only until 1955), it played a vital role in the development of North Highlands. Fruitvale allowed families moving into the rapidly growing community to have immediate access to educational benefits within walking distance of their homes for their school age children." Therefore, the F.C. Joyce School (former Fruitvale

[4] PAR reported four blocks, but review of historic aerial photography reveals it was five blocks.

Elementary School) at 6050 Watt Avenue was recommended as a historical resource for the purposes of CEQA in the 2012 North Watt Avenue Corridor Plan EIR. However, the school property is outside the Specific Plan Area.

2012 North Watt Avenue Corridor Plan EIR Results

No previously recorded or new archaeological sites or resources were identified in the majority of the Specific Plan Area during the 2009 archaeological survey conducted by PAR.

Three built environment properties were found eligible for listing in the CRHR by PAR: a restaurant building at 6099 Watt Avenue (P-34-004073); a portion of the former Santa Rita Garden Apartments complex at 5910-5950 Watt Avenue and 3600 Karl Avenue (P-34-004082); and the former Fruitvale Elementary School at 6050 Watt Avenue (P-34-0004080). However, the former Fruitvale Elementary School property is outside the Specific Plan Area. The report was not submitted to the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) for concurrence because it lacked a federal nexus, but a copy was submitted to the NCIC, and the resources were assigned Primary Numbers.

North Watt Avenue Specific Plan EIR Efforts

2025 NCIC Records Search

A new records search was completed for the Specific Plan Area and a 0.10-mile buffer by staff at the NCIC at California State University, Sacramento on October 24, 2025, to identify any new cultural resources that have been recorded since the 2009 surveys (NCIC File No. SAC-25-177). The records search identified four cultural resources studies performed within the records search area since 2009; of these, two are within the Specific Plan Area, but neither study resulted in the recordation of newly identified cultural resources. Based on the new records search, only one resource has been recorded in the Specific Plan Area since 2009; however, it was an update of the Central Pacific Railroad/Southern Pacific Railroad corridor, now the Union Pacific Railroad (P-34-000505) that recorded a segment more than 3.6-miles southwest from the Specific Plan Area.

A comparison of the plan area boundaries from the 2012 EIR and the Specific Plan Area revealed that seven properties that were previously recorded and evaluated by PAR in 2010 were no longer within the current Specific Plan Area, including the Fruitvale Elementary School (now F. C. Joyce Elementary) (P-34-004080) which was identified as a historical resource, see Table CR-3.

Table CR-3. Built Environment Resources Recorded and Evaluated in 2010, no longer in 2025 Specific Plan Area

Primary Number	Address	Built Date	Use	Status Code
P-34-004077	3829 Stephen Dr	1957	Strizek Park	6Z
P-34-004078	3800 Boliver Ave	1955	School	6Z
P-34-004079	3801 Boliver Ave	1955	Church	6Z
P-34-004096	5050 Roseville Rd	ca. 1940	Commercial / Trailer Park	6Z
P-34-004097	5070 Roseville Rd	ca. 1950	Commercial	6Z
P-34-004083	5708 Karen Way	1951	Residential	6Z
P-34-004080	6050 Watt Ave	1949-1955	School	3CS

Source: Sacramento County 2012; Primary numbers added by AECOM in 2025 from NCIC records search results.
3CS = Appears eligible for CRHR as an individual property through survey evaluation.
6Z = Found ineligible for NRHP, CRHR or Local designation through survey evaluation.

Based on the results of the 2012 North Watt Avenue Corridor Plan EIR and the Specific Plan Area, there are two resources that have the potential to be historical resources for the purpose of CEQA, and have been evaluated below: the former Santa Rita Garden Apartments at 5910-5950 Watt Avenue and 3600 Karl Avenue (P-34-004082) and the former restaurant building at 6900 Watt Avenue (P-34-004073).

2025 Re-Evaluation of Recommended Historical Resources

Due to the passage of time, an AECOM architectural historian revisited the former Santa Rita Garden Apartments (P-34-004082) and the former restaurant building at 6099 Watt Avenue (P-34-004073) on November 26, 2025. Photographs of the existing conditions of the properties were taken, and Update DPR 523 forms were prepared with additional property histories and reevaluation of eligibility for listing in the CRHR.

6099 Watt Avenue (P-34-004073)

The field check of the former restaurant building at 6099 Watt Avenue (P-34-004073) on November 26, 2025, revealed the exterior had been heavily modified since the last recordation in 2009. As discussed above, PAR found the building eligible for listing in the CRHR under Criterion 3 because the “architecture exhibited in this building is striking in the use of the asymmetrical gable parapet, cantilevered roof elements, and rock pillars. The building clearly reflects the passion for futuristic-oriented and modern designs evident in the early 1960s. It is the only one of its kind in North Highlands or the surrounding area south of I-80 and is architecturally unique.”

AECOM reevaluated the property for eligibility for listing in the CRHR and found that it was no longer eligible under Criteria 3 due to the extensive exterior alterations, and no longer retains historic integrity to its potential period of significance. Therefore, the former restaurant building at 6099 Watt Avenue (P-34-004073) is no longer recommended as a historical resource for the purposes of CEQA (AECOM 2025a).

SANTA RITA GARDEN APARTMENTS (P-34-004082)

PAR inventoried and evaluated two blocks of apartments in the former Santa Rita Garden Apartments complex in 2009. During the field check of the former Santa Rita Garden Apartments on November 26, 2025, the entire complex was photographed. As discussed above, PAR found the two blocks of apartment buildings eligible for listing in the CRHR under Criterion 3 because "The Santa Rita Garden Apartments were the first multi-family units in North Highlands and reflect an architectural style that is unusual for its time. The architects designed a series of low buildings surrounded by trees and shrubs, with a plan to create an outdoor feel to the complex. The use of the ladder design elements, separation of front doors by a utility room to create more privacy, diagonal support posts and stall dividers in the car ports are all characteristic of the 1950s style or of the designers' intent to create the outdoor, private feel to the units. With the exception of replacement of a few windows, the units have not been altered significantly and retain the sense of time and place." However, review of contemporary images in newspaper advertisements and articles reveal that the buildings have been heavily modified and five of the apartment buildings have been demolished and/or replaced with commercial buildings. Also, the previous evaluation failed to evaluate the apartment complex for listing in the CRHR under Criteria 1, 2, and 4.

AECOM reevaluated the entire former Santa Rita Garden Apartments for eligibility for listing in the CRHR based on existing conditions and additional property history. AECOM found that it was no longer eligible under Criteria 3 due to the extensive exterior alterations, and no longer retained historic integrity to its potential period of significance. It was also found ineligible for listing under Criteria 1, 2, and 4. Therefore, the former Santa Rita Garden Apartments complex (P-34-004082) is no longer recommended as a historical resource for the purposes of CEQA (AECOM 2025b).

2025/2026 NATIVE AMERICAN CONSULTATION

On January 12, 2026, pursuant to AB 52 and SB 18, Sacramento County staff sent formal notification letters to 11 tribes who previously requested to be notified of Sacramento County projects.[5] The AB 52 notification package included a letter with a project description and mapping. The SB 18 notification packages included a letter with a project description, mapping, and the results of the records search of the project area, as well as a search radius buffer.

[5] Assembly Bill (AB) 52 had not been passed when the 2012 EIR was prepared. Effective July 1, 2015, AB 52 requires a lead agency to consult with California Native American tribes that are traditionally and culturally affiliated with the geographic area of the proposed project, if the tribe requested to the lead agency, in writing, to be informed by the lead agency of proposed projects in that geographic area and the tribe requests consultation. Efforts to contact Native American tribes who may have pertinent information about the Specific Plan Area was limited to letters sent on November 20, 2009 to Dwight Dutschke at the California Office of Historic Preservation Native American Coordination and Debbie Pilas-Treadway at the Native American Heritage Commission. PAR reported that no responses were received from the letters. No additional follow-up communication took place.

No responses were received during the 30-day consultation period.

Paleontological Resources

The evaluation of potential impacts related to unique paleontological resources was based on a review of published geologic literature and maps, and a records search at the U.C. Berkeley Museum of Paleontology (2025). The information obtained from these sources was reviewed and summarized to document existing conditions and to identify the potential environmental effects of the proposed Specific Plan.

Issues Not Discussed Further

There are no unique geologic features within or adjacent to the Specific Plan Area. Thus, there would be **no impact** on unique geologic features, and this topic is not evaluated further in this EIR.

Impact CR-1: Cause a Substantial Adverse Change in the Significance of a Historical Resource

Due to the passage of time, AECOM reevaluated the two properties within the Specific Plan Area that had been recommended as historical resources in the 2012 EIR: the former Santa Rita Garden Apartments (P-34-004082) and the former restaurant building at 6099 Watt Avenue (P-34-004073). Photographs of the existing conditions of the properties were taken, and Update DPR 523 forms were prepared with additional property histories and reevaluation of eligibility for listing in the CRHR. Both properties were found to lack historic integrity to their periods of significance and are no longer recommended as historical resources for the purposes of CEQA.

Because there are no historical resources in the Specific Plan Area, there would be **no impact** from the proposed Specific Plan.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required.

Impact CR-2: Cause a Substantial Adverse Change in the Significance of an Archaeological Resource

No significant pre-contact or historic-age archaeological resources were identified in the Specific Plan Area during field efforts in 2009, nor in the NCIC records searches conducted in 2009 and 2025. However, there is potential for encountering unanticipated significant archaeological resources as a result of ground disturbance during site clearing and construction. If such unanticipated discoveries were encountered, impacts on encountered resources would be **potentially significant**.

MITIGATION MEASURES

CR-2: Mitigate for Unanticipated Discoveries

In the event that human remains are discovered in any location other than a dedicated cemetery, work shall be halted and the County Coroner contacted. For all other potential archaeological or cultural resources discovered during ground disturbing activities, work shall be halted until a qualified archaeologist and/or tribal representative may evaluate the resource.

1. **Unanticipated human remains**. Pursuant to Sections 5097.5 and 5097.98 of the State Public Resources Code, and Section 7050.5 of the State Health and Safety Code, if a human bone or bone of unknown origin is found during construction, all work is to stop and the County Coroner and Planning and Environmental Review shall be immediately notified. If the remains are determined to be Native American, the coroner shall notify the Native American Heritage Commission within 24 hours, and the Native American Heritage Commission shall identify the person or persons it believes to be the Most Likely Descendant (MLD) from the deceased Native American. The MLD may make recommendations to the landowner or the person responsible for the excavation work, for means of treating or disposition of, with appropriate dignity, the human remains and any associated grave goods.

2. **Unanticipated cultural resources**. In the event of an inadvertent discovery of cultural resources (excluding human remains) during construction or decommissioning, all work must halt within a 100-foot radius of the discovery. A qualified professional archaeologist, meeting the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualification Standards for prehistoric and historic archaeology, shall be retained at the applicant's expense to evaluate the significance of the find. If it is determined due to the types of deposits discovered that a Native American monitor is required, the Guidelines for Monitors/Consultants of Native American Cultural, Religious, and Burial Sites as established by the Native American Heritage Commission shall be followed, and the monitor shall be retained at the applicant's expense.

    - Work cannot continue within the 100-foot radius of the discovery site until the archaeologist and/or tribal monitor conducts sufficient research and data collection to make a determination that the resource is either (1) not cultural in origin; or (2) not potentially eligible for listing on the NRHP or CRHR.

    - If a potentially-eligible resource is encountered, then the archaeologist and/or tribal monitor, Planning and Environmental Review staff, and project proponent shall arrange for either (1) total avoidance of the resource, if possible; or (2) test excavations or total data recovery as mitigation. The determination shall be documented in writing and submitted to the County Environmental Coordinator as verification that the provisions of CEQA for managing unanticipated discoveries have been met.

Significance after Mitigation

Implementation of Mitigation Measure CR-2 would reduce the potential impacts in the event of the accidental discovery of human remains or previously unknown archaeological resources during future construction within the Specific Plan Area. These measures include stopping work, notification of the appropriate agencies and/or Native American contacts, and procedures to evaluate and protect cultural resources. Therefore, with implementation of these recommended mitigation measures, the impact would be **less than significant**.

Mitigation measures for potential impacts to Tribal Cultural Resources are discussed in Chapter 16, Tribal Cultural Resources.

Impact CR-3: Disturb any Human Remains, Including Those Interred Outside of Dedicated Cemeteries

There are no dedicated cemeteries in the Specific Plan Area. No pre-contact or historic-era burials were identified within the Specific Plan Area during field efforts in 2009, nor in the NCIC records searches conducted in 2009 and 2025. However, this does not preclude the existence of buried subsurface human remains. Precontact sites, including some that contain human remains, have been identified in other areas of Sacramento County. The likelihood of inadvertently exposing currently unknown archaeological resources, including those containing human remains during future development of the Specific Plan Area cannot be dismissed. This impact is considered **potentially significant**.

Mitigation Measures

CR-2: Mitigate for Unanticipated Discoveries (see Impact CR-2)

Significance after Mitigation

Implementation of Mitigation Measure CR-2 specifies actions required to reduce impacts to unanticipated human remains in the event of accidental discovery during project implementation and includes appropriate compliance with California Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5, Public Resources Code Section 5097.98, and other pertinent regulatory requirements. By implementing this mitigation measure, human remains would be identified and protected, and as a result, would reduce the potential impacts in the event of the accidental discovery or recognition of any human remains during construction and decommissioning. Therefore, with implementation of Mitigation Measure CR-2, this impact would be **less than significant**.

Impact CR-4: Damage to or Destruction of Unique Paleontological Resource or Site

As shown in Plate CR-1, the land within the Specific Plan Area is comprised of the Riverbank and Turlock Formations. Both of these formations are of high paleontological sensitivity due to the large number of vertebrate fossils and plant fossil assemblages that

have been recovered from these formations in the Central Valley (see Table CR-1). Both of these formations are exposed at the surface within the Specific Plan Area and extend beneath the surface to depths up to several hundred feet. However, most of the parcels within the Specific Plan Area where demolition and redevelopment could occur, as well as the locations where infrastructure improvements (such as underground sewer, water, and stormwater pipelines) could be installed, have been previously disturbed for construction of the existing building foundations, parking areas, roadways, and pipelines. The prior disturbance likely extends to depths of 2–6 feet or more below the ground surface depending on the type of facility; parking lot and roadways foundations are the shallowest, followed by building foundations (buildings are mostly one story in the Specific Plan Area), and pipelines would be the deepest. Because of this prior disturbance from construction activities, any fossils that may have originally been present were likely damaged or destroyed during the previous excavating and grading processes.

However, there are several parcels scattered throughout the Specific Plan Area which consist of vacant land that has never been developed; at these parcels, the native Riverbank and Turlock Lake Formations are undisturbed and would be encountered during any depth of construction activity. Furthermore, excavation for underground pipelines in new locations, and redevelopment with taller buildings (which would require deeper excavation for building foundations), could encounter native sediments within the Riverbank or Turlock Formations. Therefore, construction-related earthmoving activities in the Specific Plan Area could encounter and potentially damage or destroy unique paleontological resources. This impact is considered **potentially significant**.

Mitigation Measures

CR-4: Avoid Impacts to Unique Paleontological Resources

Prior to the start of earthmoving activities for development projects and infrastructure improvements within the Specific Plan Area, the project applicant shall do the following:

1. Retain the services of either a qualified archaeologist or a qualified paleontologist to provide training to all construction personnel involved with earthmoving activities regarding the possibility of encountering fossils, the appearance and types of fossils likely to be seen during construction, and proper notification procedures should fossils be encountered.

2. If paleontological resources are discovered during earthmoving activities, the construction crew shall immediately cease work within 100 feet of the find and shall notify the project applicant and Sacramento County.

3. If paleontological resources are discovered during earthmoving activities, the project applicant shall retain a qualified paleontologist to evaluate the resource and prepare and implement a recovery plan. The recovery plan may include, but is not limited to, a field survey, construction monitoring, sampling and data recovery procedures, museum curation for any specimen recovered, and a report of findings. The recovery plan shall be submitted to Sacramento County

for review and approval. Recommendations in the recovery plan shall be implemented before construction activities can resume at the site where the paleontological resource(s) were discovered.

Significance after Mitigation

Implementation of Mitigation Measure CR-4 would reduce Specific Plan-related impacts on unique paleontological resources to a **less-than-significant** level because construction workers would be alerted to the possibility of encountering paleontological resources and, in the event that resources were discovered, fossil specimens would be recovered and recorded and would undergo appropriate curation.

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8 ENERGY

INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes the environmental and regulatory setting for energy describes potential impacts related to energy from implementation of the proposed Specific Plan.

The discussion of electrical and natural gas infrastructure is provided in Section 18 "Utilities and Service Systems."

ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

ENERGY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

ELECTRICAL SERVICE AND RESOURCES

Electric services in Sacramento County, including the Specific Plan Area, are provided by the Sacramento Municipal Utility District (SMUD), which has a 900 square-mile service area, including most of Sacramento County and small, adjoining portions of Placer and Yolo counties.

In 2024, SMUD provided 10,698,000 megawatt hours (MWh) of electricity to its customers (California Energy Commission [CEC] 2025a). Electricity is generated from a variety of sources, including hydropower, natural-gas-fired generators, renewable resources eligible under the State's Renewable Portfolio Standards (RPS) program (e.g., solar, wind, geothermal, hydroelectric, and bioenergy), and purchases from other energy suppliers.

SMUD offers customers the option to purchase up to 100 percent of their electricity from renewable sources through its Greenergy® program. In addition, the proportion of SMUD-delivered electricity for all customers generated from eligible renewable energy sources is anticipated to increase to 100 percent by 2030 based on SMUD's 2030 Zero Carbon Plan (SMUD 2021). The general electrical power mix for SMUD as of 2024 is presented in Table EN-1 below.

NATURAL GAS SERVICE

Natural gas service is provided within Sacramento County , including the Specific Plan Area, and the surrounding areas by Pacific Gas & Electric Company (PG&E). Natural gas consumption within the PG&E service area was approximately 4,256 million therms in 2024 (CEC 2025a), approximately 6.7 percent (285 million therms) of which was provided to users in Sacramento County (CEC 2025a).

Table EN-1: SMUD Electrical Power General Mix, 2024

Energy Source	Percentage (%)
Eligible Renewable, Total	40
Biomass and Biogas	*2*
Geothermal	*13*
Eligible Hydroelectric	*1*
Solar	*6*
Wind	*18*
Coal	0.0
Large Hydroelectric	22
Natural Gas	38
Nuclear	0
Other	0
Unspecified Power	0
Total	100.0

Notes:
[1] As defined in Senate Bill 1078, and Senate Bill 1038, which modified the definition of "in-state renewable electricity generation technology," an eligible renewable resource includes geothermal facilities, hydroelectric facilities with a capacity rating of 30 MW or less, biomass and biogas, selected municipal solid waste facilities, photovoltaic, solar thermal, and wind facilities, ocean thermal, tidal current, and wave energy generation technologies.
[2] "Unspecified Power" sources refer to electricity that has been purchased through open market transactions and is not traceable to a specific generation source.
Source: SMUD 2024

Energy Use for Transportation

Transportation is the largest energy consuming sector in California, accounting for approximately 45 percent of all energy use in the state (EIA 2025). More motor vehicles are registered in California than in any other state, and commute times in California are among the longest in the country.

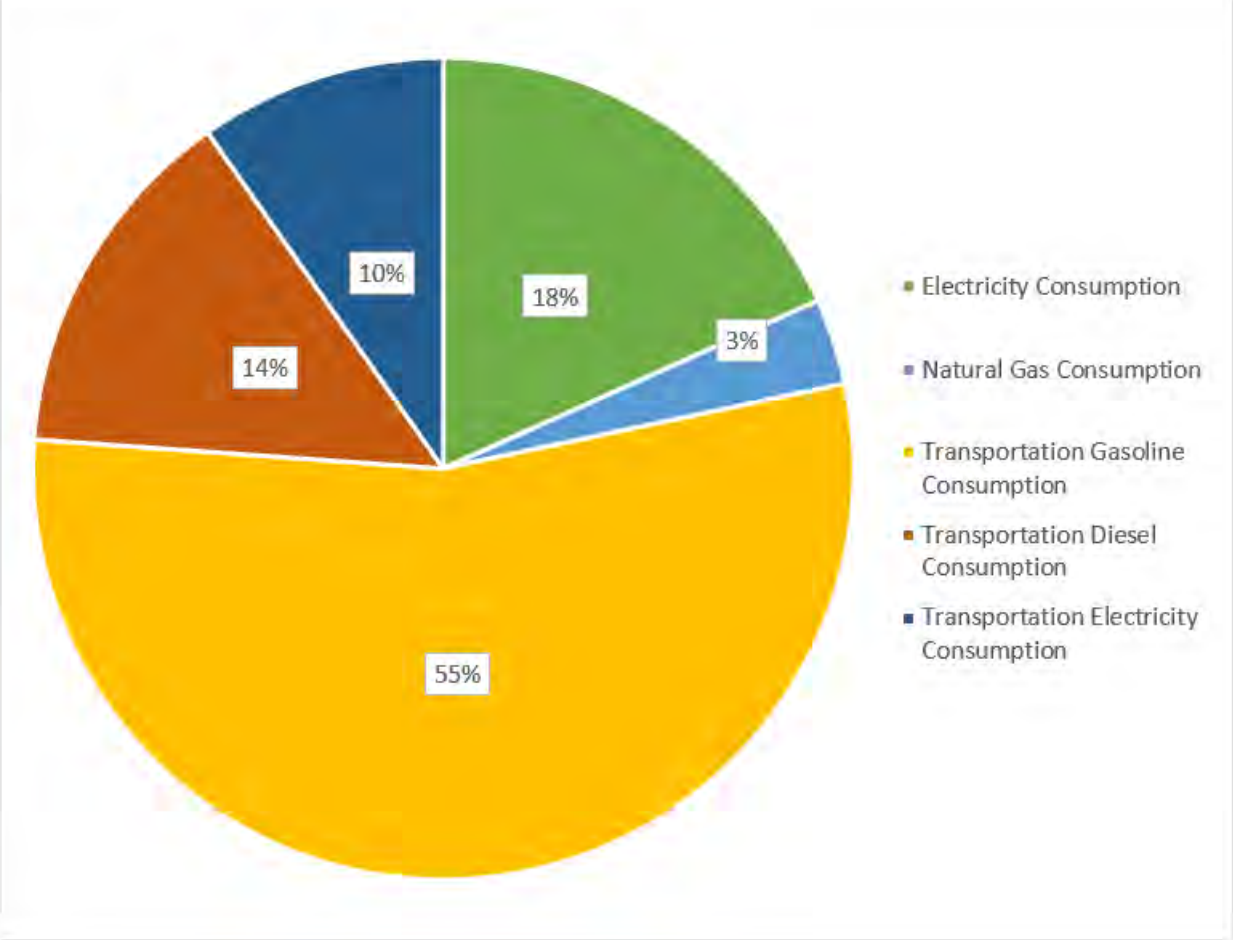
Transportation fuel has and will continue to diversify in California and elsewhere. While gasoline and diesel fuel have historically accounted for nearly all transportation energy consumption, alternative fuels that reduce the reliance on traditional fossil-fuels are increasingly available and used, including ethanol, electricity, and hydrogen. Currently, despite advancements in alternative fuels and clean vehicle technologies, gasoline and diesel remain the primary fuels used for transportation in California, and California remains the second highest consumer of motor gasoline of any state in the country (EIA 2025). In 2024, an estimated 540 million gallons of gasoline and 51 million gallons of diesel were sold in Sacramento County (CEC 2026).

Existing Conditions

The Specific Plan Area is serviced by SMUD and PG&E for electrical and natural gas service, respectively. An estimate of existing energy consumption in the Specific Plan Area was developed based on the land use inputs and data modeled in CalEEMod (see the 'Methodology and Assumptions" section below for further details); existing energy sources include electricity and natural gas for building operations and fuel consumption for on-road vehicles and stationary sources. As shown in Plate EN-1 below, transportation

fuel consumption accounts for over 70 percent of estimated existing annual operational energy consumption within the Specific Plan Area.

Plate EN-1: Existing Specific Plan Area Annual Operational Energy Consumption by Use



Source: Modeled by AECOM in 2026

REGULATORY SETTING

The federal, state, and local regulatory background of energy plans, policies, regulations, and laws is presented below. Generally, these do not directly apply to the proposed Specific Plan, but are presented to provide context to the regulatory framework.

FEDERAL

CORPORATE AVERAGE FUEL ECONOMY STANDARDS

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) have implemented corporate average fuel economy (CAFE)

standards for passenger cars and light trucks to improve fuel efficiency of such vehicles. The first phase targeted vehicle model years 2012 through 2016, while the second phase of the standards includes fuel economy standards for model years 2017 through 2025. On May 2, 2022, standards for model years 2024 through 2026 were published, which require the fuel economy standards to increase eight percent year over year for model years 2024 and 2025 and 10 percent annually for model year 2026. In 2026, if all standards are met through fuel efficiency improvements, the average industry fleetwide fuel efficiency for light duty cars and trucks would be approximately 49 miles per gallon (NHTSA 2022).

On June 24, 2024, NHTSA published a final rule for CAFE standards for passenger cars and light trucks built in model years 2027 through 2032, and new fuel efficiency standards for heavy-duty pickup trucks and vans built in model years 2030 through 2035. The final rule requires an industry fleet-wide average of approximately 50.4 miles per gallon for passenger cars and light trucks in model year 2031. This will be a phased approach which increases fuel economy requirements by 2 percent year over year for passenger cars, and by 0 percent year over year for light trucks model years 2027 and 2028 then 2 percent for light trucks model years 2029 through 2031. For heavy-duty pickup trucks and vans, the proposal would increase fuel efficiency by 10 percent year over year for model years 2030 through 2032 and 8 percent for model years 2033 through 2035.

On December 5, 2025, NHTSA published a notice of proposed rulemaking for the Safer Affordable Fuel-Efficient Vehicles Rule III for passenger cars and light trucks with model years 2022 through 2031 to amend the maximum feasible fuel economy standards to align with the Energy Policy and Conservation Act of 1975, the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007, and other applicable laws. NHTSA projects that the amended standards would correspond to the industry fleetwide average for all light-duty vehicles of roughly 34.5 miles per gallon in model year 2031.

Renewable Fuel Standard Program

The Energy Policy Act of 2005, which amended the federal Clean Air Act, created the 2005 Renewable Fuel Standard Program to reduce the reliance on fossil fuels. The Renewable Fuel Standard Program established requirements for volumes of renewable fuel used to replace petroleum-based fuels. The four renewable fuels accepted as part of Renewable Fuel Standard Program are biomass-based diesel, cellulosic biofuel, advanced biofuel, and total renewable fuel. The 2007 Energy Independence and Security Act expanded the program and its requirements to include long-term goals of using 36 billion gallons of renewable fuels and extending annual renewable fuel volume requirements to year 2022, and requires EPA to set renewable fuel volumes for 2023 and beyond in coordination with the Secretary of Energy and according to certain criteria defined in the statute. The four renewable fuels have specific renewable fuel-blending requirements for obligated parties, such as refiners and importers of gasoline or diesel fuel. EPA implements the program in consultation with U.S. Departments of Agriculture and Energy. Obligated parties are required to demonstrate compliance with the Renewable Fuel Standard program.

STATE

WARREN-ALQUIST ACT AND CALIFORNIA ENERGY COMMISSION

The CEC was created in 1974 by the Warren-Alquist Act and is the State's primary energy policy and planning agency to regulate energy efficiency standards. The CEC is tasked with reducing energy costs and environmental impacts of energy use such as GHG emissions while ensuring a safe, resilient, and reliable supply of energy. Among other work, the CEC collects and analyzes energy-related data, including energy production, transportation, delivery, and distribution, in order to provide both historical and forecast data on energy usage. It also develops energy policy recommendations and plans for the State, and is in charge of energy efficiency programs and the enforcement of appliance and building energy efficiency standards.

SB 1389 (2002) requires the CEC to prepare a biennial integrated energy report. In accordance, the CEC prepares the Integrated Energy Policy Report, which provides a cohesive approach to identify and address the State's energy requirements and challenges. The report develops and lays the framework for implementation of energy plans and policies. The report contains an integrated assessment of major energy trends and issues facing California's electricity, natural gas, and transportation fuel sectors. The report provides policy recommendations to conserve resources, protect the environment, ensure reliable, secure, and diverse energy supplies, enhance the state's economy, and protect public health and safety.

The most recent update to the IEPR examines how California's energy system must be transformed to meet the State's 2030 GHG emissions reduction goal, including implementation of SB 350 (De Leon, Chapter 547, Statutes of 2015) to double the energy efficiency of existing buildings and SB 100's target of achieving 60 percent renewables in the electricity supply by 2030. The report also covers policies and trends in integrated resource planning, distributed energy resources, transportation electrification, demand response, transmission and landscape-scale planning, the California Energy Demand Preliminary Forecast, the preliminary transportation energy demand forecast, wave and tidal energy resources, and solutions to increase resiliency in the electricity sector (CEC 2025b).

CALIFORNIA RENEWABLES PORTFOLIO STANDARD

Established in 2002 by SB 1078, California's RPS requires electricity providers (i.e., utilities, cooperatives, and community choice aggregators) to provide a specified minimum portion of their electricity supply from eligible renewable resources by milestone target years. Since 2002, legislative actions have modified and accelerated the RPS several times, resulting in one of the most ambitious renewable energy standards in the country. Per SB 100, the RPS requires retail sellers of electricity to serve 60 percent of their electric load with renewable energy by 2030 with new interim targets of 44 percent by 2024 and 52 percent by 2027, as well as requiring that all the state's electricity come from carbon-free resources (not only RPS-eligible ones) by 2045. These requirements reduce the carbon content of electricity generation, and would reduce GHG emissions associated with existing development, as well as new development.

As of 2024, SMUD supplies 40 percent of its general mix electricity from eligible renewable sources, including wind, geothermal, biomass, solar and small hydroelectric plants (SMUD 2024). SMUD is on track to meet the renewable energy requirements outlined in SB 100 and has detailed a plan to reach 100 percent renewables by 2030, 15 years ahead of the 2045 State deadline (SMUD 2021).

California Building Standards Code

Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations (CCR) contains regulations governing the design and construction of buildings in California. Part 6, Title 24, provides energy efficiency standards for both residential and nonresidential buildings. The Building Standards were most recently revised in 2025, effective January 1, 2026. Part 11, Title 24, is the California Green Building Code (also known as CALGreen), which was developed to enhance the design and construction of buildings and sustainable construction practices through planning and design, energy efficiency, water efficiency and conservation, material conservation and resource efficiency, and environmental air quality.

Executive Order B-16-12

Executive Order (EO) B-16-12 orders State entities under the direction of the Governor including CARB, CEC, and Public Utilities Commission to support the rapid commercialization of zero emission vehicles (ZEV). It directs these entities to achieve various benchmarks related to zero emission vehicles, including:

- Infrastructure to support up to one million ZEV by 2020;
- Widespread use of ZEV for public transportation and freight transport by 2020;
- Over 1.5 million ZEV on California roads by 2025;
- Annual displacement of at least 1.5 billion gallons of petroleum fuels by 2025; and
- A reduction of GHG emissions from the transportation sector equaling 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050.

Executive Order S-01-07 (Low Carbon Fuel Standard)

EO S-01-07 (17 CCR 95480 et seq.) requires the State to achieve a 10 percent or greater reduction by 2020 in the average fuel carbon intensity for transportation fuels in California regulated by CARB. CARB identified the Low Carbon Fuel Standard (LCFS) as a discrete early action item under AB 32, and the final CARB resolution (No. 09-31) adopting the LCFS was issued on April 23, 2009. CARB re-adopted LCFS in 2015. The LCFS was amended in 2018 to further reduce the carbon intensity to 20 percent or greater by 2030 to align with the 2030 GHG reduction target enacted through SB 32.

Executive Order N-79-20

Signed September 23, 2020, EO N-79-20 sets the goal to transition to 100 percent ZEVs for in-state sales of new passenger cars and trucks by 2035 and for medium-and heavy-duty vehicles by 2045. In addition, EO N-79-20 sets the goal for California to transition to

100 percent zero-emission off-road vehicles and equipment by 2035. While in-state sales of EVs will increase through 2045, the State does not have legislation which will restrict or preclude the *use* of fossil-fueled vehicles by or after 2045.

CARB Advanced Clean Cars Program/ZEV Program

AB 1493 (Chapter 200, Statutes of 2002), also known as the Pavley regulations, required CARB to adopt regulations by January 1, 2005, that would result in the achievement of the "maximum feasible" reduction in GHG emissions from vehicles used in the state primarily for non-commercial, personal transportation.

In January 2012, CARB approved a new emissions-control program for model years 2017 through 2025. The program combines the control of smog, soot, and GHGs and requirements for greater numbers of ZEVs into a single package of standards called Advanced Clean Cars (13 CCR 1962.1 and 1962.2).

The Advanced Clean Cars Program also includes the Low Emission Vehicle (LEV) III amendments to the LEV regulations, ZEV Program, and the Clean Fuels Outlet Regulation. The ZEV Program is designed to achieve California's long-term emission reduction goals by requiring manufacturers to offer for-sale specific numbers of the very cleanest cars available. These ZEV, which include battery electric, fuel cell, and plug-in hybrid electric vehicles, have now entered the marketplace. The Clean Fuels Outlet regulation ensures that fuels, such as electricity and hydrogen, are available to meet the needs of the new advanced technology vehicles as they come to market. In June 2022, in support of EO N-79-20, CARB proposed the Advanced Clean Cars II Regulations requiring manufacturers of light-duty passenger cars, trucks, and SUVs to transition to electric ZEV beginning with model year 2026 and phasing in of increasingly stringent requirements through 2035. By 2035, under the proposed Advanced Clean Cars II Regulations, all new passenger vehicles sold within the state would be zero emission.[1]

Local

Sacramento Area Council of Governments

SB 375, signed in September 2008, aligns regional transportation planning efforts, regional GHG reduction targets, and land use and housing allocation. SB 375 requires Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) to adopt a Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS), which will prescribe land use allocation in that MPO's Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). The Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG) serves as the MPO for the Sacramento region, maintaining the regional MTP/SCS in coordination with each of the 28 member cities and counties, including the County of Sacramento. SACOG has developed its RTP to detail the long-range goals for the region

[1] On May 22, 2025, the U.S. Senate voted to revoke three waivers of preemption issued by the EPA for CARB to implement the Advanced Clean Cars II regulation, the Advanced Clean Trucks regulation, and the Heavy-Duty Low NO_X Omnibus Regulation. In June 2025, California filed a lawsuit against the federal government challenging the revocation of the waivers.

and methods of compliance with federal and State transportation mandates. The most recent MTP/SCS (the 2025 Blueprint) for the SACOG region was adopted in November 2025. The 2025 Blueprint outlines the strategy for years 2020 through 2050, including GHG emissions reductions methods related to transportation, with the goal of preparing for future growth in a sustainable manner (SACOG 2025). The 2025 Blueprint has the following goals related to energy.

- Prioritizing infill development that locates housing near job centers and jobs near major residential areas to provide choice and reduce the growth rate of VMT;
- Integrated, multimodal transportation network and goods movement system;
- Reduction of per-capita GHG emissions emitted by weekday drivers by 19% below 2005 levels by 2035; and
- Transitioning the regional transit system to zero emission vehicles and expanding transit service.

Sacramento County General Plan

The following policies from the Energy and Land Use elements of the Sacramento County 2030 General Plan (County of Sacramento 2017, 2022) may be applicable to the proposed Specific Plan.

ENERGY

Policy EN-1. Develop standards which would reduce the energy required to maintain interior spaces in the comfort zone, including such standards as tree planting and proper orientation of dwellings.

Policy EN-3. Encourage the conservation and rehabilitation of existing housing and the revitalization of older, more intensively developed neighborhoods in the urban area.

Policy EN-5. Reduce travel distances and reliance on the automobile and facilitate increased use of public transit through appropriate land use plans and regulations.

Policy EN-14. Develop or revise design standards relating to building solar orientation, landscaping, impervious surfaces, and parking space requirements to conserve energy.

LAND USE

Policy LU-28. Encourage the development of energy-efficient buildings and communities.

Policy LU-29. Promote voluntary participation in incentive programs to increase the use of solar photovoltaic systems in new and existing residential, commercial, institutional, and public buildings.

Policy LU-30. Whenever feasible, incorporate energy-efficient site design, such as proper orientation to benefit from passive solar heating and cooling, into master planning efforts.

Policy LU-70. Enact cost effective energy conservation performance standards consistent with USEPA [U.S. Environmental Protection Agency] Energy Star standards for new construction.

Policy LU-71. Reduce the energy impacts from new residential and commercial projects through investigation and implementation of energy efficiency measures during all phases of design and development.

County of Sacramento Climate Action Plan

The County Board of Supervisors approved the 2024 Final Climate Action Plan (CAP) on November 6, 2024. The CAP identifies measures for the County to achieve a local fair share of State GHG emission reduction targets pursuant to AB 32, SB 32, and AB 1279 by focusing on GHG emissions reduction measures in transportation, energy use, land use, water and solid waste (County of Sacramento 2024). While the CAP focuses specifically on reducing GHG emissions, many of the plan's measures have the potential to both reduce countywide energy use and improve energy efficiency.

Impacts and Analysis

Significance Criteria

For purposes of this EIR and consistent with the criteria presented in Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, impacts related to energy would be considered significant if implementation of the proposed Specific Plan would:

- result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation; or
- conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency.

Methodology and Assumptions

Construction fuel consumption associated with vehicles and equipment was estimated by converting the construction GHG emissions estimates to an estimated fuel consumption using EIA's GHG equivalency factors for diesel and gasoline fuel (EIA 2024).

Operational electricity and natural gas consumption were estimated using CalEEMod based on the building square footage associated with existing development and future development (accounting for existing plus anticipated new development and redevelopment) within the Specific Plan Area. Electricity consumption includes electricity associated with supplying, treating, and distributing water for use in proposed Specific

Plan development. These estimates are based on default energy consumption rates developed for CalEEMod and do not account for the likelihood of increased energy efficiency over time due to improvements in building design and technology, as well as regulatory requirements of the California Building Standards Code (Title 24) that typically are increasingly stringent over time. Transportation fuel consumption associated with operational trips was calculated based on projected Specific Plan VMT and trip generation rates developed in support of this EIR and the use of CARB's EMission FACtor (EMFAC) 2021 model version v.1.0.2[2] vehicle fuel and electricity consumption data.

Energy consumption was converted to a common energy unit using heat content information for fuels (The Climate Registry 2025), and the conversion rate of 7,477 British thermal units (BTU) per kilowatt hour for electricity (CEC 2025c).

Similar to the methodology described in Chapter 4, Air Quality, the net change in operational energy consumption was calculated by subtracting energy consumption under existing conditions from future energy consumption. To ensure conservative results, the existing conditions used an operational year of 2050 so that factors that would reduce transportation-related energy consumption independent of the proposed Specific Plan are not reflected in the net energy estimate. Such factors include, but are not limited to, increased fuel efficiency, fleet turnover, and the rise in use of zero-emissions vehicles. The future conditions scenario similarly used an operational year of 2050 and projected VMT and trip generation rates for anticipated new development under the proposed Specific Plan, as well as existing land uses that would remain. The resulting net change in operational energy consumption reflects anticipated development under the proposed Specific Plan.

IMPACT EN-1: RESULT IN WASTEFUL, INEFFICIENT, OR UNNECESSARY CONSUMPTION OF ENERGY DURING PROJECT CONSTRUCTION

Construction activities associated with development and infrastructure improvements under the proposed Specific Plan would result in a temporary increase in energy consumption, primarily in the form of fossil fuels (e.g., gasoline, diesel fuel) and electricity for the duration of construction. Energy in the form of fuel and electricity would be consumed during temporary construction activities by construction vehicles and equipment, trucks delivering equipment and supplies, and construction worker vehicles.

[2] CalEEMod has not yet been updated to incorporate CARB's adjustment factors for NO_X, ROG, PM_{10}, and $PM_{2.5}$, which were developed (primarily for the purposes of SIP development and conformity determinations) to remove the estimated emissions benefits attributed to the Advanced Clean Trucks (ACT), Zero-Emission Airport Shuttle, Heavy-Duty Vehicle and Engine Emission Warranty and Maintenance Provisions (Warranty Phase 1), and Heavy-Duty Omnibus (Omnibus) regulations. These regulations can no longer be enforced due to Congressional resolutions disapproving EPA's decisions to grant California waivers for several regulations in the EMFAC baseline. These Congressional resolutions are pending litigation. As such, construction-related and operational mobile source emissions are estimated based on the existing emission factors available in CalEEMod.

Energy consumption would vary depending on the type of construction activities. For example, during construction equipment-intensive phases, such as site grading, daily fuel use would be higher than during less intensive phases, such as building construction. For the purposes of this EIR, an anticipated most intensive construction year was estimated by assuming a maximum annual construction level of up to 20 percent of the assumed development in Specific Plan Area in the earliest possible year of construction (2027). Realistically, development would likely occur over the duration of the planning horizon, through 2050. Calculating fuel use based on the vehicle and equipment fleet mix in 2027 provides a conservative (high) estimate of total construction-related fuel demand, as vehicle and equipment fuel intensity is anticipated to decrease over time with the turnover of new vehicles in the fleet mix that are designed to adhere to increasingly stringent emissions and fuel efficiency standards. Because of these conservative assumptions, actual construction-related energy consumption could be less than presented in this analysis. If construction is delayed or occurs over a longer period, fuel use would be reduced because of a more modern and fuel-efficient construction equipment fleet mix.

Table EN-2 presents the total fuel consumption anticipated for construction activities. The data in Table EN-2 are based on the GHG emissions calculations for construction activities (using CalEEMod, as detailed in the methodology section above) and application of standard carbon dioxide (CO_2) emissions coefficients for diesel and gasoline fuel to estimate fuel consumption for each phase of construction activities. The analysis presented assumes all off-road equipment is diesel-fuel powered[3]. Refer to Appendix AQ-1 for detailed model inputs, assumptions, and calculations. As noted above, the energy consumption presented in Table EN-2 assumes 20 percent of anticipated development in the Specific Plan Area would occur in the earliest possible year and applies that most intensive and conservative assumption to estimate total construction energy consumption.

Table EN-2: Construction-Related Fuel Consumption

Fuel Type	Maximum Construction Year Fuel Consumption (gallons)	Total Construction Duration Fuel Consumption [1] (gallons)
Diesel	304,276	1,521,381
Gasoline	182,803	914,013

Notes:

Sources:

[a] Modeled by AECOM in 2025

[b] U.S. Energy Information Administration 2024

[1] Total MT CO_2e for buildout of entire Specific Plan Area is calculated based on the maximum construction year and scaling based on the assumed percentage of development (20 percent) for the maximum construction year.

[3] Construction activities for development under the proposed Specific Plan could also involve the use of on-site electric-powered equipment, the use of which would result in reduced gasoline and diesel fuel consumption.

Based on the estimated total fuel consumption associated with construction of the proposed Specific Plan and assuming a buildout period of 23 years, an estimated annual average of 66,147 gallons of diesel and 39,740 gallons of gasoline would be used per year, which equates to approximately 0.12 percent of the diesel and less than 0.01 percent of the gasoline sold in Sacramento County in 2024.

Construction activities within the Specific Plan Area would be conducted in accordance with all applicable laws and regulations, including applicable federal, State, and local laws that are intended to promote efficient utilization of resources and minimize environmental impacts. Vehicles used for construction would comply with CAFE fuel economy standards, which would result in more efficient use of transportation fuels. Construction of development anticipated under the proposed Specific Plan would use fuel-efficient equipment consistent with federal and State regulations, such as fuel efficiency regulations in CARB's Pavley Phase II standards; the anti-idling regulation in 13 CCR Section 2485; and fuel requirements for stationary equipment in 17 CCR Section 93115. In accordance with 13 CCR Sections 2485 and 2449, idling by commercial vehicles over 10,000 pounds and off-road equipment over 25 horsepower would be limited to a maximum of five minutes. The intent of these regulations is to reduce construction emissions; however, compliance with the anti-idling and emission reduction regulations discussed above would also result in fuel savings from the more efficient use of equipment. Material resulting from demolition and site preparation would be reused to the extent feasible, in accordance with CALGreen standards for the diversion of non-hazardous waste. Specific Plan-related construction activities and corresponding fuel consumption would be temporary, localized, and necessary. The proposed Specific Plan, inclusive of transportation and infrastructure improvements, does not include unusual characteristics that would necessitate the use of construction equipment that would be less energy-efficient than at comparable construction sites. Therefore, construction activities associated with the Specific Plan and off-site improvements would not result in inefficient, wasteful, or unnecessary use of fuel or other energy sources. This impact would be **less than significant.**

In addition, while not required for this construction energy impact, Mitigation Measures AQ-1a and AQ-4a would further reduce non-renewable energy use and inefficiencies in equipment fuel consumption during construction. Mitigation Measure AQ-1a would limit equipment idling to two minutes, which is beyond the requirements of CCR Title 13, Sections 2485 and 2449, and would require equipment to be maintained in proper working condition. Mitigation Measure AQ-4a would require the use of electric equipment where commercially available, thereby limiting non-renewable fuel consumption during construction. Implementation of these mitigation measures would further reduce energy consumption and increase energy efficiencies during construction.

Energy efficiency is a possible indicator of environmental impacts. The actual adverse physical environmental effects associated with energy use and the efficiency of energy use are detailed throughout this EIR in the environmental topic–specific chapters. For example, the use of energy can lead to air pollutant and GHG emissions, the impacts of which are addressed in the "Air Quality" and "Climate Change" chapters, respectively, of this EIR.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required.

Impact EN-2: Result in Wasteful, Inefficient, Or Unnecessary Consumption Of Energy During Project Operation

Energy use associated with operations under full buildout of the Specific Plan would include electricity and natural gas use associated with building operations, and fuel and electricity for vehicle travel.

Buildings would consume energy for multiple purposes including, but not limited to, building heating and cooling, cooking, refrigeration, lighting, and use of other electronic equipment. Additionally, electricity would be consumed associated with the supply, distribution and treatment of water and wastewater treatment. Future buildings constructed under the proposed Specific Plan would be required to be constructed to meet all applicable energy efficiency standards at the time of construction and would be required to comply with the current energy performance standards of Title 24 of the CCR, including the Building Energy Efficiency Standards (Part 6 of Title 24) and CALGreen (Part 11 of Title 24). Development under the Specific Plan would receive electrical power from SMUD and natural gas from PG&E. As described above, under "Environmental Setting," the proportion of SMUD-delivered electricity for all customers generated from eligible renewable energy sources is anticipated to increase to 100 percent by 2030.

Transportation-related energy consumption would be in the form of both fuel (e.g., diesel and gasoline) and electricity for electric and hybrid vehicles. Buildout of the Specific Plan would generate daily operational trips for residents, employees, and visitors. Federal and State regulations regarding fuel efficiency standards for vehicles in California, which are designed to reduce wasteful, unnecessary, and inefficient use of energy for transportation, would continue to become more stringent, thereby resulting in increased fuel efficiency associated with long-term vehicle travel associated with operations under buildout of the Specific Plan.

Operational energy consumption associated with building operations and vehicle travel for both existing development and future development (accounting for existing plus proposed new development and redevelopment) within the Specific Plan Area are presented in Table EN-3. Electrical and natural gas demands were modeled using CalEEMod based on the existing land uses and anticipated new development and redevelopment under the proposed Specific Plan. It should be noted that the estimated electricity and natural gas consumption do not account for increased energy efficiency that is likely over time due to improvements in building design and technology, as well as updated regulatory requirements of the California Building Standards Code (Title 24).

Table EN-3: Specific Plan Land Use Operational Electricity and Natural Gas Demand

Energy Type	Existing Annual Consumption	Existing Annual Consumption (MMBTU)	Proposed Specific Plan Annual Consumption	Proposed Specific Plan Annual Consumption (MMBTU)
Building Electricity[1]	66,008 MWh	493,528	154,131 MWh	1,152,397
Building Natural Gas	91,318 MMBTU	91,318	212,032 MMBTU	212,032
Transportation Gasoline	11,749,653 gallons	1,468,707	16,863,371 gallons	2,107,921
Transportation Diesel	2,761,648 gallons	381,707	3,963,581 gallons	546,974
Transportation Electricity	35,131 MWh	262,668	50,421 MWH	376,987
Energy Consumption (MMBTU) per Capita[2]	**--**	**1,004**	**--**	**154**

Notes: MWh = mega-hours; MMBtu = million British thermal units
Source: Modeled by AECOM in 2025
1 The electricity demands presented in this table include both the electricity associated with the operation of buildings, and electricity associated with the supply, distribution and treatment of water and wastewater treatment, which were estimated using CalEEMod default electricity intensity factors.
2 Based on existing Specific Plan Area population of 2,687 and projected future population of 28,566.

As shown in Table EN-3, operational energy consumption associated with the proposed Specific Plan would increase compared to existing conditions due to operation of new development, redevelopment of existing buildings where parcels are currently underutilized, and increased vehicle trips. However, the proposed Specific Plan could add up to 25,000 new residents to the Specific Plan Area, and as shown in Table EN-3, operational energy consumption per capita would decrease by over 84 percent.

Since transportation accounts for the greatest proportion of operational energy consumption within the Specific Plan Area, the fuel use and travel demand due to the buildout of the proposed Specific Plan are important for consideration in an assessment of energy efficiency. The decrease in energy consumption per capita is primarily driven by increased transportation efficiencies associated with the proposed Specific Plan's land use mix of anticipated new development and redevelopment of existing parcels, which includes primarily mixed uses of co-located residential, commercial and retail land uses. As illustrated by Table EN-3, the proposed Specific Plan's anticipated land use mix would accommodate future residents and employees at a higher energy efficiency (i.e., less transportation energy usage per capita) than under existing conditions, which includes primarily commercial, retail, and industrial uses that do not place residents central to amenities and dense populations. The proposed land use mix is intended to reduce trip distances and allow future residents' trips to be captured on-site, including trips to jobs, retail, and services within the Specific Plan, and would allow residents to access amenities and services using alternative modes such as walking and biking, thereby reducing transportation-related energy consumption. Features of the proposed Specific Plan that place higher-density uses near planned transit and provide convenient and safe

pedestrian and bicycle access to destinations that are placed near residences would help reduce per-capita VMT and associated transportation-related energy consumption.

For the reasons described above, energy consumption associated with operational transportation and building operations would not be inefficient, wasteful, or unnecessary and this impact would be **less than significant**.

In addition, while not required for this operational energy impact, climate change Mitigation Measure CC-1 would further reduce non-renewable energy consumption associated with building operations by requiring all new residential and non-residential development to be designed and constructed as all-electric ready with the necessary wiring and electrical capacity.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required.

Impact EN-3: Conflict with or Obstruct a State or Local Plan for Renewable Energy or Energy Efficiency

Implementation of the proposed Specific Plan would result in the redevelopment of existing parcels and development of new land uses that would result in the consumption of electricity and natural gas, as well as transportation-related fuel consumption.

As discussed above in Impact EN-1, construction activities within the Specific Plan Area and off-site improvement areas would be conducted in accordance with all applicable laws and regulations, including applicable federal, State, and local laws that are intended to promote efficient utilization of resources and minimize environmental impacts. Materials resulting from demolition and site preparation would be reused to the extent feasible, in accordance with CALGreen standards for the diversion of non-hazardous waste, and on-site idling of heavy-duty equipment would be limited to no more than two minutes, in accordance with Mitigation Measure AQ-2, which is stricter than the requirements of CCR Title 13, Sections 2485 and 2449.

As discussed above in Impact EN-2, operation of the land uses proposed under the Specific Plan would result in increased consumption of electricity and natural gas related to building operations compared to existing conditions due to operation of new land uses that would be constructed on undeveloped parcels, in addition to increased building square footage on parcels that are currently underutilized and would be redeveloped. The design and construction of buildings would comply with the most recently adopted California Building Standards Code (including the Building Energy Efficiency Standards [Part 6 of Title 24] and CALGreen [Part 11 of Title 24]). This would ensure that future development would consume energy efficiently through the incorporation of such features as efficient water heating systems, high performance roofs and walls, and high efficacy lighting. Additionally, while operation of development under the proposed Specific Plan would result in increased energy consumption, energy consumption per capita would be reduced within the Specific Plan Area, as shown in Table EN-3 and discussed in Impact EN-2 above.

Transportation-related energy consumption, which is correlated with VMT, accounts for the greatest proportion of operational energy consumption. Many regulatory requirements reduce VMT, such as SB 375, which requires MPOs to conduct land use and transportation planning in a way that reduces GHG emissions from cars and light duty trucks. An outcome of the 2025 Blueprint is to reduce regional VMT per capita by 7.5 percent in the year 2050 compared to 2020. To achieve regional reductions in VMT, the 2025 Blueprint emphasizes revitalizing existing commercial corridors and main streets, compact growth, local job opportunities, reduced traffic congestion, and investment in public transportation infrastructure (SACOG 2025). A key implementation activity and critical component of the 2025 Blueprint is the Green Means Go program, which is a regional effort to accelerate infill development and electrify vehicle trips in locally adopted Green Zones. Green Zones are areas identified for infill development where future residents are likely to take fewer and shorter car trips than people in the surrounding community and the region. Further, Green Zones must be planned for growth and supported by local policies and actions that support increased development and redevelopment in the area, such as a specific plan. To accelerate infill development and implement the Green Means Go Program within the North Watt corridor area, the North Watt Corridor Green Zone was established, which is inclusive of the Specific Plan Area. In other words, the Specific Plan Area and immediately surrounding areas have been identified by SACOG as an area where projects that create more infill housing, increase mobility, and reduce VMT should be focused. The proposed Specific Plan would align with the priorities and strategies of the 2025 Blueprint to reduce regional emissions by facilitating infill development and compact growth that achieves transportation-related efficiencies, reducing VMT and associated fuel consumption. Additionally, federal and State regulations regarding fuel efficiency standards for vehicles in California would continue to become more stringent, thereby resulting in increased fuel efficiency associated with long-term vehicle travel associated with operations under buildout of the Specific Plan.

For the reasons described above, development under the proposed Specific Plan would not conflict with or obstruct a State or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency and this impact would be **less than significant**.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required.

9 HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes the environmental setting and regulatory background related to hazards and hazardous materials in the North Watt Avenue Specific Plan Area, and identifies potential impacts related to these issues from implementation of the proposed Specific Plan.

ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

EXISTING AND PAST USES OF THE SPECIFIC PLAN AREA AND VICINITY

The Specific Plan Area is a commercial and industrial corridor that reflects several decades of development from the 1950s through the present. Because of its proximity to the former McClellan Air Force Base (now redeveloped as McClellan Park, which features industrial, logistics, aviation, and other commercial uses) immediately to the west, the Specific Plan Area evolved over time with businesses that supported Air Force operations or that were oriented to the needs of employees at McClellan Air Force Base. Development within the Specific Plan Area is primarily commercial, with industrial uses south of the Union Pacific Railroad line, and a limited amount of residential development. Commercial uses include services and arranged in low-scale buildings and oriented to motorists along Watt Avenue. Land immediately east and north of the Specific Plan Area consists primarily of residential development. Immediately south of the Specific Plan Area, Interstate 80 (I-80) is present, with the Haggin Oaks Golf Course farther to the south.

HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

SUPERFUND SITE –FORMER MCCLELLAN AIR FORCE BASE

The Specific Plan Area is adjacent to the boundaries of the former McClellan Air Force Base (AFB), which operated as a logistical depot and managed maintenance and repair of aircraft, electronics, and communication equipment. McClellan AFB was an active military facility from 1939 until 2001, when the base was closed under the Department of Defense Base Realignment and Closure process. It is now the Sacramento McClellan Airport, a privately-owned, public-use general aviation airfield. Most of the leasable building space has been leased to a variety of businesses and organizations that are now part of a privately owned commercial development known as McClellan Park. All leases and subleases have appropriate use restrictions to maintain protection of human health and the environment during the ongoing investigation and cleanup activities (U.S. Environmental Protection Agency [U.S. EPA] 2025).

The operation and maintenance of aircraft at McClellan AFB involved the use, storage, and disposal of hazardous materials including industrial solvents, caustic cleaners, paint,

metal plating waste, and low-level radioactive wastes, and a variety of fuels, oils, and lubricants. The former McClellan AFB is on the Federal National Priorities List as a Superfund Site and is also on the State Cortese List maintained under California Government Code Section 65962.5 (as discussed in the Regulatory Setting below). The former McClellan AFB operations utilized organic solvents including trichloroethene (TCE), dichloroethane (DCE), methylene chloride, tetrachloroethylene (PCE), trichloroethane (TCA), and carbon tetrachloride and resulted in at least 46 waste storage and disposal areas, along with individually contaminated areas, at various buildings and facilities. Additional contaminants included oils, polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), metals, and radioactive compounds. The base has undergone many years of remedial actions including soil excavation and removal, and groundwater extraction and treatment. Remedial actions are ongoing to prevent the spread of contaminants and to clean up contaminated soils and groundwater to the maximum extent practicable.

In groundwater, volatile organic compounds (VOCs) of concern that have been consistently detected above maximum contaminant levels for drinking water include benzene, carbon tetrachloride, chloroform, 1,2-dichlorobenzene, 1,2-dichloroethane, 1,1-dichloroethene, 1,2-dichloroethene, tetrachloroethene, 1,1,1-trichloroethane, and vinyl chloride. The groundwater contamination of greatest concern at the former McClellan AFB is from shallow plumes of VOCs, of which TCE is the most frequently detected chemical of concern.

The principal means of groundwater remediation have included: capping ground surface areas with asphalt to prevent the intrusion of water that might further the transport of pollutants, abandoning production wells that contribute to the spread of pollutants, and installing a groundwater treatment plant in the western portion of the site that removes VOCs and other organic compounds. The groundwater cleanup program includes a network of 85 extraction wells across the former McClellan AFB. These wells send approximately 1,450 gallons per minute of contaminated water to the groundwater treatment plant (located on the west side of the former McClellan AFB), which cleans and discharges the water into Magpie Creek (U.S. EPA 2025). Based on the most recent data available from the California Department of Water Resources (DWR), the depth to groundwater in the Specific Plan Area is approximately 100–120 feet below the ground surface (DWR 2024).

There is a small, contaminated groundwater plume associated with support activities at the former McClellan AFB within the Specific Plan Area south of the Union Pacific railroad tracks along Myrtle Avenue at Watt Avenue (USACE 2010).

Cortese-Listed Sites

In 2025, AECOM performed historical research related to hazardous materials sites within the Specific Plan Area and vicinity based on a review of topographic maps, aerial photographs, directories, Google Earth aerial and street view images, and database search results obtained from Environmental Data Resources, Inc. (EDR). Multiple properties were identified within the Specific Plan Area in the environmental database report obtained from EDR. The majority of these database listings were related to

compliance with a hazardous materials-related regulation, and for most properties appearing on the database listing, their listing is non-contamination related and does not indicate a hazardous materials release or other environmental concern. Based on AECOM's review of the database listings in the EDR report, most of the listed sites do not represent a hazard for development within the Specific Plan Area based on their distance, regulatory status (i.e., closed, no violations found), media affected (i.e., soil only[1]), and/or topographic position from the Specific Plan Area (i.e., down-gradient or cross-gradient).

A variety of properties listed in regulatory databases were identified in the EDR report as having potential environmental concerns for the Specific Plan Area due to the presence of underground storage tanks (USTs) or aboveground storage tanks (ASTs), open or closed release cases, historic or current gasoline stations, automotive repair or body shops, and historic or current dry-cleaning facilities.

AECOM also performed a detailed review of the sites listed in the EDR report. The properties with environmental concerns where a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment is recommended within the Specific Plan Area are listed in Table HAZ-1, shown in **bold** text, and shown on Plate HAZ-1a through Plate HAZ-1d. These properties generally comprise former or current gas stations, automotive repair facilities, automotive body shops, dry cleaners, and former LUST sites. In Table HAZ-1, unshaded cells represent properties with no concerns, **bolded** cells represent properties where a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment is currently recommended prior to development, and underlined cells indicate properties where adjoining properties may have an environmental concern.

In addition to the EDR report, AECOM performed a review of selected available online regulatory agency databases to collect information pertaining to the Specific Plan Area and surrounding area. These searches included the EnviroStor database maintained by the California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC), and the GeoTracker database maintained by the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB). These databases include federal National Priorities List (NPL) sites, state response sites, voluntary cleanup sites, and school cleanup sites, Leaking Underground Storage Tank (LUST) Cleanup Sites, (non-petroleum) Cleanup Program Sites, military cleanup sites, and permitted UST sites located throughout California. Some of these sites are part of the Cortese List (discussed in the Regulatory Setting, below).

[1] Sites that only involved contaminated soil do not represent a hazard because the remediation involved removal of the affected soil and replacement with clean fill dirt; thus, there is no remaining hazard.

Table HAZ-1. Hazardous Materials Sites

Sheet No	APN	Address	Property Information	Location Name	Land Use
1	**219-0220-054-0000**	**7550 Watt Avenue**	**Gas Station. Underground Storage Tank pad on the north side of the property. Prior Leaking Underground Storage Tank Site – Beacon #3783 Closed Case 5/11/2009**	**Speedway/Shell Gas Station**	**Gas Station**
2	219-0012-001-0000	7460 Watt Avenue	Adjoining Former Phillips 66 Gas Station/R&C Auto Service (1970 to present) Small back lot with some vehicles. Possible gas station historically based on building setup. No regulatory documented spills or releases.	Tailpipes Smog Test Center	Former Gas Station/Now Auto Service
3	**208-0153-026-0000**	**7471 Watt Avenue, Suite 110**	**Highland Dry Cleaners present day/Former Park Place Cleaners. Located in strip mall**	**Highland Cleaners**	**Current Dry Cleaners**
4	**208-0132-008-000**	**7235 Watt Avenue**	**Former Thompson's Auto Repair/Stevens Hitches Welding, Recession Cure All Auto Repair, VW Auto Pieces & Parts**	**Vacant Lot with dirt driveway and concrete slab**	**Auto Service/ Repair**
5	208-0132-027-0000	7215 Watt Avenue	Big lot looks to be a demo spot. Lots of stacked tires in their fenced back lot. Former MAACO Body Shop	Express Tires	Auto Sales and Service
6	**208-0133-039-0000**	**7145 Watt Avenue**	**Car Wash since at least 2006**	**Quick Quack Car Wash**	**Auto Sales and Service**
7	200-0400-006-0000	6990 Watt Avenue	Highlands Auto Repair Shop	Highlands Auto Repair Shop	Auto Sales and Service
8	208-0152-015-0000	6831 Watt Avenue	Tire shop backs to an empty (possibly fenced lot). Storage containers present in the back lot	Five Star Tires - Tire Shop	Auto Sales and Service
9	208-0153-015-0000	6709 Watt Avenue	In a shopping center - may have been a Gas station based on a covered area that looks like a gas pumping cover.	Jiffy Lube	Auto Sales and Service
10	**208-0153-026-0000**	**6705 Watt Avenue**	**Elkhorn Cleaners.**	**Strip Mall with PJ Mart, Elkhorn Cleaners, Salon & Barber, Crown Wig & Beauty Supply**	**Commercial**
11	**208-0172-022-0000**	**6421 Watt Avenue**	**Smog Inspection Station. Backs to a fenced lot with storage container, dirt, and debris. Former Service Station. Leaking Underground Storage Tank Cleanup.**	**Smog N Tag**	**Auto Sales and Service**
12	**215-0062-025-0000**	**6323 Watt Avenue**	**ECO Gas & Mart Station. Backs to an empty lot with storage containers and debris - not accessible from street; fenced. Former Digol's Gas, Miles Oil Co., Eco Gas & Mart, Gardner ARCO, Fred's Mufflers, (1965 - Present Day).**	**Eco Gas and Mart**	**Auto Sales and Service**
13	**215-0062-040-0000**	**6303, 6305, 6309, 6315 Watt Avenue**	**In a cluster of Auto Service business. Watt Avenue Automotive Center, Universal Automotive Repair, Import Auto Performance, Concord Automotive, Drobot Diesel Performance, Gill's Auto Repairs, Express Plus Service & Repair, Express Plus Service, Auto Quick Automotive, J&T Auto Repair, Hillsdale Auto Repair, Foreign Auto Care, Advance Auto Repair, and Smog and Tune-up Center.**	**J&T Auto Repair**	**Auto Sales and Service**

Sheet No	APN	Address	Property Information	Location Name	Land Use
14	**215-0062-027-0000**	**6229 Watt Avenue**	**Warehouses with automotive repair shops. Backs to a large storage building with many vehicles parked in the back lot (not accessible from the street). Mexico Auto Repair, All Season Tires, Body Works Auto Body, A.G. Auto, A1 Auto Diesel, HI Enterprises**	**Lou's Burgers/ All Season Tire (back building)**	**Auto Sales and Service**
15	**215-0062-057-0000**	**6233 Watt Avenue**	**Former Exxon at 6241 Watt Avenue. Underground Storage Tank Registration one 5,000-gallon premium Underground Storage Tank, one 12,332-gallon regular Underground Storage Tank, one 7,500-gallon unleaded fuel Underground Storage Tank (1988). No other records found.**	**Vacant Lot**	**Former Gas Station/ Now Auto Service**
16	217-0110-008-0000	6150 Watt Avenue	Former Grand Auto Store #4032. Case Closed 10/30/2018 Former King's Tire Wheel and Auto Repair, Wheel Works, PAC Car Automotive, Inc.	Tire Wheels & Auto Repair, O'Reilly Auto Parts	Auto Sales and Service
17	215-0072-019-0000	6101 Watt Avenue	Former Fast Gas Service Station. Former Kayo Oil Company.	Thrift Store	Commercial
18	**215-0080-004-0000**	**6013 Watt Avenue**	**Former Curley's Coin-Op Dry Cleaners/ Texaco Gas & Service Station/Sam's Auto Repair northwest corner of Freedom Park Dr/N. Watt Avenue.**	**Vacant Lot**	**Vacant Lot**
19	215-0182-019-0000	5949 Watt Avenue	Former FATTA /Gas Station.	California Check Cashing	Commercial
20	**215-0182-031-0000**	**5911 Watt Avenue**	**Former George's Cleaners reported from 1961 to 1995 with records of halogenated solvents in the 1990s.**	**Temple of Deliverance**	**Commercial**
21	215-0300-094-0000	5900 32nd Street	Aerospace Museum of California; airplanes on property.	Aerospace Museum of California	Public/Quasi-Public
22	**215-0182-014-0000**	**5851/5855 Watt Avenue**	**Several Auto shops/services within on large hanger/warehouse building. North Highlands Tire Pros Auto Care/Holcomb's Auto Clinic.**	**North Star Smog & Auto Care/ North Highland Tire Pros**	**Auto Sales and Service**
23	**215-0182-013-0000**	**5849 Watt Avenue**	**Car dealer. Lot filled with vehicles in front and in fenced back lot (non-accessible).**	**All Cares & Trucks/ A-1 Cars & Trucks**	**Auto Sales and Service**
24	**215-0182-027-0000**	**5825 Watt Avenue**	**CMP Motors, Cliff Auto Repairs, Car Land Auto Sales, Holcomb's Auto Clinic, Patsy D's, Eternal Transmission, Waynes Amerikan Motors, Jor's Trim Line, Safeco Auto Sales, Takkar Bros Auto.**	**Royal Auto Center and Atlas Car Sales**	**Auto Sales and Service**
25	**218-0151-008-0000**	**5750 Watt Avenue**	**Former Unocal gas station.**	**Believed to be now 5700 Watt Avenue. Vacant Lot**	**Auto Sales and Service**
26	**215-0190-011-0000**	**5701 Watt Avenue**	**Chevron Gas Station. Underground Storage Tank pad on the north side of the property. Former North Highland Shell Station. Also known as Servo Gasoline, Cal Texaco Watt**	**Chevron Gas Station**	**Auto Sales and Service**
27	**218-0151-008-0000**	**5645 Watt Avenue**	**MAACO Auto Body Shop. Former gas station with gasoline spill.**	**MAACO Auto Body Shop**	**Auto Sales and Service**
28	**215-0190-052-0000**	**5621 Watt Avenue # 102**	**Former Dry Cleaners - Top Flight Cleaners, Jet Cleaners**	**Express Dry Cleaners**	**Commercial**

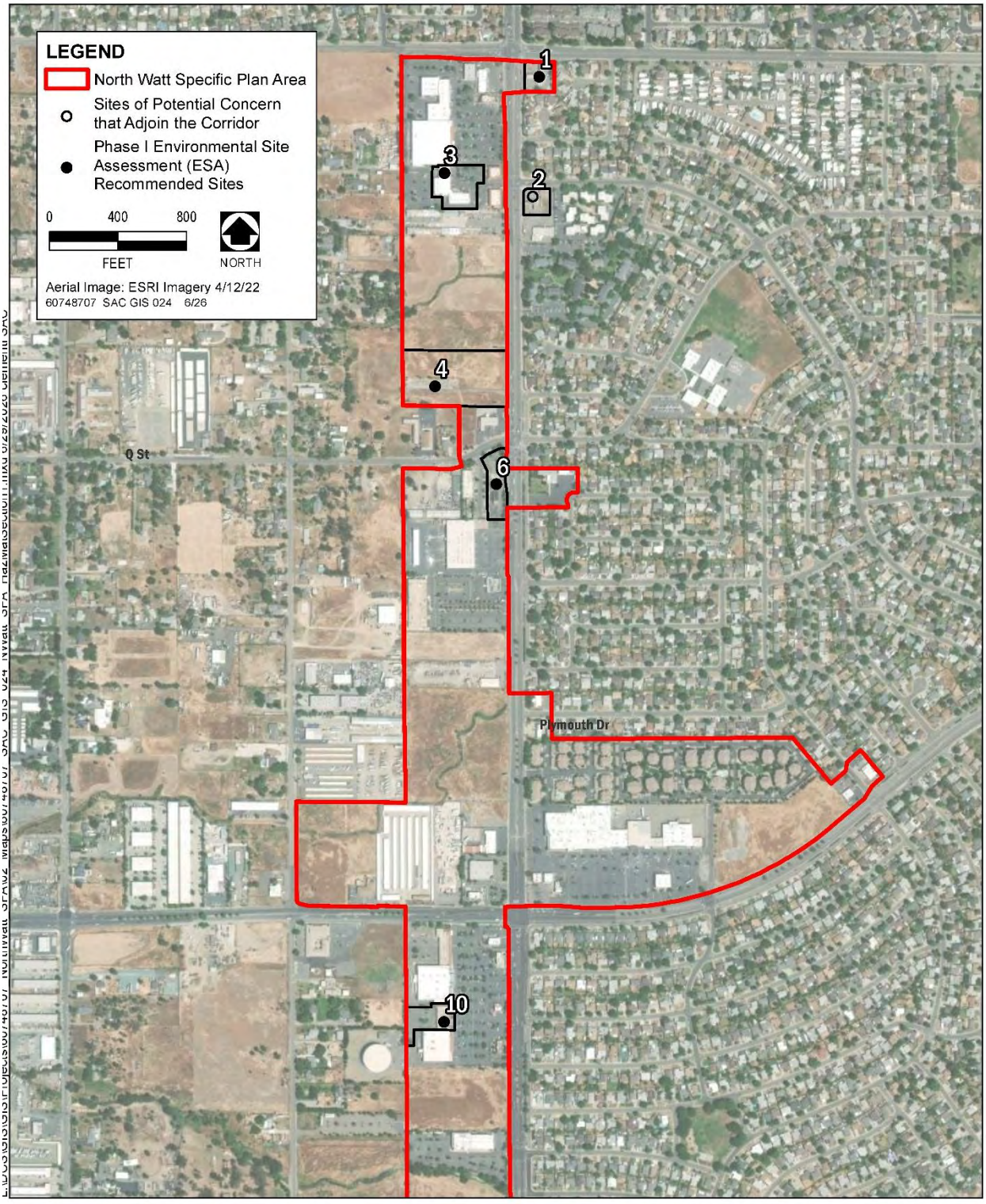
Sheet No	APN	Address	Property Information	Location Name	Land Use
29	218-0231-001-0000	5545 Watt Avenue	Former McClellan Shell Station, Standard Oil Service Station, Lyle's Chevron. Former Leaking Underground Storage Tank site.	Adalberto's Mexican restaurant	Commercial
30	**218-0231-005-0000**	**5500 Watt Avenue**	**Former Pay Less Dry Cleaners 1970s, Texaco Gas Station 1961-65**	**Retail / Commercial**	**Banquet Hall/Former Dry Cleaner**
31	218-0281-001-000	5200 Watt Avenue	Former McClellan Bld., 5365. Also listed as buildings 600, 900, 7, 262, 200, 445, 367, 376. Listed as former historical Underground Storage Tank. PEA Investigation conducted with a No Further Action 11/6/2002.	Vacant Lot	Vacant Lot
32	228-0251-048-0000	4990 Watt Avenue	Former Car Care Center (1961), Flying A Service gas station (1965), Hughes Motors (1970), B&B Motors (1975)	Jack-in-the-Box	Commercial
33	**228-0251-029-0000**	**4946 Watt Avenue**	**Listed in EDR as Motorworks, LLC, DCR Propellor Co, Sacramento Products Finishing, Hoop Scoop, One Step Service Solutions, Autoban Wheel and Tire, Angies Auto Repair, AES Wholesale Alternators & Starters, River City Painting, LLC, J. R. Putman, CleanServ Caldwell, Paxton Engineering, Sierra Cylinder Head, KC's Auto Works, Nor Cal Pest Control, Tom's Carter Co Auto Trim**	**Multiple Warehouses with automotive services**	**Industrial/ Commercial**
34	228-0251-034-0000	4900 Watt Avenue	7 -Eleven Inc. Store #16081. Listed Ross Pacini Property as Leaking Underground Storage Tank site.	7-Elevan Store with no gas pumps	Industrial/ Commercial
35	**240-0011-020-0000**	**4840 Watt Avenue**	**Vacant Lot - Former Gas Station - Floyd S Richfield Service (1961), Dick S Richfield (1965), & Logan S Richfield (1970)**	**Vacant Lot with island of grass, old sign post, and asphalt parking lot. Looks to be adjoined to former fast food restaurant.**	**Industrial/ Commercial**
36	240-0550-059-0000	4837 Watt Avenue	Unlisted address; warehouse appears to be up for rent	Unlisted	Industrial/ Commercial
37	**240-0011-037-0000**	**4800 Watt Avenue**	**Extreme Tires and Wheels. Former Hudson Service Station. Quaker State Minit Lube 1311, True Value Tires Inc., Jiffy Lube #2225 Leaking Underground Storage Tank site.**	**Extreme Tires and Wheels**	**Auto Sales and Service**
38	**240-0550-012-0000**	**4745 Watt Avenue**	**Arco Gas Station #6255. Former BP West Coast Products, Prestige Stations Inc. #0546, Sacramento Petroleum, Leaking Underground Storage Tank Site Case #1. Case Closed 3/16/2012. Case #2 Remedial Action Cleanup - Underway**	**ARCO Gas Station**	**Auto Sales and Service**
39	**240-0550-019-0000**	**4741 Watt Avenue**	**Recycling center; trucks and equipment on the lot. Allied Waste Services of North America, LLC, Recycling Industries, Inc., former Levitz Furniture Corp. Leaking Underground Storage Tank Cleanup Site. Case Closed 11/6/20217**	**Republic Services Recycling Center**	**Industrial/ Commercial**
40	**240-0550-005-0000**	**4637 Watt Avenue**	**Firestone Store #3106-021-156 with reported 550-gallon waste oil Underground Storage Tank.**	**Firestone Complete AutoCare**	**Auto Sales and Service**

Sheet No	APN	Address	Property Information	Location Name	Land Use
41	**240-0550-006-0000**	**4631 Watt Avenue**	**76 Gas Station #5999. Underground Storage Tank pad on the east side of the lot. Also known as UNOCAL #5999, Service station since at least 1970. Also known as the following Conns Union #3, Tosco Corporation Station 31053, Conoco Phillips #25599, Bhullars Inc. Leaking Underground Storage Tank Cleanup Site.**	**76 Gas Station**	**Auto Sales and Service**
42	**215-092-001-0000**	**3223 Freedom Park Drive**	**Kenyon Plastering of CA, Inc.**	**Plaster Company**	**Industrial/Commercial**
43	Adjacent to above parcel - Not in target area	6114 32nd Street	Mitchell Marine Services/ABC Foreign Dismantlers	Junk Yard	Industrial
44	**240-0660-020-000**	**Roseville Road**	**PG&E Company/ R-1370-North Highlands**	**Utility Yard**	**Industrial**
45	**240-0660-001-0000**	**Roseville Road**	**PG&E 2022 Gas Transmission Program**	**Utility Yard**	**Industrial**
46	**240-0660-002-0000**	**Roseville Road**	**PG&E Transmission Lines/Yard**	**Utility Yard**	**Industrial**
47	**240-0660-003-0000**	**Roseville Road**	**Appears to be rail laydown yard with rail base materials such as gravel, sand, and dirt.**	**Laydown Materials Yard**	**Industrial**
48	**240-0550-042-0000**	**4558 Roseville Road**	**Auto Repair Shop; ET Muscle Cars, Anything Automotive, Mom & Pop Auto Repair. Robert Griffith**	**Anything Automotive**	**Industrial/ Commercial**
49	**240-0550-040-0000**	**4550 Roseville Road**	**Construction & Safety Supply; HD Supply Construction. SWEEPS Underground Storage Tank - not reported 1,000-gallon waste oil Underground Storage Tank. Also known as White Cap**	**White Cap**	**Industrial/ Commercial**
50	240-0480-001-0000	4300 Roseville Road	Steel Construction Company; Fenced Lot with lots of metal on the property	Steeler Inc.	Industrial/ Commercial
51	240-0540-050-0000	4290 Roseville Road	Lumber Supply; Diamond Lumber, Inc. Historical Underground Storage Tank Registered 1972 Gasoline 2,000-gallons Underground Storage Tank (2). Also known as: Anderson Lumber Co., Pacific Coast Supply.	Anderson Lumber	Industrial/ Commercial
52	**240-0540-007-0000**	**4200 Roseville Road**	**Hunt & Sons, Inc. Large uncovered lot with diesel and gas pumps. Leaking Underground Storage Tank Cleanup Site.**	**Pacific Pride Gas Station**	**Auto Sales and Service**
53	240-0540-078-0000	3100 Orange Grove Avenue	Agri-enterprises service provider	Helena Products	Industrial/ Commercial
54	240-0540-047-0000	4190 Roseville Road	Trailer Repair Shop; Appears to be mostly flatbed trailers on the property. Some full trailers on the back of the lot - fenced	Pac West Trailer Co., Inc	Auto Sales and Service
55	208-0133-017-0000	3524 Q Street	Potential Utility Location (unlisted on maps); fenced lot	Unlisted Utility	Misc/Irregular

Sheet No	APN	Address	Property Information	Location Name	Land Use
56	**218-0161-026-0000**	**3519 A Street**	**Texaco Station - Power Market. Underground Storage Tank pad on the south side of the property. Potentially close to housing. Former Leaking Underground Storage Tank site. Closed Case 3/19/1996**	**Power Market Gas Station**	**Auto Sales and Service**
57	208-0133-012-0000	3500 Q Street	Temp. Closed; Lots of cars on the lot (fenced).	One Stop Detailing	Industrial/ Commercial
58	**208-0172-014-0000**	**3451 I Street**	**Tire Shop; in a string of auto specific businesses with open garages. Sasha Auto Body, PAD Collision and Auto Repair, VM Auto Care, Lopez Transmission and Auto Repair, RG Auto Group, Slavik & Son Auto Repair, New Power Auto Repair, Ramos Auto Shop, Sokol Auto Body, Gibbons Auto and Marine, Cal Star Smog, Inc., May Auto Repair, Tars Auto Repair, Milano Auto Body, Elbrus Auto Body, RPS Auto Repair, Yakov Quality Repair, Octavio's Shop, Freeway Auto Body, Lupe's Automotive Services, Johnson Auto Body, Superior Transmission**	**Vlad's Tires**	**Auto Sales and Service**
59	240-0550-069-0000	3390 Winona Way	Home improvement store with large covered outdoor lot with materials and equipment	Contractors Warehouse Home Improvement	Industrial/ Commercial
60	240-0490-010-0000	4300 Jetway Court	Pacific Bell Historical Underground Storage Tank 10,000-gallon unleaded gas (Registration 1980). No information about removal of Underground Storage Tank.	Multi-Tenant Warehouse with Scafco Steel, Builders First Source, Heritage Interests, LLC	Industrial
61	240-0540-030-0000	3340 Orange Grove Avenue	Fenced Utility Lot with transformers	Unlisted Utility	Utility/Power
62	**240-0540-034-0000**	**3314 Orange Grove Avenue**	**In the same building as Stewart Customs and Collison Inc. (Autobody Shop)**	**Stewart Customs and Collison Inc.**	**Industrial/ Commercial**
63	**240-0540-044-0000**	**3300 Orange Grove Avenue**	**In the same building as Stewart Customs and Collison Inc. (Autobody Shop)**	**Stewart Customs and Collison Inc.**	**Industrial/ Commercial**
64	240-0550-068-0000	3300 Winona Way	Fenced equipment lot with a canopy cover over the lot	Likely associated with Contractors Warehouse Home improvement	Industrial/ Commercial
65	**240-0540-079-000**	**3270 Orange Grove Avenue**	**Western Home Services. 3,000-gallon Unleaded Gasoline (1973) Case Closed 3/19/1996**	**Western Home Services**	**Industrial/ Commercial**
66	**240-0540-079-0000**	**3200 Orange Grove Avenue**	**Truck Repair Shop. In a warehouse with several other offices. Big wheeler trucks present on lot.**	**Diesel Kings Truck Repair**	**Industrial/ Commercial**
67	**240-0540-078-0000**	**3120 Orange Grove Avenue**	**Apex Truck & Trailer Repair, MAACO body shop, Buttes/Hajoca, Cell Energy Inc.,**	**Apex Truck & Trailer Repair**	**Industrial/ Commercial**
68	240-0540-100-0000	3050 Orange Grove Avenue	Former Coca-Cola with Leaking Underground Storage Tank Cleanup Site. Case Closed 11/9/1993	Bus Yard	Industrial
69	240-0540-093-0000	3030 Orange Grove Avenue	Construction Company; some equipment on a side lot	Performance Contracting Inc	Industrial/ Commercial
70	240-0540-065-0000	3000 Orange Grove Avenue	Air Conditioning system supplier; Fenced lot with HVAC equipment	Baker Distributing Company	Industrial/ Commercial

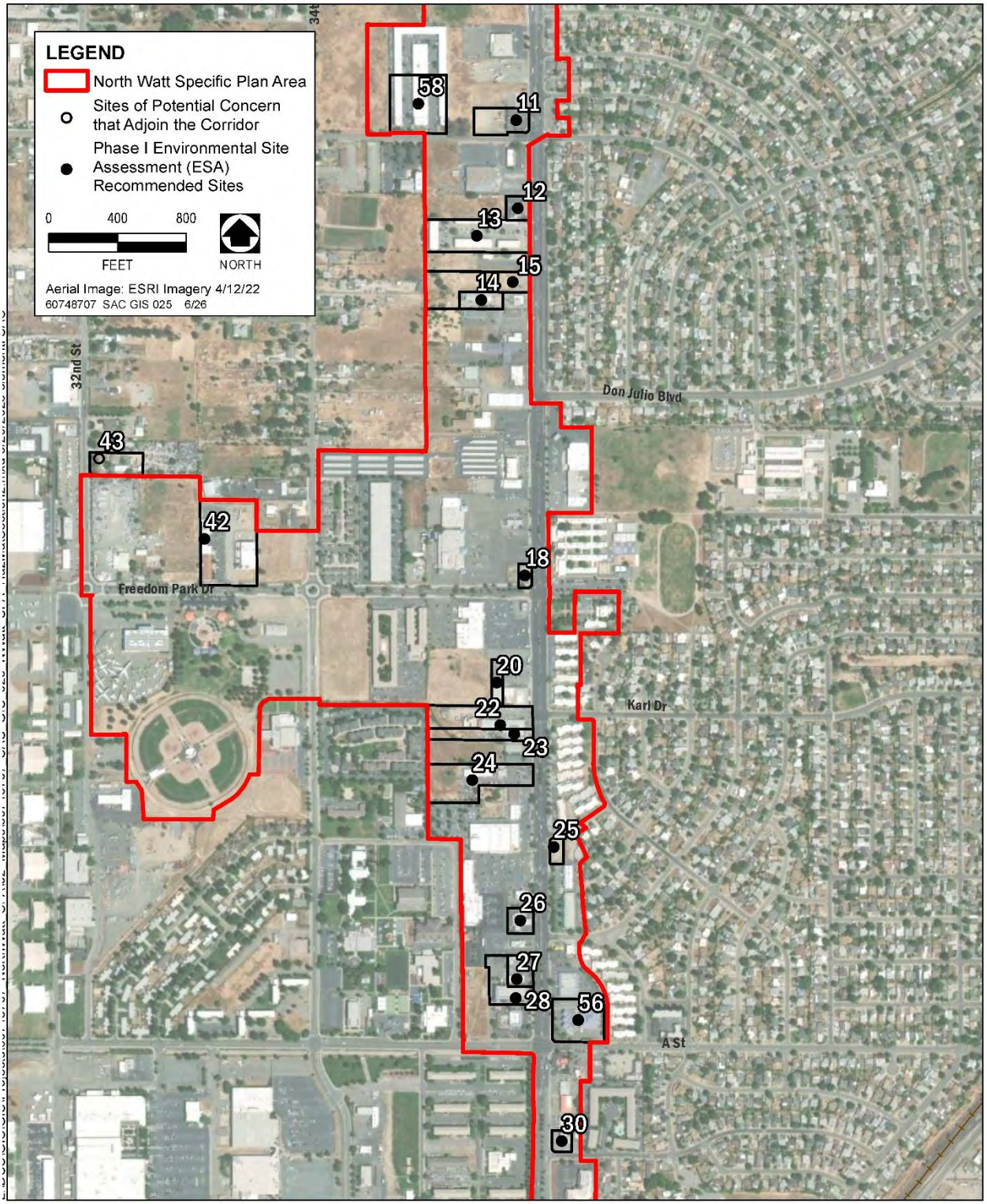
Notes:
Bold = Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) recommended.
Underline = Adjoining properties with possible environmental concerns.

Plate HAZ-1a: Hazardous Materials Sites in the Specific Plan Area



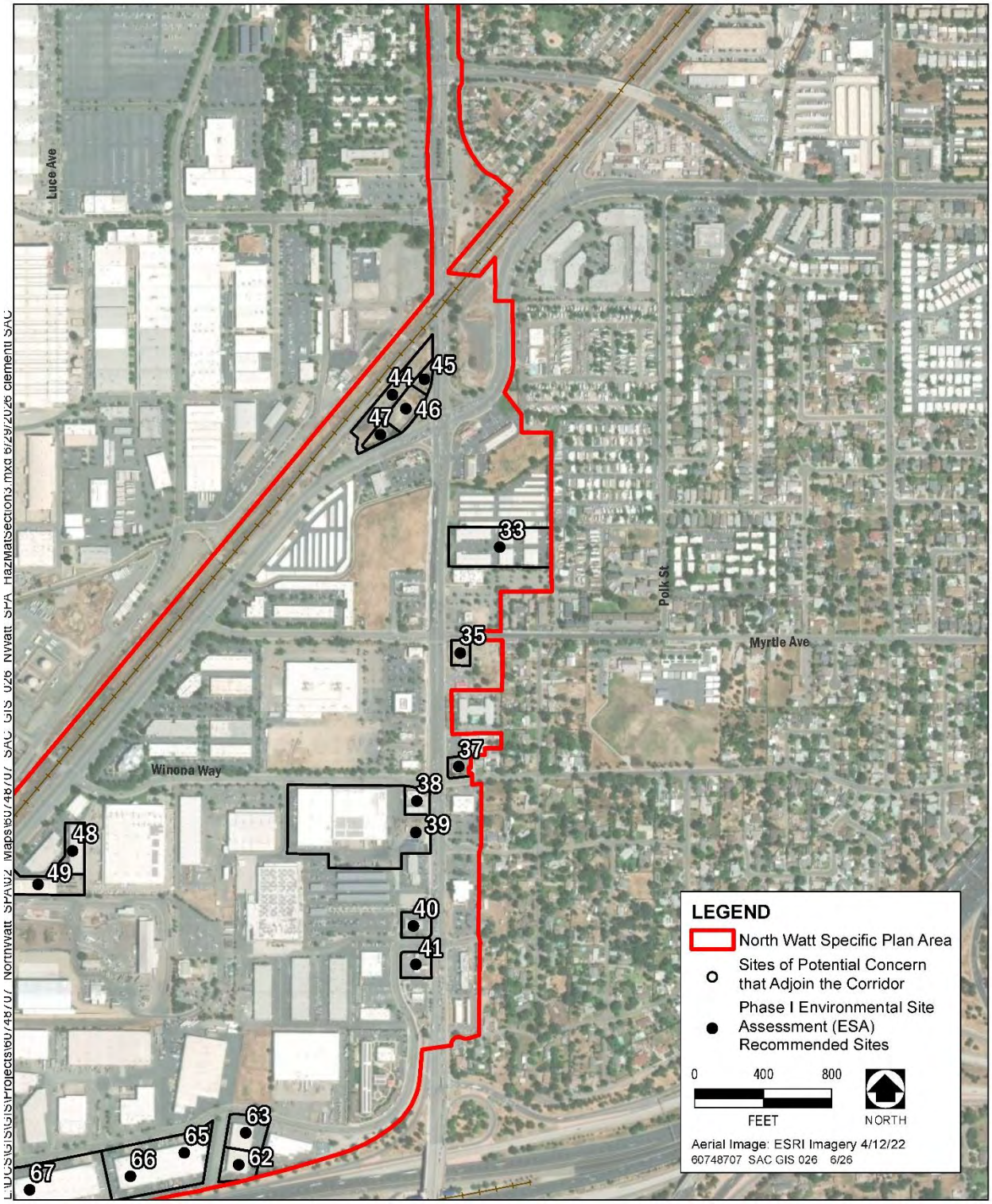
Source: Data compiled by AECOM in 2026

Plate HAZ-1b: Hazardous Materials Sites in the Specific Plan Area



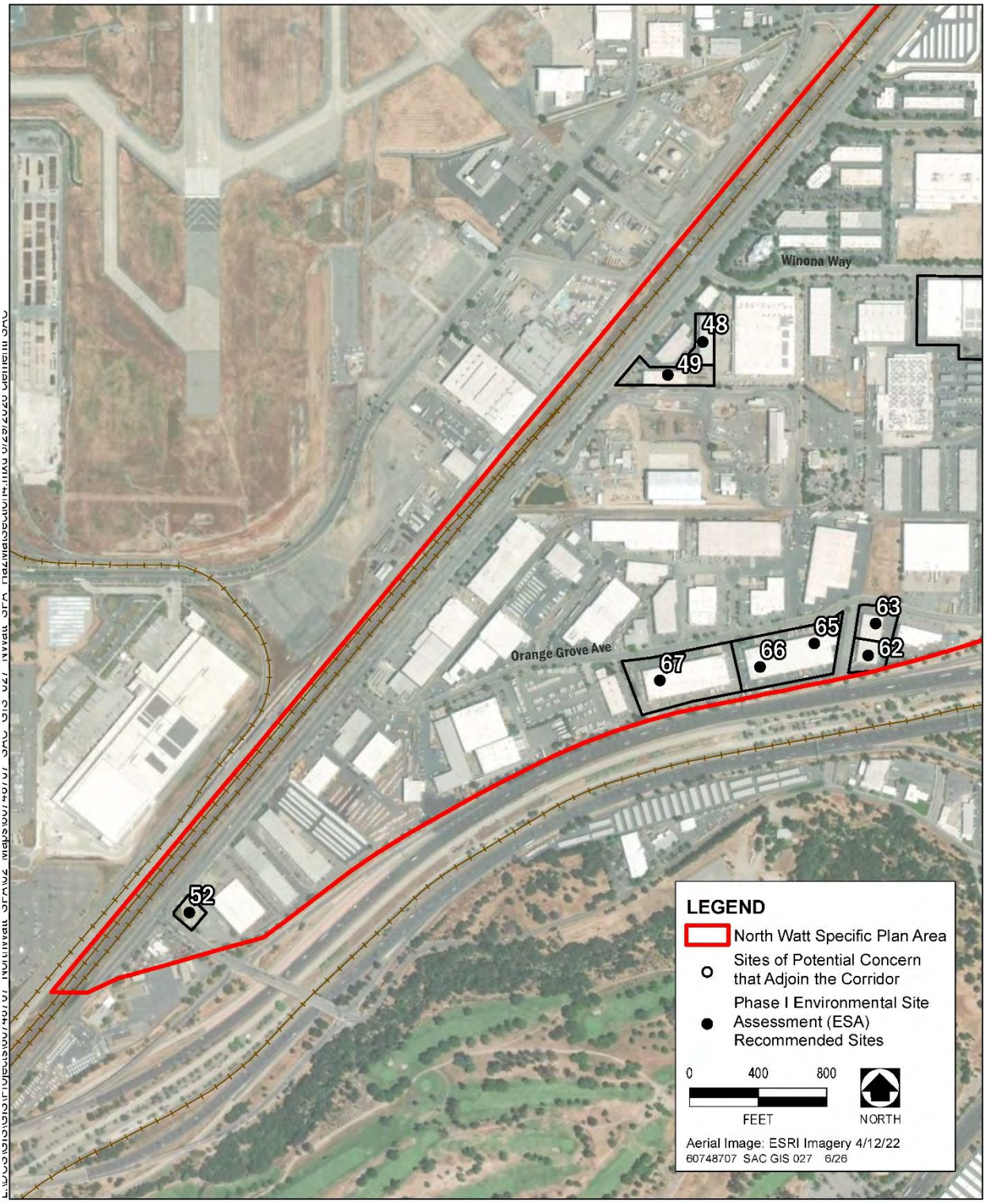
Source: Data compiled by AECOM in 2026

Plate HAZ-1c: Hazardous Materials Sites in the Specific Plan Area



Source: Data compiled by AECOM in 2026

Plate HAZ-1d: Hazardous Materials Sites in the Specific Plan Area



Source: Data compiled by AECOM in 2026

Asbestos/Lead-Based Paint Demolition Hazards

Asbestos is designated as a hazardous substance when the fibers have potential to come in contact with air because the fibers are small enough to lodge in lung tissue and cause health problems. The presence of asbestos-containing materials (ACMs) in existing buildings poses an inhalation threat only if the ACMs are in a friable state. If the ACMs are not friable, then there is no inhalation hazard because asbestos fibers remain bound in the material matrix.

People exposed to asbestos may develop lung cancer and mesothelioma. Demolition of facilities that contain ACMs is regulated locally by the Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District (SMAQMD) in accordance with U.S. EPA's Asbestos National Emission Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants. In addition, the California Occupational Safety and Health Administration (Cal/OSHA) administers regulations that must be followed by certified asbestos abatement contractors to protect the health and safety of workers who may be exposed to asbestos and lead-based paint in connection with their jobs.

Lead is a highly toxic metal that was used until the late 1970s in a number of products, most notably paint. The use of lead as an additive to paint was discontinued in 1978 because human exposure to lead was determined by U.S. EPA and the federal Occupational Health and Safety Administration (OSHA) to be an adverse human health risk, particularly to young children. Demolition of structures containing lead-based paint requires specific remediation activities regulated by federal, state, and regional and local laws.

Aerially Deposited Lead

Aerially deposited lead along high-volume roadways in California can represent an environmental concern due to historical vehicle emissions. Lead alkyl compounds were first added to gasoline in the 1920s to boost octane levels and improve engine performance. Beginning in 1973, the U.S. EPA ordered a gradual phase-out of lead from gasoline that substantially reduced the prevalence of leaded gasoline by the mid-1980s. Shallow soils within approximately 30 feet of the edge of pavement of high-volume roadways can contain lead from these emissions, which can result in environmental and human health hazards if the soil is disturbed during construction activities. Watt Avenue, which has historically conveyed a substantial volume of traffic, runs through the middle of the Specific Plan Area from north to south. In addition, a portion of the Specific Plan Area south of the Union Pacific Railroad line is adjacent to I-80, which carries thousands of vehicles per day and has been operating since the mid-1960s. If lead-contaminated soil is not properly managed, such as being removed, treated, or buried in accordance with regulatory standards, it may pose long-term health risks to construction workers and future residents through direct exposure to contaminated soil or dust.

Potential Contamination from Railroad Corridors

A Union Pacific Railroad line is present immediately adjacent to, and west of the Specific Plan Area south of the Union Pacific Railroad line, and there is a railroad spur within this industrial development area. The main Union Pacific Railroad line continues northeast

and crosses Watt Avenue (at an at-grade crossing) in the Specific Plan Area just south of Peacekeeper Way.

According to the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy (2004), the most commonly reported soil contamination along railroad corridors are metals and petroleum products from railroad operations. Elevated concentrations of arsenic (a metalloid) are common in shallow soils from historical applications of inorganic herbicides and leaching from chemically preserved railroad ties and/or arsenic-laced slag used as ballast material. Other sources of contaminants associated with historical railroad operations may include coal ash from engines and polynuclear aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) from diesel exhaust. The risk of soil contamination is generally greater at railyards and along railroad corridors that are adjacent to industrial areas, where historical loading practices, leaks during material transfers or storage, and repair activities may have contaminated the soil. Therefore, elevated concentrations of metals and petroleum hydrocarbons could potentially be present in shallow soil and ballast materials along existing railroad corridors within and immediately adjacent to the Specific Plan Area south of the Union Pacific Railroad line.

Hazardous Materials Pipelines

Based on a review of mapping available from the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA 2025) Public Map Viewer, major natural gas and hazardous liquid transmission lines are buried within the Union Pacific Railroad right-of-way immediately adjacent to the west side of the Specific Plan Area, adjacent to Roseville Road, and southeast of the Union Pacific Railroad line. Both pipelines cross through the Specific Plan Area within the railroad easement at Watt Avenue just south of Peacekeeper Way. No known high-pressure pipeline ruptures or accidents have occurred in the vicinity of the Specific Plan Area (PHMSA 2025).

Schools

Schools within 0.25 mile of the Specific Plan Area are listed in Table HAZ-2, in order from north to south.

Airports

As shown on Plate HAZ-2, portions of the Specific Plan Area are either within or adjacent to the boundaries of the Airport Influence Area for the former McClellan AFB, which has been redeveloped as the Sacramento McClellan Airport. While McClellan Air Force Base historically generated substantial aircraft noise, it has since been decommissioned and redeveloped into a commercial development. The site continues to operate as Sacramento McClellan Airport, a public-use airport that accommodates a range of aviation activities, including general aviation, governmental operations, and seasonal aerial firefighting operations. Aircraft operations at the airport, which were used to identify the Airport Safety Zones discussed in this chapter, are substantially lower than under historical military use. There is one paved primary runway that is 10,599 feet long and 150 feet wide, along with four helipads. In addition to public use at the airport, the Sacramento McClellan Airport also houses the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection's (CAL FIRE) McClellan Airtanker Base, which includes a fleet of airtankers

and helicopters, along with associated personnel. The former air traffic control tower at the airport is currently not staffed; however, CAL FIRE operates a mobile air traffic control operation at the base during the peak fire-fighting season.

Table HAZ-2. Schools Within One-Quarter Mile of the Specific Plan Area

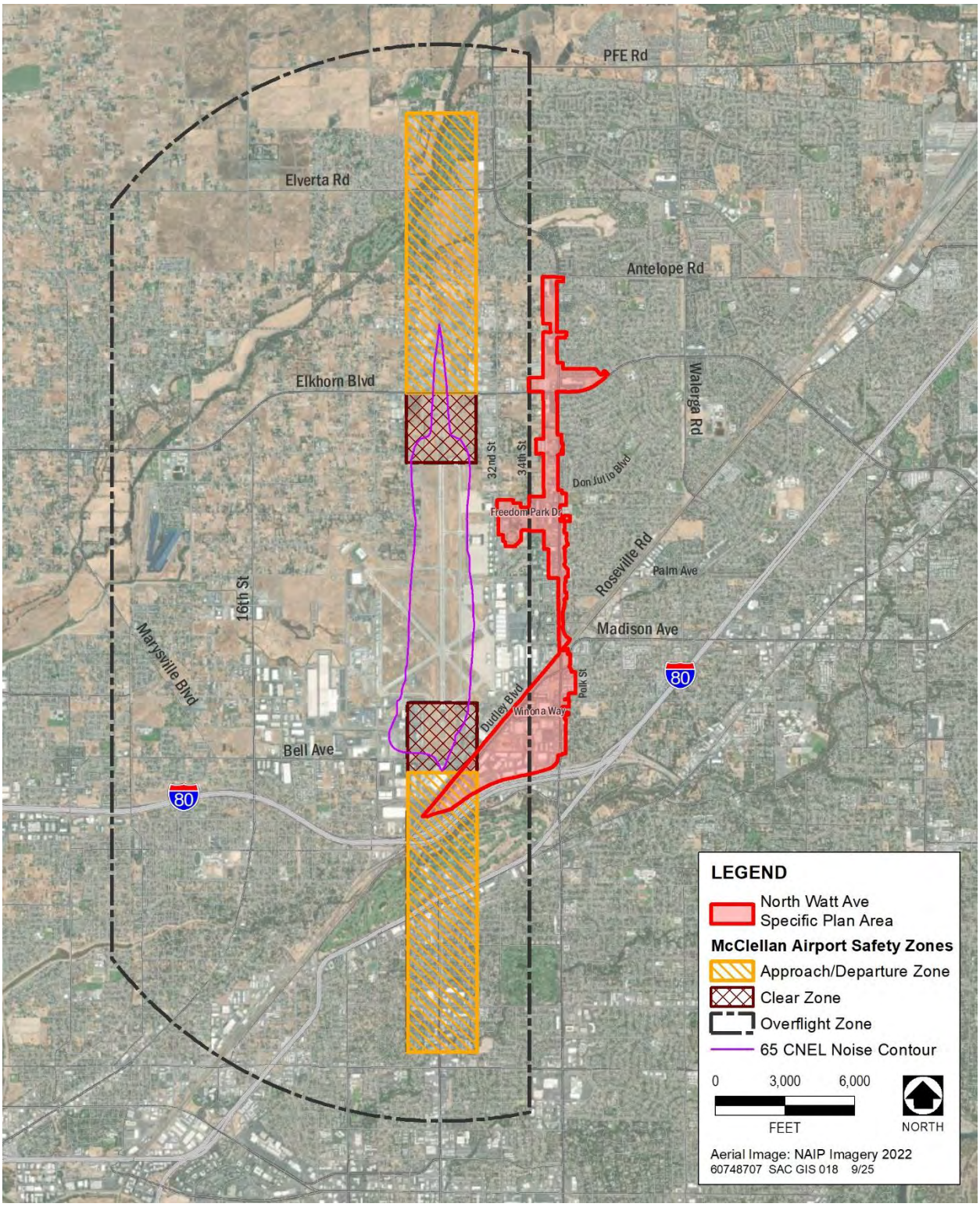
School Name	Address	Grades Served	Distance from Specific Plan Area
Cyril Spinelli Elementary	3401 Scotland Drive, Antelope	K–6	0.2 mile northwest
Sierra View Elementary School	3638 Bainbridge Drive, North Highlands	K–6	0.17 mile east
F.C. Joyce School	6050 Watt Avenue, North Highlands	K–8	Immediately adjacent to the east
Community Outreach Academy Middle School	3800 Bolivar Avenue, North Highlands	6–8	Immediately adjacent to the east
Community Collaborative Charter School	5715 Skvarla Avenue, McClellan Park	K–8	Immediately adjacent to the west
Community Outreach Academy Elementary School	5640 Dudley Boulevard, McClellan Park	K–6	Immediately adjacent to the west
Community Outreach Academy	5839 Dudley Boulevard, McClellan Park	5th	Immediately adjacent to the south
Aero Haven Elementary School[1]	5450 Georgia Drive, North Highlands	Closed	0.07 mile (350 feet) east
Oakdale Elementary School	3708 Myrtle Avenue, North Highlands	K–8	0.09 mile (485 feet) east

Notes:
[1] Although this school has been permanently closed, the facility is owned and maintained by the Twin Rivers Unified School District, and it could be reopened as a school facility in the future.
Source: Data compiled by AECOM in 2025

The airport Clear Zone is near the end of the runway and has the most restrictions on development, because this is the area where data indicates that most aircraft accidents occur. The Clear Zone is 3,000 feet wide (1,500 feet on each side of the runway centerline) and 3,000 feet long. A very small triangular area of existing industrial development within the Specific Plan Area, comprising approximately 4 acres, is within the airport's southern Clear Zone (see Plate HAZ-2).

The airport Approach-Departure Zone is located under the runway takeoff and landing slopes and is less restrictive from a land use compatibility standpoint; this zone is 3,000 feet wide (1,500 feet on each side of the runway centerline) and 12,000 feet long. The southwestern end of the Specific Plan Area, comprising approximately 41 acres, is within the airport's southern Approach/Departure Zone (see Plate HAZ-2).

Plate HAZ-2: McClellan Airport Safety Zones



Source: SACOG 1992

The airport Overflight Zone is the least restrictive in terms of land use compatibility and includes land overflown by aircraft in a take-off or landing phase, aircraft using flight paths associated with training touch and go operations, and aircraft maneuvering near the airfield after take-off or before landing. Portions of the Specific Plan Area are within the Overflight Zone, as shown in Plate HAZ-2.

The McClellan Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan Land Use Compatibility Guidelines for Safety include a table that indicates whether or not various types of land uses are compatible with the Clear Zone, Approach/Departure Zone, and Overflight Zone (SACOG 1992:III.C.2.c). The only compatible uses within the Clear Zone are open space and natural uses, row and field crops, and pasture and grazing (provided that none of these uses result in birdstrike hazards). Compatible uses within the Approach/Departure Zone include single-family residences (minimum 5-acre lots); most types of manufacturing, warehousing, recycling/materials transfer, and transportation facilities; limited retail trades (e.g., auto repair, lumber); business parks; laboratories; golf courses and open space uses; and agriculture and mining (provided that none of these land uses includes substantial numbers of people gathered in one place). Most types of land uses are compatible with the Overflight Zone.

As directed by the McClellan Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan (SACOG 1992:III.C.2.b), the following land use activities are incompatible in the Clear Zone and the Approach/Departure Zone:

1) Any use that would direct a steady or flashing light of white, red, green, or amber color toward an aircraft engaged in an initial straight climb following takeoff or toward an aircraft engaged in a straight final approach toward a landing, other than an FAA approved navigational signal light or visual approach slope indicator.

2) Any use that would cause sunlight to be reflected toward an aircraft engaged in an initial straight climb following take-off or toward an aircraft engaged in a straight final approach toward a landing.

3) Any use that would generate smoke, attract large concentrations of birds, or otherwise affect safe air navigation.

4) Any use that would generate electrical interference that could be detrimental to the operation of aircraft or airport instrumentation.

5) Any hazardous installations such as above-ground oil, gas or chemical storage facilities, but excluding facilities for noncommercial, private domestic, or private agricultural use.

Federal Aviation Regulation (FAR) Part 77 (14 Code of Federal Regulations), Objects Affecting Navigable Airspace, includes height standards for buildings, trees, and other objects (such as communication towers) to ensure that objects do not impair flight safety or decrease the operational capability of the airport. FAR Part 77 defines a series of imaginary surfaces surrounding airports. Any object or structure that would penetrate any

of these imaginary surfaces is considered by the FAA to be an obstruction of air navigation. California Public Utilities Code Section 21659 prohibits the construction of any structure that would constitute a hazard to air navigation, as defined in FAR Part 77, unless the California Department of Transportation, Division of Aeronautics issues a permit. The maximum building height within the Specific Plan Area that would be compatible with the FAR Part 77 regulations is 150 feet (Sacramento County Community Planning and Development Department 2012).

EMERGENCY RESPONSE AND EVACUATION

Emergency response/evacuation services to the Specific Plan Area would be provided by the Sacramento Metropolitan Fire Department (fire protection), the Sacramento County Sheriff's Office (police protection), and the Sacramento County Office of Emergency Services (emergency operations, shelters, and evacuation).

The *Sacramento County Emergency Operations Plan* (Sacramento County Office of Emergency Services [OES] 2022a) establishes a county-wide emergency management organization that assigns specific tasks and functions that would be undertaken in the event of an emergency. The goal of the plan is to preserve human life and property through advance planning, preparedness measures, and training.

The *Area Plan for Emergency Response to Hazardous Materials Incidents in Sacramento County* (Area Plan) (Sacramento County OES 2022b) describes the responsibilities of local, state, and federal agencies during incidents involving the release and/or threatened release of hazardous materials. As discussed in the Regulatory Setting below, businesses that handle larger quantities of hazardous wastes are required to prepare Hazardous Materials Business Plans; this information is collected and verified by the Sacramento County Environmental Management Department. The intent of the disclosure program is to provide first responders with site-specific information such as chemical inventory, emergency phone numbers, and facility site maps indicating location and quantities of hazardous materials and wastes stored on site. Sacramento County Environmental Management Department, along with other approved government personnel, has access to this information on the California Environmental Reporting System (CERS) website. During a hazardous materials incident, the information from the CERS website may be used to supplement the Area Plan guidelines at fixed facilities. By developing hazardous material emergency response plans, both businesses and governmental agencies can be better prepared for a coordinated response to these hazardous material incidents, thereby minimizing potential risks to life, the environment, and property.

The *Sacramento County Operational Area Evacuation Annex* (Evacuation Plan) (Sacramento County OES 2021) provides evacuation strategies that would be implemented in an affected area, including public alerts and warnings, transportation, and evacuation triggers. The Evacuation Plan outlines local government (cities and special districts), the Sacramento Operational Area, and state responsibilities for management of evacuation during an emergency. Organizations, operational concepts, responsibilities, and a documented process to accomplish an evacuation are defined within the

Evacuation Plan. The decision to evacuate, if necessary, would be made based on the information gathered, and communities would be evacuated as the need arises, on a case-by-case basis. The decision to evacuate would depend entirely upon the nature, scope, and severity of the emergency; the number of people affected; and what actions would be necessary to protect the public.

WILDLAND FIRE HAZARDS

California Public Resources Code Sections 4201–4204 and Government Code Sections 51175–51189 require identification of fire hazard severity zones within the state of California. Fire hazard severity zones are measured qualitatively, based on vegetation, topography, weather, crown fire potential (a fire's tendency to burn upward into trees and tall brush), and ember production and movement within the area in question.[2]

State Responsibility Areas (SRAs) are areas where the CAL FIRE is the primary emergency response agency responsible for fire suppression and prevention. Lands where the primary responsibility for firefighting falls within the purview of a local agency are referred to as Local Responsibility Areas (LRAs). The Specific Plan Area is within an LRA, and is served by the Sacramento Metropolitan Fire Department.

Based on the most recent (2025) fire hazard severity zone ratings issued by CAL FIRE for LRAs, the Specific Plan Area and vicinity are in an urbanized, unclassified fire hazard severity zone, meaning that CAL FIRE has determined that the fire hazard is low (i.e., they are not within moderate, high, or very high fire hazard severity zones) (CAL FIRE 2025).

The Specific Plan Area is not located in or near SRAs or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones. The nearest very high fire hazard severity zone is approximately 2.5 miles northeast of the Specific Plan Area, and consists of a small grove of trees on a privately-owned parcel north of Dyer Road within an LRA (CAL FIRE 2025). The nearest SRAs are in the Sierra Nevada foothills, approximately 17 miles to the northeast, east, and southeast (CAL FIRE 2025).

[2] CAL FIRE delineates three potential wildfire hazard ratings: moderate, high, and very high. These classifications indicate "hazard" not "risk." CAL FIRE's fire "hazard" rating is based on the physical conditions that create a likelihood for wildfire in combination with expected fire behavior, over a 30- to 50-year period (without considering measures such as home hardening, recent wildfires that have burned vegetation, or fuel reduction efforts).

REGULATORY SETTING

FEDERAL

MANAGEMENT OF HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Various federal laws address the proper handling, use, storage, and disposal of hazardous materials, and require implementation of cleanup measures if such materials are accidentally released. The U.S. EPA is the agency primarily responsible for enforcing and implementing federal laws and regulations regarding hazardous materials. Applicable federal regulations pertaining to hazardous materials are contained mainly in Code of Federal Regulations Titles 29, 40, and 49. Hazardous materials, as defined in the code, are listed in 49 CFR 172.101. Management of hazardous materials is governed by the following laws, among others:

- The Toxic Substances Control Act of 1976 (Title 15, Section 2601 and following sections of the U.S. Code [15 USC 2601 et seq.]) regulates the manufacturing, inventory, and disposition of industrial chemicals, including hazardous materials.
- The Resource Conservation and Recovery Act of 1976 (42 USC 6901 et seq.) established an all-encompassing federal regulatory program for hazardous substances that is administered by the U.S. EPA. Under the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, the U.S. EPA regulates the generation, transportation, treatment, storage, and disposal of hazardous substances.
- The Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980 (also called the Superfund Act or CERCLA) (42 USC 9601 et seq.) created a trust fund to provide broad federal authority for releases or threatened release of hazardous substance that could endanger public health or the environment.

EMERGENCY PLANNING AND COMMUNITY RIGHT-TO-KNOW ACT

The Emergency Planning Community Right-to-Know Act of 1986 was included under the SARA law and is commonly referred to as SARA Title III. The Act was passed in response to concerns regarding the environmental and safety hazards proposed by the storage and handling of toxic chemicals. The Act establishes requirements for federal, state, and local governments, Indian Tribes, and industry regarding emergency planning and Community Right-to-Know reporting on hazardous and toxic chemicals. SARA Title III requires states and local emergency planning groups to develop community emergency response plans for protection from a list of Extremely Hazardous Substances (40 CFR Appendix B). The Community Right-to-Know provisions help increase the public's knowledge of and access to information on chemicals at individual facilities, their uses, and their release into the environment.

HAZARDOUS MATERIALS TRANSPORTATION ACT

The Hazardous Materials Transportation Act of 1975 was created to provide adequate protection from the risks to life and property related to the transportation of hazardous

materials in commerce by improving regulatory enforcement authority of the Secretary of Transportation.

Occupational Safety and Health Administration

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration is the federal agency responsible for enforcing and implementing federal laws and regulations pertaining to worker health and safety. The administration's Hazardous Waste Operations and Emergency Response regulations require training and medical supervision for workers at hazardous waste sites (29 CFR Section 1910.120). Additional regulations have been developed regarding exposure to lead (29 CFR Section 1926.62) and asbestos (29 CFR Section 1926.1101) to protect construction workers.

State

California Department of Toxic Substances Control

The DTSC has primary regulatory responsibility, with delegation of enforcement to local jurisdictions that enter into agreements with the State agency, for the management of hazardous materials and the generation, transport and disposal of hazardous waste under the authority of the Hazardous Waste Control Law. Since August 1, 1992, DTSC has been authorized to implement the state's hazardous waste management program for California Environmental Protection Agency.

State Water Resources Control Board

The SWRCB was established in 1967. The Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) is authorized by SWRCB to enforce provisions of the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act of 1969. This act gives the Central Valley RWQCB authority to require groundwater investigations when the quality of groundwater or surface waters of the state is threatened and to require remediation of the site, if necessary.

California Occupational Safety and Health Administration

California Occupational Safety and Health Administration (Cal/OSHA) assumes primary responsibility for developing and enforcing workplace safety regulations within California. Regulations pertaining to the use of hazardous materials in the workplace (Title 8 of the California Code of Regulations [CCR]) include requirements for safety training, availability of safety equipment, accident and illness prevention programs, hazardous substance exposure warnings, and preparation of emergency action and fire prevention plans. Cal/OSHA enforces hazard communication program regulations that contain training and information requirements, including procedures for identifying and labeling hazardous substances, communicating hazard information related to hazardous substances and their handling, and preparation of health and safety plans to protect workers and employees at hazardous-waste sites. The hazard communication program requires that employers make Safety Data Sheets available to employees, and requires documentation of informational and training programs for employees.

The Cal/OSHA regulations also include requirements for protective clothing, training, and limits on exposure to hazardous materials. Cal/OSHA also enforces occupational health and safety regulations specific to lead and asbestos investigation and abatement. These regulations equal or exceed their federal counterparts. Specific worker safety measures for excavation hazards (e.g., falling or cave-in of excavation walls) are described in Title 8 CCR Section 1541.

Senate Bill (SB) 1082 – California Environmental Protection Agency's Unified Program

In 1993, SB 1082 gave the California Environmental Protection Agency the authority and responsibility to establish a unified hazardous waste and hazardous materials management and regulatory program, commonly referred to as the Unified Program. The purpose of this program is to consolidate and coordinate six different hazardous materials and hazardous waste programs, and to ensure that they are consistently implemented throughout the state. The Unified Program is overseen by the California Environmental Protection Agency with support from DTSC, the nine RWQCBs, the OES, and the State Fire Marshal. The six programs are:

- Hazardous Materials Release Response Plans and Inventories (Business Plans)
- California Accidental Release Prevention Program
- Underground Storage Tank Program
- Aboveground Petroleum Storage Act Program
- Hazardous Waste Generator and Onsite Hazardous Waste Treatment (tiered permitting) Programs
- California Uniform Fire Code: Hazardous Material Management Plans and Hazardous Material Inventory Statements

State law requires county and local agencies to implement the Unified Program. The agency in charge of implementing the program is called the Certified Unified Program Agency. The Sacramento County Environmental Management Department is the designated Certified Unified Program Agency for the County. Other local agencies, including incorporated cities in the area, help to implement the Unified Program.

Cortese List, California Government Code Section 65962.5

The provisions of Section 65962.5 of the California Government Code are commonly referred to as the "Cortese List" (after the legislator who authored the legislation that enacted it). The Cortese List is a planning document used by state and local agencies to comply with CEQA's requirement to provide information about the location of hazardous-materials release sites. California Government Code Section 65962.5 requires the California Environmental Protection Agency to develop an updated Cortese List at least annually. DTSC and SWRCB are responsible for most of the information contained on the Cortese List. Other state and local government agencies, including the RWQCBs and local cities and counties, are also required to provide additional information for the Cortese List about releases of hazardous materials.

In addition, California Government Code Section 65962.5 requires all project applicants to consult the Cortese List and determine whether the project site is within a hazardous materials site on the list. If so, the project applicant is required to notify the lead agency in writing prior to the issuance of a building permit, so the lead agency can determine the appropriate course of action (which generally includes environmental site assessments and site-specific remediation).

Assembly Bill 2185 and Assembly Bill 2189, Hazardous Materials Business Emergency Response Plan Program, CA Health and Safety Code Chapter 6.95

The California Health and Safety Code Chapter 6.95 (Hazardous Materials Release Response Plans and Inventory) requires qualifying businesses to prepare a hazardous materials business plan. The plan must include procedures for managing hazardous materials and hazardous waste. In addition, the plan must describe emergency response procedures and include a list of emergency spill cleanup supplies and equipment. Before an applicant may use hazardous materials at certain defined federal and/or state thresholds, the applicant must submit a Hazardous Material Business Plan to the administering agency.

Asbestos Abatement

Asbestos abatement efforts must be completed in compliance with 7 CCR Section 5208, 8 CCR Section 1529, and 8 CCR Sections 341.6 through 341.14. The regulations in 7 CCR Section 5208 implement worker exposure limits, require exposure monitoring, implement compliance programs, require employee protection and hazard communication, and require employee medical surveillance and reporting. Asbestos exposure for construction work is regulated by 8 CCR Section 1529, which includes exposure limits and procedures for handling and removal. Requirements for transport and disposal are included in 8 CCR Sections 341.6 through 341.14.

Section 19827.5 of the California Health and Safety Code, adopted January 1, 1991, prohibits local agencies from issuing demolition or alteration permits until the applicant has demonstrated compliance with applicable regulations. If there is 100 square feet or more of ACMs, renovation or demolition of buildings containing asbestos must be conducted by a licensed contractor and the work must comply with requirements included in 8 CCR Sections 1529 and 341.6 through 341.14. Cal/OSHA must be notified 10 days before the start of construction and demolition activities. Asbestos encountered during demolition of an existing building must be transported and disposed of at an appropriate facility. The contractor and hauler of the material must file a hazardous-waste manifest that provides disposal details.

Lead-Based Paint Abatement

Regulation for handling of lead-based paint during construction are described in 29 CFR 1926.62 (OSHA’s Lead in Construction Standard) and 8 CCR Section 1532.1 (Cal/OSHA’s Lead in Construction Standard), which are essentially the same regulations. These regulations cover the demolition, removal, cleanup, transportation, storage, and

disposal of lead-containing material. The regulations outline the permissible exposure limit, protective measures, and monitoring. The regulations require notification of Cal/OSHA if the lead abatement would involve more than 100 square feet or 100 linear feet, and implementation of a lead compliance plan with safe work practices.

Aerially Deposited Lead Abatement

In California, the residential cleanup goal for lead is 80 milligrams per kilogram (mg/kg) or 80 parts per million (ppm). This is the cleanup concentration recommended by the Human and Ecological Risk Office within the DTSC (DTSC 2024). Regulatory criteria for handling and disposal of lead-contaminated soil are outlined in CCR Title 22, and require soil characterization before reuse or disposal.

Regional

Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District

Construction Asbestos Abatement

The U.S. EPA has delegated authority to the SMAQMD to enforce the federal National Emission Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants through local SMAQMD Rule 902, Asbestos. An asbestos survey must be conducted by a Certified Asbestos Consultant, and an Asbestos Renovation/Demolition Survey & Notification Form must be completed by the consultant and submitted to SMAQMD. An Asbestos Abatement Notification Form is required for projects involving removal of ACMs greater than 160 square feet, 260 linear feet, or 35 cubic feet. Asbestos-containing materials must be removed and properly disposed of by a licensed asbestos abatement contractor.

Local

Sacramento County General Plan

The Sacramento County General Plan of 2005–2030 (2017) includes the following policies related to hazards and hazardous materials that apply to the proposed Specific Plan.

HAZARDOUS MATERIALS ELEMENT

Policy HM-3. Continue to support a household hazardous waste disposal program while striving to improve its convenience and provide for permanent funding. *(Intent of Policy HM-3: The County currently operates two interim household hazardous waste (HHW) collection facilities at the North [in the Specific Plan Area] and South Area Transfer Stations. The recyclable waste accepted at these facilities include latex paint, used oil, oil filters, anti-freeze and automotive batteries. More toxic household items are collected at periodic turn-in events hosted jointly with the City of Sacramento. Although this program is considered successful, it has the potential to reach even a greater percentage of households once additional permanent facilities become operational,*

as currently proposed by the County's Waste Management and Recycling Department).

Policy HM-4. The handling, storage, and transport of hazardous materials shall be conducted in a manner so as not to compromise public health and safety standards.

Policy HM-7. Encourage the implementation of workplace safety programs and to the best extent possible ensure that residents who live adjacent to industrial or commercials facilities are protected from accidents and the mishandling of hazardous materials.

Policy HM-8. Continue the effort to prevent groundwater and soil contamination.

Policy HM-9. Continue the effort to prevent surface water contamination

Policy HM-10. Reduce the occurrences of hazardous material accidents and the subsequent need for incident response by developing and implementing effective prevention strategies.

LAND USE ELEMENT

Policy LU-87. Because land use decisions around airports by local governments have a direct impact on an airport's long-term viability and utility, proposed new land use projects and land use practices near airports within Sacramento County shall consider consistency with current federal, State, and local airport land use compatibility regulations, orders, policies, plans, standards and guidance pertaining to public safety and minimization of hazardous wildlife attractants within five statute miles of County airports.

SACRAMENTO COUNTY ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT

The Sacramento County Environmental Management Department serves as the local Certified Unified Program Agency, and regulates hazardous waste, aboveground petroleum storage, hazardous materials business plans and chemical inventories, risk management plans, and USTs.

MCCLELLAN AIRPORT LAND USE COMPATIBILITY PLAN

The McClellan AFB [now Sacramento McClellan Airport] ALUCP was prepared by the Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG) in its role as the Airport Land Use Commission (ALUC) for Sacramento County, as required by the State Aeronautics Act (Pub. Util. Code, § 21670 et seq.). The ALUCP (SACOG 1992) was adopted to protect public health, safety, and welfare through the adoption of land use standards to minimize the public's exposure to excessive noise and safety risks near the airport, and to prevent the encroachment of incompatible land uses around the airport to preserve airport utility.

The compatibility criteria outlined in the ALUCP for portions of the Specific Plan Area include standards related to noise exposure, safety zones, and height restrictions near the airport. These criteria are intended to guide land use decisions and minimize introducing or expanding incompatible uses near the airport. As noted previously, the aircraft operations that were used to inform the ALUCP have now decreased substantially, though Sacramento McClellan Airport does still function as a public-use airport that accommodates a range of aviation activities, including general aviation, governmental operations, and seasonal aerial firefighting operations.

IMPACTS AND ANALYSIS

SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA

Based on Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, impacts related to hazards and hazardous materials would be considered significant if implementation of the proposed Specific Plan would:

- create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials or through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment;
- emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school;
- be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to California Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would create a significant hazard to the public or the environment;
- for a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area;
- impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan; or
- expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires.

Please see Chapter 20, “Summary of Impacts and Their Disposition” of this EIR, under the heading “Wildfire,” for the analysis of impacts related to wildland fires, which were determined to be less than significant.

Please see Chapter 11, “Noise,” of this EIR for the analysis of impacts related to airport noise and noise from aircraft overflights.

IMPACT HAZ-1: RELEASE OF HAZARDOUS MATERIALS FROM ROUTINE TRANSPORT, USE, OR DISPOSAL OF HAZARDOUS MATERIALS OR REASONABLY FORESEEABLE UPSET AND/OR ACCIDENT CONDITIONS

HAZARDOUS MATERIALS FOR CONSTRUCTION AND OPERATION

Construction associated with development within the Specific Plan Area would involve the routine storage, use, transport, and disposal of small quantities of hazardous materials such as fuels, oils and lubricants, paints and paint thinners, glues, and cleaning fluids (e.g., solvents). None of the substances would be acutely hazardous. Statutory requirements governing hazardous waste transportation in California are contained in the California Health and Safety Code, Division 20, Chapter 6.5, Articles 6.5, 6.6, and 13. Hazardous waste transporters must have a valid registration permit issued by DTSC. In addition, hazardous waste transporters must comply with a variety of other State and federal regulations, including the California Vehicle Code (CCR Title 13); California State Fire Marshal Regulations (CCR Title 19); U.S. Department of Transportation regulations (Title 49 Code of Federal Regulations); and U.S. EPA regulations (Title 40 Code of Federal Regulations).

The California Highway Patrol, Caltrans, and DTSC are responsible for enforcing federal and State regulations pertaining to the transport of hazardous materials. If a discharge or spill of hazardous materials occurs during transportation, the transporter is required to take appropriate immediate action to protect human health and the environment (e.g., notify local authorities and contain the spill); the transporter is also responsible for cleanup (22 Cal. Code Regs. Section 66260.10 et seq.). The federal and state Department of Transportation (through the Hazardous Materials Transportation Act) and other regulatory agencies provide standards designed to avoid releases, including provisions regarding securing materials and container design.

There are existing industrial land uses within the Specific Plan Area that likely would continue, particularly within the southwest corner of the Specific Plan Area south of the Union Pacific Railroad line. However, existing or new facilities that would use hazardous materials during operation within the Specific Plan Area (such as gas stations, dry cleaners, and the existing industrial uses) would be required to obtain permits and comply with appropriate regulatory agency standards designed to avoid hazardous waste releases and protect the public health. Regulated activities would be managed by the Sacramento County Environmental Management Department, and commercial and office workplaces would be required to comply with Cal/OSHA regulations. Regulations pertaining to the use of hazardous materials in the workplace (CCR Title 8) include requirements for safety training, availability of safety equipment, accident and illness prevention programs, hazardous substance exposure warnings, and preparation of emergency action and fire prevention plans. The Cal/OSHA regulations also include requirements for protective clothing, training, and limits on exposure to hazardous materials. Cal/OSHA also enforces occupational health and safety regulations specific to lead and asbestos investigation and abatement.

Furthermore, because most future development projects under the proposed Specific Plan would disturb more than one acre of land, most development projects under the proposed Specific Plan would be required by law to prepare and implement a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) with appropriate best management practices (BMPs) such as spill prevention and contingency measures to reduce the potential for accidental spills and procedures for implementation of appropriate and timely cleanup activities if spills do occur.

The Specific Plan is focused on residential development, parks, and small commercial and office uses and does not propose uses that would involve any unusual conditions related to use, storage, or transport of hazardous materials such that an increased likelihood for accidental spills would occur. Office, commercial, and residential land use developments under the proposed Specific Plan would involve the use of small amounts of hazardous materials such as fuel, oils, paints, and solvents. However, the use of these materials is heavily regulated at both the state and federal level. All users are required to follow state and federal laws related to proper storage, handling, and disposal of these materials. Businesses that use larger quantities of hazardous materials are required by California Health and Safety Code Chapter 6.95 to prepare and implement a hazardous materials business plan. The plan must include procedures for managing hazardous materials and hazardous waste, as well as accidental spill procedures and equipment. Development under the proposed Specific Plan would be required to implement and comply with existing hazardous material regulations, and each of these regulations is specifically designed to protect the public health through improved procedures for the handling of hazardous materials, better technology in the equipment used to transport these materials, and a more coordinated quicker response to emergencies, thereby reducing the potential for accidental releases. Future project applicants and their construction contractors are required to comply with these materials-handling regulations.

Compliance with these regulations summarized above would reduce the potential for accidental release of hazardous materials and will minimize both the frequency and the magnitude if such a release occurs. Therefore, these impacts would be **less than significant**.

Asbestos and Lead-Based Paint

Due to the age of some of the existing structures and underground pipelines, asbestos and lead-based paint could be encountered during demolition activities associated with development within the Specific Plan Area. Asbestos could be present in sprayed fireproofing, cement plaster finishes, floor tiles and adhesives, pipe insulation, and roofing materials, and underground transite and concrete pipes. ACMs would represent a human health hazard to construction workers if not properly handled and disposed of. However, for future development projects under the Specific Plan involving demolition, project applicants must comply with SMAQMD Rule 902, which requires that an asbestos survey be conducted by a Certified Asbestos Consultant, and an Asbestos Renovation/Demolition Survey & Notification Form be completed by the consultant and submitted to SMAQMD. An Asbestos Abatement Notification Form would be submitted to SMAQMD for projects involving removal of ACMs greater than 160 square feet, 260 linear

feet, or 35 cubic feet. ACMs would be removed and properly disposed of by a licensed asbestos abatement contractor as required by SMAQMD, and all asbestos-related work would comply with requirements included in 8 CCR Sections 1529 and 341.6 through 341.14. Furthermore, contractors handling the demolition of structures within the Specific Plan Area that have more than 100 square feet or 100 lineal feet of lead-based paint are required to comply with 8 CCR Section 1532.1 (Cal/OSHA's Lead in Construction Standard), which addresses the demolition, removal, cleanup, transportation, storage, and disposal of lead-containing material, as well as proper personal protective equipment for construction personnel. Compliance with these regulations would result in safe handling, removal, and disposal of ACMs and lead-based paint. Therefore, impacts would be **less than significant**.

Hazards From Underground Pipelines

Two major underground high-pressure pipelines containing natural gas and jet fuel traverse the Specific Plan Area within the Union Pacific Railroad right-of-way. These pipelines could be encountered by earthmoving activities associated with Watt Avenue improvements, other transportation improvements, or other infrastructure improvements adjacent to the Union Pacific Railroad crossing over Watt Avenue in the Specific Plan Area south of the Union Pacific Railroad tracks. A review of the PHMSA (2025) Pipeline Map Viewer indicated there have been no recorded pipeline releases in the Specific Plan Area. Other buried underground utility lines are also present in the Specific Plan Area such as stormwater, potable water, and sewer lines. Excavation and earthmoving activities associated with Watt Avenue improvements, other transportation improvements, or other infrastructure improvements adjacent to the Union Pacific Railroad line could encounter buried pipelines resulting in accidental rupture or leaks, which could cause a human health and environmental hazard. However, through County Standard Construction Specifications, construction contractors would be required to verify through field surveys and the use of the USA North underground service alert services the locations of all utilities that may be buried and that could be affected by excavation and construction activities (e.g., high-pressure natural gas and jet fuel, stormwater, sewer, and water lines). Any buried utility lines would be clearly marked in the field and on the construction drawings in advance of any earthmoving activities and avoided throughout site preparation and construction activities. Therefore, this impact would be **less than significant.**

Aerially Deposited Lead

As noted previously, the presence of aerially deposited lead along high-volume roadways in California that handled traffic before the phase-out of lead gasoline can represent an environmental concern. For the Specific Plan Area, the high-volume roadways of concern are I-80 and North Watt Avenue. The Specific Plan Area ends approximately 30 feet north of I-80, and therefore is outside the area where aerially deposited lead is generally present. Thus, there would be little potential to encounter aerially deposited lead that may be present in the soil along the north side of I-80. For North Watt Avenue, most properties adjacent to the roadway are developed with buildings and pavement. However, there are a number of vacant parcels along North Watt Avenue that have not yet been developed, and due to the high number of vehicles that historically traveled on North Watt Avenue,

lead from vehicle exhaust emissions prior to the mid-1980s could be present in the shallow soils within approximately 30 feet of the edge of the pavement. This constituent could result in human health hazards if present at high enough levels and if disturbed during construction activities. Therefore, this impact is considered **potentially significant**.

Potential Soil Contamination Along Rail Lines

As discussed in detail in the "Environmental Setting" subsection, commonly reported soil contamination along railroad corridors includes metals and petroleum products from railroad operations, along with herbicides used for weed control. Along Roseville Road in the southwestern portion of the Specific Plan Area, the Union Pacific Railroad line is approximately 200 feet from the edge of the Specific Plan Area. The Union Pacific Railroad line crosses the Specific Plan Area just south of Peacekeeper Way. No part of the Specific Plan Area north of Peacekeeper Way is within 250 feet of the Union Pacific Railroad line. Extended use of the Union Pacific Railroad line may have resulted in soil contamination with metals and petroleum products. These constituents could result in human health and environmental hazards if present at high levels and disturbed during construction activities. Therefore, this impact is considered **potentially significant**.

Mitigation Measures

HAZ-1a: Perform Soil Testing for Hazardous Materials Associated with Aerially Deposited Lead from Watt Avenue

> Transportation and other infrastructure projects or development projects that would involve disturbance of undeveloped property within 30 feet of the edge of Watt Avenue shall require a qualified remediation consultant to obtain soil borings and employ laboratory testing for aerially deposited lead. Soil testing shall be performed within 30 feet of Watt Avenue, extending to a depth of at least 3 feet. If lead is not present or is present at levels below established human health and environmental safety thresholds, then no further action shall be required. A copy of the soil testing report shall be provided to the Sacramento County.
>
> If lead is found to be present at levels above human health or environmental safety thresholds, then soil remediation shall be performed as determined in consultation with DTSC or the Sacramento County Environmental Health Department. Remediation activities may include, but are not limited to, the following: excavating and disposing of lead-containing soil at an appropriately permitted landfill; reusing the soil on-site in areas that would be covered by paved parking lots or paved roadways and where soil placement would be at least 5 feet above the maximum water table elevation (if approved by the regulatory agency depending on the level of contamination); watering the soil during construction to control dust; and covering soil stockpiles until the soil is reused or transported off-site for disposal at a permitted solid waste landfill or other permitted hazardous waste facility.

HAZ-1b: Perform Soil Testing for Hazardous Materials Associated with Rail Lines

> Transportation and other infrastructure projects or development projects that would involve disturbance of undeveloped property within 30 feet of the edge of the Union Pacific Railroad line or spur shall require a qualified remediation consultant to obtain soil borings and employ laboratory testing for residual chemicals that may be present. If reported constituents of concern are present at levels that are below established human health and environmental thresholds, then no further action shall be required. A copy of the soil testing report shall be provided to Sacramento County.
>
> If constituents of concern are found to be present at levels above human health or environmental safety thresholds, then soil remediation shall be performed as determined in consultation with DTSC or the Sacramento County Environmental Health Department. Remediation activities would likely consist of excavating and disposing of contaminated soil at an appropriately permitted landfill, and replacement with clean fill dirt.

Significance after Mitigation

Implementation of Mitigation Measures HAZ-1a and HAZ-1b would reduce project impacts related to potential accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials to a **less-than-significant** level because soil testing would be performed for aerially deposited lead and hazardous chemicals adjacent to North Watt Avenue and rail lines and any contamination would be remediated.

Impact HAZ-2: Result in Hazardous Emissions or Use of Hazardous Materials Within One-Quarter Mile of Schools

The Specific Plan is focused on new residential, park, and small commercial development with associated infrastructure improvements. The Specific Plan does not propose new industrial land uses that could manufacture or store large quantities of hazardous materials that could affect sensitive uses, including schools during operations. Historically, in the context of urban development involving typical residential, commercial services, retail, and office uses, the primary concern with regard to hazardous emissions during operations had been with drycleaners. However, the use of perchloroethylene (PCE), which is a hazardous chemical (human carcinogen) that was used as a cleaning solution by drycleaning establishments, has been banned by U.S. EPA from use in any new machines, with a full phase-out of all PCE use in any drycleaning equipment by 2034.

The Specific Plan does not include the construction of any new schools. However, as shown in Table HAZ-2, demolition of existing structures and construction within the Specific Plan Area could occur within 0.25 mile of several existing schools. Depending on the location, construction could occur immediately adjacent to or within only a few hundred feet of most of these schools. As discussed above under Impact HAZ-1, minor amounts of hazardous materials used during construction (primarily fuel and oil for equipment), and potentially remediation of asbestos during demolition of older buildings, would be used and managed in accordance with applicable laws and regulations,

including SMAQMD Rule 902 related to asbestos, would not be acutely hazardous, and therefore would not be expected to create a human health hazard.

The primary exposure pathway of concern for children at nearby schools is through the inhalation of air contaminants, such as particulate matter. As discussed in Chapter 4, "Air Quality," the primary source of hazardous emissions during construction would consist of diesel particulate matter from the exhaust of construction equipment. Because diesel emissions would occur in close proximity to children attending the schools described above, exposure to harmful levels of particulate matter could occur during construction. Therefore, this impact would be **potentially significant**.

Mitigation Measures

AQ-1a: Implement SMAQMD's Basic Construction Emission Control Practices (see Impact AQ-1 in Chapter 4, "Air Quality")

AQ-1b: Reduce Off-Road Equipment Exhaust-Related Emissions (see Impact AQ-1 in Chapter 4, "Air Quality")

AQ-4b: Further Reduce Potential Construction-Related Health Effects for Development within 300 Feet of Sensitive Receptors (see Impact AQ-4 in Chapter 4, "Air Quality")

Significance after Mitigation

Implementation of Mitigation Measures AQ-1a and AQ-1b would require implementation of emission control practices that would reduce the level of diesel particulate matter emitted by construction equipment. Implementation of Mitigation Measure AQ-4b would require future projects to reduce potential construction-related health risks. With implementation of Mitigation Measures AQ-1a, AQ-1b, potential toxic air contaminant emissions from construction-related activities, particularly diesel particulate emissions, would be further reduced. Mitigation Measure AQ-4a would require the use of zero-emission construction equipment where commercially available would require future projects of greater than 3 acres that would include construction activities within 300 feet of sensitive receptors to incorporate actions that would further reduce potential exposure of sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations, such as requiring the establishment of staging areas as far from sensitive receptors as possible and the use of the most current and cleanest available equipment where non-electric equipment is proposed to be used. With implementation of these mitigation measures, the potentially significant impact related to exposure of school children to diesel particulate matter emissions from construction of projects near schools would be reduced to **less than significant**.

Impact HAZ-3: Potential Release of Hazardous Materials from Site Listed in California Government Code Section 65962.5 (Cortese List)

There is a small area of groundwater contamination from support activities associated with the former McClellan AFB (which is a federal Superfund site), within the southern

end of the Specific Plan Area south of the Union Pacific Railroad line along Myrtle Avenue; however, the contamination is being remediated and the depth to groundwater is approximately 100–120 feet below the ground surface (DWR 2024). Because excavation would not exceed 20 feet below the ground surface, contaminated groundwater would not be encountered and therefore would not represent an environmental hazard within the Specific Plan Area; thus, there would be **no impact.**

As discussed in detail in the Environmental Setting (and shown on Exhibits HAZ-1a through HAZ-1d and listed in Table HAZ-1), a number of parcels within the Specific Plan Area include open or closed hazardous materials sites that are listed on various regulatory databases. Some of these sites are on the Cortese List. The listed sites generally comprise former or current gas stations, automotive repair, automotive body shops, dry cleaners, and former LUST sites. Because earthmoving activities associated with development of parcels with known or suspected contamination could result in exposure of construction workers, future residents and employees, and the environment to hazardous materials, this impact is considered **potentially significant**.

MITIGATION MEASURES

HAZ-3a: Perform Environmental Site Assessments

> Prior to the start of construction activities at any of the properties where a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) is recommended in Table HAZ-1 and properties adjacent to adjoining properties with possible environmental concerns, the project applicant shall hire a remediation specialist to perform a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment or to document that conditions have changed such that there is no longer any recognized environmental condition. Where a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment is required and does not identify any recognized environmental condition, no further action is required.
>
> In instances where a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment identifies potential hazards, a Phase II Environmental Site Assessment shall be prepared to further assess site soil, soil vapor, and/or groundwater conditions (as appropriate). Depending on the results of the Phase II investigation, additional remediation or cleanup measures shall be implemented as necessary, in coordination with the appropriate regulatory agencies (e.g., DTSC, RWQCB, Sacramento County Environmental Management Department) before the start of construction.

HAZ-3b: Prepare and Implement a Site-Specific Health and Safety Plan for Parcels with Known Hazardous Materials Issues

> Prior to the start of construction activities at any of the properties where a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) is recommended in Table HAZ-1 and properties adjacent to adjoining properties with possible environmental concerns, a site-specific Health and Safety Plan (HASP) shall be prepared and implemented in accordance with State and federal OSHA regulations (29 CFR 1910.120) and approved by a certified industrial hygienist. Copies of the HASP shall be made available to construction workers for review during their orientation training and/or

during regular health and safety meetings. The HASP shall identify potential hazards such as stained or odiferous soils at any location where earthmoving activities would occur within the Specific Plan Area, chemicals of concern (i.e., VOCs, heavy metals, and gases), personal protective equipment and devices, decontamination procedures, the need for personal or area monitoring, and emergency response procedures.

The HASP shall state that if stained or odiferous soil or groundwater is discovered during project-related construction activities, project applicants shall retain a licensed environmental professional to conduct a Phase II ESA that includes appropriate soil and/or groundwater analysis. Recommendations contained in the Phase II ESA to address any contamination that is found, shall be implemented before reinitiating ground-disturbing activities in these areas.

The HASP shall also require notification of the appropriate federal, State, and local agencies if evidence of previously undiscovered soil or groundwater contamination (e.g., stained soil, odorous groundwater, or groundwater with a surface sheen) or if previously undiscovered underground storage tanks are encountered during construction activities. Any contaminated areas shall be remediated in accordance with recommendations made by the RWQCB, DTSC, the Sacramento County Environmental Health Division, and/or other appropriate federal, State, or local regulatory agencies.

Significance after Mitigation

Implementation of Mitigation Measures HAZ-3a and HAZ-3b would reduce potential impacts from construction in a hazardous materials site to a **less-than-significant** level because Phase I and Phase II (if necessary) Environmental Site Assessments would be performed to characterize any contamination and remediation would be performed (if necessary) to the satisfaction of the appropriate regulatory agency prior to the start of construction activities; and a HASP would be prepared and implemented to protect the health of construction worker personnel and ensure that any suspected contamination that is encountered during construction is reported and appropriately remediated.

Impact HAZ-4: Result in Airport Safety Hazard

As shown in Plate HAZ-2, an approximately 4-acre portion of the Specific Plan Area between Orange Grove Avenue and Roseville Road is within the McClellan Airport Clear Zone. Furthermore, the southwestern end of the Specific Plan Area, comprising approximately 41 acres, is within the airport's southern Approach/Departure Zone (see Plate HAZ-2). Both of these areas are developed with light industrial uses comprising warehouse-style buildings and paved parking areas. This portion of the Specific Plan Area currently has no residential uses.

As discussed in the McClellan Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan, Land Use Compatibility Guidelines for Safety (SACOG 1992:III.C.2.c), residential uses are not permitted within the Clear Zone, and may only be permitted in the Approach/Departure Zone at a density of one single-family residence per 5 acres. However, the Specific Plan

does not propose residential uses within the McClellan Airport Clear Zone or the Approach/Departure Zones and thus there would be no safety hazards related to land use compatibility for residential uses.

The Specific Plan development standards require that any changes to land uses in the future must comply with the Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan and applicable airport land use compatibility criteria, and proposed uses within the McClellan Airport Overflight Zone would be required to be compatible with the McClellan Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan, Land Use Compatibility Guidelines for Safety (SACOG 1992:III.C.2.c).

The approximately 41 acres that are within the airport's southern Approach/Departure Zone is envisioned as an employment center with office and light industrial uses. There are no areas within the Approach/Departure Zone that are zoned by the proposed Specific Plan for mixed-use development that could include residential development. Within the Approach/Departure Zone, most industrial uses are compatible. The Specific Plan standards prohibit bulk petroleum products or chemical storage or other uses that are specifically restricted in the Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan. Furthermore, land uses within the Approach/Departure zone would not result in an average density greater than 25 persons per acre per hour during any 24-hour period ending at midnight or exceed 50 persons per acre at any time. Light industrial uses would continue within the airport's southern Approach/Departure Zone in the Specific Plan Area, and with incorporation of the Specific Plan development standards, would be a compatible land use as identified in the McClellan Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan, Land Use Compatibility Guidelines for Safety (SACOG 1992:III.C.2.c) and therefore would not result in substantial safety hazards.

Furthermore, the existing and the proposed light industrial land uses within the Clear Zone and the Approach/Departure Zone would not include flashing lights, cause excessive glare, generate smoke, attract hazardous wildlife, or generate electrical interference; and would not consist of hazardous above-ground oil, gas, or chemical storage facilities. Therefore, the light industrial land uses for these areas proposed in the Specific Plan would meet the McClellan Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan land use activity compatibility requirements for the Clear Zone and the Approach/Departure Zone (SACOG 1992:III.C.2.b).

FAR Part 77, Objects Affecting Navigable Airspace, includes height standards for buildings, trees, and other objects to ensure that objects do not impair flight safety or decrease the operational capability of the airport. The proposed Specific Plan includes limits on the maximum building heights within each of the three proposed zoning districts, ranging from 55 to 75 feet. The Specific Plan development standards require that within airport compatibility areas, no structure, object, equipment, landscaping, or other feature shall penetrate applicable FAA Part 77 imaginary airspace surfaces, consistent with applicable airport airspace protection requirements. Therefore, implementation of the proposed Specific Plan would not result in building heights that would impair flight safety or decrease the operational capability of the Sacramento McClellan Airport.

For all of the reasons described above, implementation of the proposed Specific Plan would not result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area, and therefore this impact would be **less than significant**.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required.

Impact HAZ-5: Impair Implementation of or Physically Interfere with an Adopted Emergency Response Plan or Emergency Evacuation Plan

During construction, materials and equipment would be staged and stored within the boundaries of each future development project or infrastructure improvement project. However, temporary lane closures could be necessary for short periods during construction of roadway and sidewalk improvements, and installation of underground sewer, water, and stormwater drainage pipelines. Each project applicant would be required to obtain written authorization from the Sacramento County Department of Transportation for construction of roadway improvements where lane closures are required, including an encroachment permit. The County's Right of Way Management Section acts as the lead agency in the review process and is responsible for the coordination and management of the review process. Traffic Control Plans and/or Detour Plans are reviewed and managed by the Right of Way Management Section and are required for all construction work within the road right of way that modifies vehicular, bicycle, and/or pedestrian traffic patterns. Traffic Control Plans for project-related construction of the aforementioned improvements would be prepared and implemented by each project applicant and reviewed and approved by the County to ensure the safe and efficient movement of traffic and emergency vehicles through construction work zones.

Redevelopment within the Specific Plan Area would increase the number of residents that could require evacuation in the event of an emergency. However, road improvements within the Specific Plan Area would be subject to the version of the County's Improvement Standards related to street design that are effect at the time of design and construction (currently Sacramento County Department of Engineering 2018), as well as provisions in the County Municipal Code Title 10 (Vehicles and Traffic) and Title 22 Chapter 22.10 (Design and Improvement Standards), related to roadway widths and carrying capacities.

The Specific Plan Area is situated within four different emergency evacuation zones as designated by the Sacramento County Office of Emergency Services (SacOES 2025): Rio Linda/Garden Highway (Zone 11), North Highlands (Zone 13), West Foothill Farms (Zone 14), and McClellan Air Field (Zone 15). In addition to Watt Avenue (the primary north-south evacuation route to I-80), there are numerous other east-west roads throughout the Specific Plan Area that are designated as primary evacuation routes to the east to I-80 (for example, Roseville Road, Madison Avenue, Elkhorn Boulevard, and Antelope Road) (SacOES 2025). Any necessary emergency evacuations in the vicinity of the Specific Plan Area would be coordinated by County officials through SacOES. As

discussed in the *Sacramento County Evacuation Plan* (SacCounty OES 2021), the primary mode of transportation that would be used during an evacuation would be the evacuees' private transportation resources. Law enforcement would be the primary agency for managing the movement of people during an evacuation. Primary evacuation routes in Sacramento County consist of the major interstates, highways, and prime arterial roadways. Traffic conditions are monitored along evacuation routes, and operational adjustments would be made by County officials as necessary during an evacuation to maximize throughput. During an evacuation, County Department of Transportation traffic engineers, along with California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), would be able to quickly calculate traffic flow capacity and decide which of the available traffic routes should be used to move people in the correct directions and to adjust evacuation routes based on real-time conditions. Additionally, known traffic conditions may be communicated to Internet applications such as WAZE and Google Crisis Maps to better inform the public in real time regarding available traffic conditions.

For the reasons stated above, future development within the Specific Plan Area would not impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan, and therefore this impact would be **less than significant.**

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required.

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10 HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes the environmental and regulatory setting for hydrology, drainage, and water quality in the Specific Plan Area, and describes impacts related to these resources from implementation of the proposed Specific Plan. This chapter also includes an evaluation of flooding and potential adverse changes to groundwater conditions.

ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

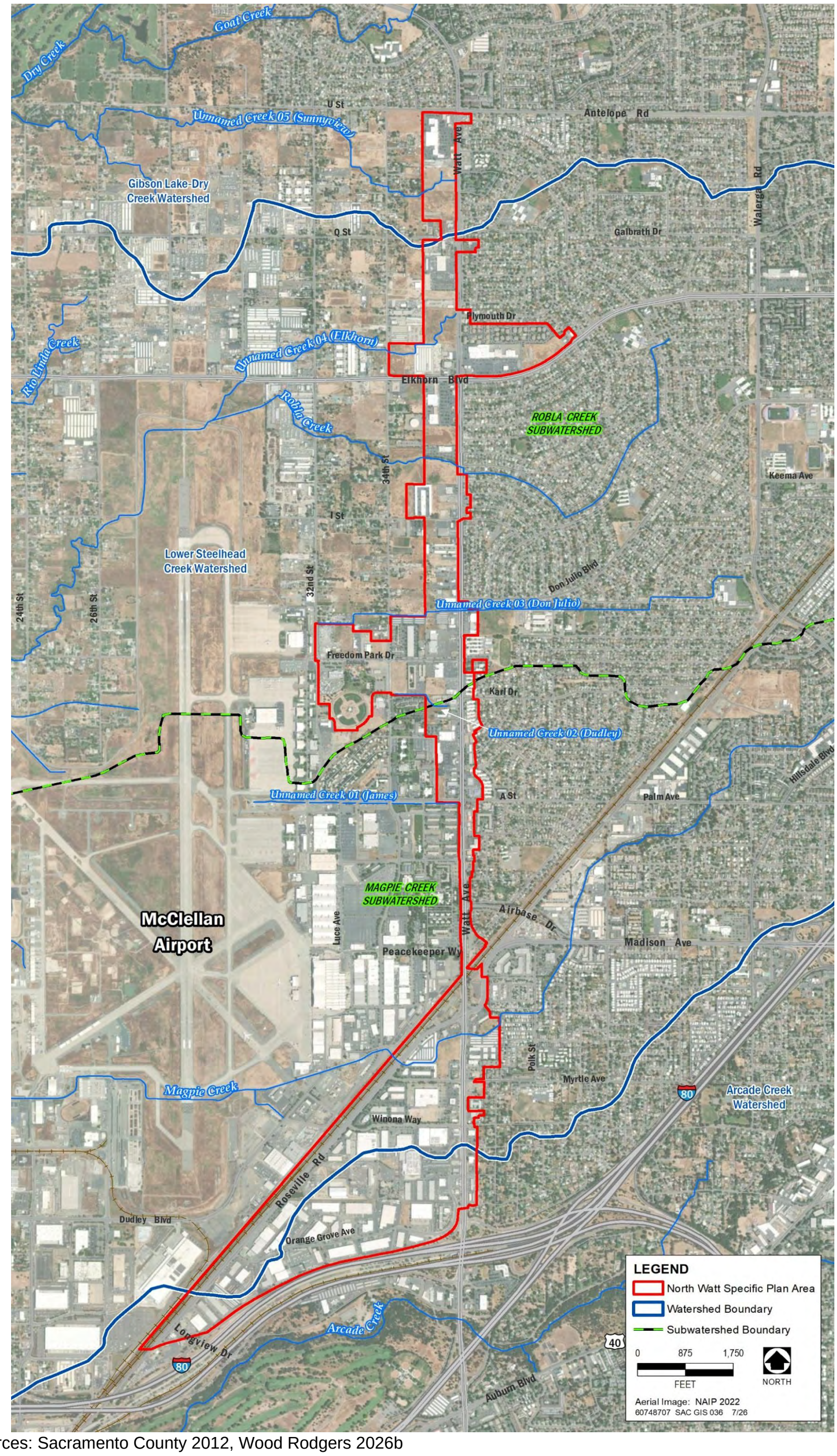
SURFACE WATER RESOURCES

WATERSHEDS AND DRAINAGE

The Specific Plan Area encompasses approximately 705 acres along a 4-mile segment of Watt Avenue from Antelope Road/U Street in the north to Interstate 80 (I-80) in the south within unincorporated Sacramento County. The Specific Plan Area is situated within the Gibson Lake-Dry Creek Watershed, the Lower Steelhead Creek Watershed, and the Arcade Creek Watershed. There are two subwatersheds within the Lower Steelhead Creek Watershed: Robla Creek and Magpie Creek (see Plate HWQ-1). Dry Creek, Robal Creek, Magpie Creek, and Arcade Creek are also known as the North Sacramento Streams Group. There are seven surface water bodies that traverse the Specific Plan Area (shown in Plate HWQ-1), all generally flowing from northeast to southwest. Arcade Creek, which receives runoff from the southern portion of the Specific Plan Area, is approximately 765 feet southeast of the Specific Plan Area (at the closest point), on the south side of I-80. A brief summary of the watersheds and the surface water bodies in and near the Specific Plan Area are provided below.

- The Dry Creek subwatershed encompasses approximately 4,138 acres in Sacramento County (the remainder of the watershed is upstream in Placer County). The main stem of Dry Creek flows southwest and discharges into Natomas East Main Drainage Canal (NEMDC)/Steelhead Creek near Hansen Ranch Park. In the northern portion of the Specific Plan Area between U Street and Q Street, a tributary to Dry Creek (Unnamed Creek 05 [Sunnyview]) flows through an undeveloped parcel of land in a shallow earthen channel with limited riparian vegetation. The channel is approximately 10 feet wide and 3 feet deep.

Plate HWQ-1: Subwatersheds and Surface Waters in the Specific Plan Area



Sources: Sacramento County 2012, Wood Rodgers 2026b

The Robla Creek subwatershed consists of approximately 5,141 acres of urban and agricultural lands located in North Highlands, east of Sacramento McClellan Airport. Robla Creek and Rio Linda Creek flows southwest and discharges into NEMDC/Steelhead Creek south of Hansen Ranch Park. In the Specific Plan Area, the north branch of Robla Creek (Unnamed Creek 04 [Elkhorn]) flows mostly through undeveloped land and consists of a shallow, natural earthen channel with meanders and riparian vegetation; a small portion of the channel has been artificially straightened and partially concrete lined (at the bends) along the property boundary adjacent to an existing industrial building.

The mainstem of Robla Creek flows through an undeveloped parcel of land and consists of a natural channel approximately 4 feet deep with meanders, earthen sides, and riparian and other vegetation. Unnamed Creek 03 (Don Julio), which is also within the Robla Creek subwatershed, is a concrete-lined, straightened trapezoidal channel.

- The Magpie Creek subwatershed drains through the Sacramento McClellan Airport and encompasses approximately 3,789 acres of urban development. Unnamed Creek 02 (Dudley) runs west from Watt Avenue near Karl Drive and is an approximately 6-foot-deep trapezoidal channel with earthen sides. Unnamed Creek 01 (James) runs west from Watt Avenue along James Way and is a narrow, approximately 6-foot-deep concrete-lined channel. In the Specific Plan Area east of Watt Avenue, Magpie Creek is an approximately 6-foot-deep trapezoidal channel with earthen sides. Vegetation and scattered shrubs are present along this portion of the channel. West of Watt Avenue in the Specific Plan Area, Magpie Creek is a concrete-lined, straightened trapezoidal channel. Magpie Creek discharges into NEMDC/Steelhead Creek just north of Interstate 80, approximately 3.8 miles west of the Specific Plan Area.
- The Arcade Creek subwatershed encompasses approximately 6,508 acres of urban development. Arcade Creek, which is outside of the Specific Plan Area south of I-80, discharges into NEMDC/Steelhead Creek approximately 3.5 miles southwest of the Specific Plan Area.
- NEMDC/Steelhead Creek is a human-made, leveed drainage facility that extends for approximately 13.3 miles from high ground near Sankey Road in the north and flows south and then west to its confluence with the Sacramento River at Discovery Park.

Stormwater drainage through the Specific Plan Area is conveyed through a variety of pipelines, open waterways, and via overland sheet flow (Sacramento County 2025). There are two County stormwater trunk lines along Watt Avenue: one at the southern end of the Specific Plan Area in the existing industrial park and one in the central portion of the Specific Plan Area, and a combination of public and private drainage facilities serve the remainder of the Specific Plan Area. The west side of Watt Avenue has some areas of undeveloped land, where open channels and drainage swales are the primary drainage features. Stormwater drainage in the Specific Plan Area discharges to the North Sacramento Streams Group through a variety of outfall structures.

Existing conditions modeling performed by Wood Rodgers (2026b), found that many locations within the existing storm drain system are undersized and are not able to convey existing conditions flow as required by current published County drainage standards. The

modeling demonstrated that the 100-year water surface elevations exceeded the storm drainage rim or grate elevation, resulting in flooding of streets that was either within 1 foot of adjacent pad elevations or would completely inundate the street and therefore would not provide a drivable lane for emergency access vehicles (Wood Rodgers 2026b).

Flooding

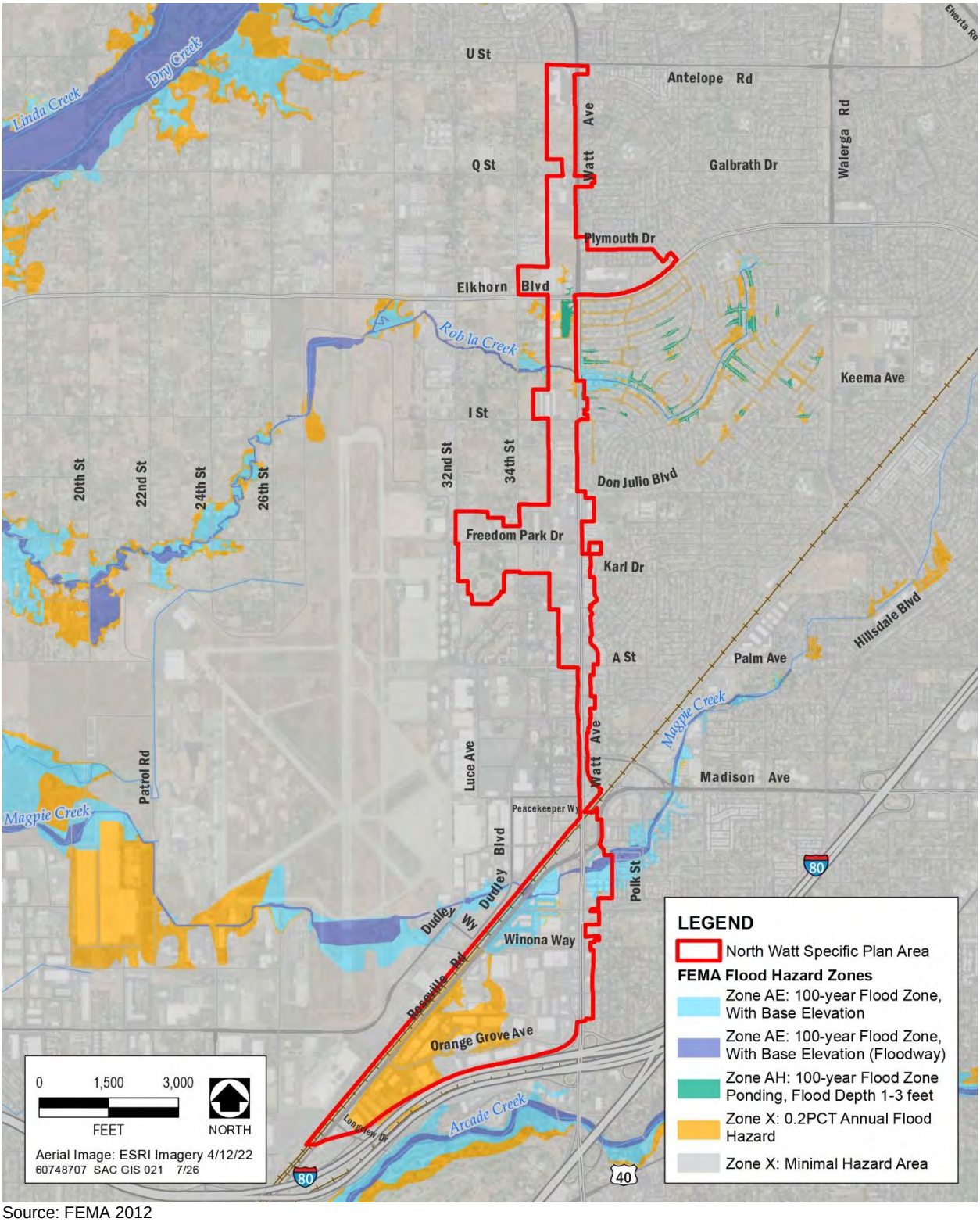
Federal Emergency Management Agency Classifications

Within the Specific Plan Area, areas along Magpie Creek, and along the north and middle branches of Robla Creek, have been classified by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA 2012) as special flood hazard Zones AE, AH, and Regulatory Floodways (Plate HWQ-2). The FEMA classifications within the Specific Plan Area and their definitions are listed below.

- **Zone AE:** a 100-year flood hazard zone where the base flood elevation has been determined. Flood insurance is required.
- **Zone AH:** a 100-year flood hazard zone comprised of areas subject to shallow flooding, typically in the form of ponding, with depths from 1 to 3 feet. Flood insurance is required.
- **Zone AE Regulatory Floodway:** the channel of a river or other watercourse and the adjacent land areas that must be reserved in order to discharge the base flood without cumulatively increasing the water surface elevation more than a designated height (typically 1 foot). Flood insurance is required.
- **Zone X (shaded):** areas with a 0.2 percent chance flood hazard (a moderate flood hazard) that are between the 100- and 500-year floodplains with an average flood depth of less than 1 foot or with drainage areas of less than 1 square mile. Zone X is not a Special Flood Hazard Zone. Flood insurance is not required for properties within Zone X.
- **Zone X (unshaded):** areas of minimal flood hazard. Zone X is not a Special Flood Hazard Zone. Flood insurance is not required for properties within Zone X.

Any urban development that is proposed within a FEMA special flood hazard zone must comply with the County's Floodplain Management Ordinance, Sacramento County Municipal Code Title 16, Chapter 16.02, Section 16.02.060 (Ordinance SZC-2016-0023) (discussed in detail below in the "Regulatory Setting").

Plate HWQ-2: FEMA Flood Zones in the Specific Plan Area



Source: FEMA 2012

URBAN LEVEL OF FLOOD PROTECTION (200-YEAR FLOOD HAZARD)

Within the Specific Plan Area, the North Sacramento Streams Group do not have levees and are outside (to the east) of the mapped 200-year urban level of flood protection boundary (DWR 2025). Furthermore, those portions of the North Sacramento Streams Group that are within the Specific Plan Area are not Regulated Streams or Designated Floodways under the jurisdiction of the Central Valley Flood Protection Board (DWR 2025).

WATER QUALITY

The *Water Quality Control Plan for the Sacramento and San Joaquin River Basins* (Basin Plan), updated and adopted by the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) in 2019, contains the regulations adopted to control the discharge of waste and other controllable factors affecting the quality of waters of the state within the boundaries of the Central Valley Region. California's Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act defines "Waters of the State" to mean any surface water or groundwater, including saline waters, within the boundaries of the state. The Basin Plan establishes the beneficial uses of water within the region; the water quality objectives necessary to protect those uses, including an anti-degradation policy; the prohibitions, policies, and action plans, by which protections are implemented; and the monitoring, which is conducted to ensure attainment of water quality standards. Under the federal Clean Water Act (CWA), water quality standards include designated uses, water quality criteria, and an anti-degradation policy.

Section 303(d) of the federal CWA requires each state to periodically prepare a list of all surface waters in the state for which beneficial uses of the water (e.g., drinking, recreation, aquatic habitat, and agricultural use) are impaired by pollutants. The Basin Plan designates the following existing beneficial uses for the Sacramento River from the Colusa Basin Drain to the I Street bridge (Central Valley RWQCB 2019): municipal, domestic, and agricultural water supply; water contact recreation, canoeing and rafting, and non-water contact recreation; warm and cold freshwater habitat; warm and cold migratory aquatic organism habitat; warm and cold spawning habitat; wildlife habitat; and navigation. Applying the Central Valley RWQCB's "tributary rule," the beneficial uses of any specifically identified water body generally also apply to all its tributaries. As stormwater from the Specific Plan Area flows into Dry Creek, Robla Creek, Magpie Creek, and Arcade Creek, which ultimately discharge into the Sacramento River. The beneficial uses for the Sacramento River apply to these tributaries.

Section 303(d) of the CWA also requires states to identify waters where the permit standards, any other enforceable limits, or adopted water quality standards are still unattained. The law requires states to develop total maximum daily loads (TMDLs) to improve the water quality of impaired water bodies. TMDLs are the quantities of pollutants that can be safely assimilated by a water body without violating water quality standards. TMDLs are developed for impaired water bodies to maintain beneficial uses, achieve water quality objectives, and reduce the potential for future water quality degradation. National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permits for water discharges

(for both construction and operation) must take into account the pollutants for which a water body is listed as impaired.

Table HWQ-1 lists impaired water bodies in the region included in the State Water Resources Control Board's (SWRCB) 303(d) list that could receive runoff from the Specific Plan Area, the pollutants of concern, and whether they have approved TMDLs. Even if a specific stream is not included in the SWRCB's 303(d) list, any upstream tributary to a 303(d)-listed stream could contribute pollutants to the listed segment.

Table HWQ-1. Section 303(d) List of Impaired Water Bodies

Impaired Water Body	Pollutant
Dry Creek	Fipronil
Natomas East Main Drainage Canal/Steelhead Creek (upstream from Arcade Creek)	Polychlorinated biphenyls
Arcade Creek	Copper
Arcade Creek	Toxicity
Arcade Creek	Malathion
Arcade Creek	Pyrethroids
Arcade Creek	Bifenthrin
Arcade Creek	Fipronil Sulfone
Arcade Creek	Permethrin
Natomas East Main Drainage Canal/Steelhead Creek (downstream from Arcade Creek)	Polychlorinated biphenyls
Natomas East Main Drainage Canal/Steelhead Creek (downstream from Arcade Creek)	Trash
Natomas East Main Drainage Canal/Steelhead Creek (downstream from Arcade Creek)	Mercury
Natomas East Main Drainage Canal/Steelhead Creek (downstream from Arcade Creek)	Indicator bacteria
Sacramento River (Knights Landing to the Delta)	Mercury
Sacramento River (Knights Landing to the Delta)	Chlordane
Sacramento River (Knights Landing to the Delta)	Dieldrin
Sacramento River (Knights Landing to the Delta)	Polychlorinated biphenyls
Sacramento River (Knights Landing to the Delta)	Toxicity
Sacramento River (Knights Landing to the Delta)	Dichlorodiphenyl-trichloroethane (DDT)
Sacramento River (Knights Landing to the Delta)	Water temperature

Notes: TMDL = total maximum daily load
Source: SWRCB 2024

GROUNDWATER

SUSTAINABLE GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT

The Specific Plan Area is in the North American Groundwater Subbasin, which underlies northern Sacramento, southern Sutter, and western Placer counties. Groundwater in the Specific Plan region is managed by the Sacramento Groundwater Authority, which is the designated Groundwater Sustainability Agency for the southern portion of the Subbasin (where the Specific Plan Area is situated), as required by the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA). A Groundwater Sustainability Plan for the North American Subbasin (Groundwater Sustainability Plan) was prepared and submitted to the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) in January 2022 (GEI Consultants 2021), and approved by DWR in 2023. As required by the SGMA, the Groundwater Sustainability Plan includes a description of the subbasin setting, hydrogeological conceptual model, comprehensive water budget, basin-wide monitoring network, sustainable management criteria, and projects and management actions necessary to ensure the Subbasin's sustainability.

The North American Subbasin is not in a condition of overdraft. Modeling conducted for the Groundwater Sustainability Plan, including the projected conditions water budget scenario (i.e., future development through 2040 with implementation of the specific management actions included in the Groundwater Sustainability Plan), indicates there will be greater inflows than outflows in the North American Subbasin, resulting in an increase in groundwater storage over time.[1]

GROUNDWATER QUALITY

As described in the Groundwater Sustainability Plan, generally, the quality of groundwater in the North American Subbasin is suitable for nearly all uses, with the exception of contamination plumes, and localized naturally occurring and human-caused quality issues, which may affect the supply, beneficial uses, and potential management of groundwater in the Subbasin if not properly managed. Total dissolved solids (TDS) and nitrate were identified as constituents that represent general conditions in the Subbasin, with some wells displaying upward trends. Nitrate is below the drinking water standards for all wells in the North American Subbasin. TDS exceeds the drinking water standards in some wells, predominantly in the western and eastern portions of the North American Subbasin. The higher salinity concentrations are generally considered to be present due to natural sources (GEI Consultants 2021).

Extensive investigations have been conducted by the U.S. Air Force at Sacramento McClellan Airport to identify soil and groundwater contamination that resulted from past activities during use as the former McClellan Air Force Base. Remedial actions are ongoing to prevent the spread of contaminants and clean up contaminated soils and

[1] The Groundwater Sustainability Plan contains a description of specific projects and management actions that will be undertaken in the North American Subbasin to promote groundwater sustainability, including continued conjunctive use (i.e., a mix of groundwater and surface water) in urban areas, and continued water demand management throughout the Subbasin.

groundwater to the maximum extent practicable. Volatile organic compounds (VOCs) of concern that have been consistently detected above maximum contaminant levels for drinking water include benzene, carbon tetrachloride, chloroform, 1,2-dichlorobenzene, 1,2-dichloroethane, 1,1-dichloroethene, 1,2-dichloroethene, tetrachloroethene, 1,1,1-trichloroethane, and vinyl chloride. The groundwater contamination of greatest concern at Sacramento McClellan Airport is from shallow plumes of VOCs; trichloroethene (TCE) is the most frequently detected chemical of concern. The principal means of groundwater remediation have included: capping ground surface areas with asphalt to prevent the intrusion of water that might further the transport of pollutants, abandoning production wells that contribute to the spread of pollutants, and installing a groundwater treatment plant that removes VOCs and other organic compounds. The groundwater cleanup program includes a network of 85 extraction wells across Sacramento McClellan Airport. These wells send approximately 1,450 gallons per minute of contaminated water to the groundwater treatment plant (located on the west side of Sacramento McClellan Airport), which cleans and discharges the water into Magpie Creek (U.S. EPA 2025). There is a small, contaminated groundwater plume associated with former McClellan Air Force Base support activities within the southern portion of the Specific Plan Area along Myrtle Avenue at Watt Avenue (USACE 2010).

Based on the most recent data available from the DWR, the depth to groundwater in the Specific Plan Area, including the depth to the McClellan contaminated groundwater plume, is approximately 100–120 feet below the ground surface (DWR 2024, USACE 2010).

Regulatory Setting

Federal

Clean Water Act

The Clean Water Act (CWA) (33 U.S.C. Section 1251 et seq.) is the primary federal law that governs and authorizes water quality control activities by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA), the lead federal agency responsible for water quality management. By employing a variety of regulatory and non-regulatory tools, including establishing water quality standards, issuing permits, monitoring discharges, and managing polluted runoff, the CWA seeks to restore and maintain the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of surface waters to support the protection and propagation of fish, shellfish, and wildlife, and recreation in and on the water.

USEPA is the federal agency with primary authority for implementing regulations adopted pursuant to the CWA, and has delegated the State of California as the authority to implement and oversee most of the programs authorized or adopted for CWA compliance through the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act of 1969 described below.

WATER QUALITY CRITERIA AND STANDARDS

Section 303 of the CWA requires states to adopt water quality standards for all surface waters of the U.S. As defined by the CWA, water quality standards consist of two elements: (1) designated beneficial uses of the water body in question, and (2) criteria that protect the designated uses. Section 304(a) requires EPA to publish advisory water quality criteria that accurately reflect the latest scientific knowledge on the kind and extent of all effects on health and welfare that may be expected from the presence of pollutants in water. Where multiple uses exist, water quality standards must protect the most sensitive use. Section 303(d) requires states to develop lists of the water bodies and associated pollutants that exceed water quality criteria; these lists are submitted to EPA for approval.

NATIONAL POLLUTANT DISCHARGE ELIMINATION SYSTEM PERMIT PROGRAM, SECTION 402

The NPDES permit program was established as part of the CWA to regulate municipal and industrial discharges to surface waters of the U.S. Federal NPDES permit regulations have been established for broad categories of discharges, including point source municipal waste discharges and nonpoint source stormwater runoff. NPDES permits generally identify limits on the concentrations and/or mass emissions of pollutants in effluent discharged into receiving waters; prohibitions on discharges not specifically allowed under the permit; and provisions that describe required actions by the discharger, including industrial pretreatment, pollution prevention, self-monitoring, and other activities.

In November 1990, USEPA published regulations establishing NPDES permit requirements for municipal and industrial stormwater discharges (i.e., NPDES General Permit for Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems, or MS4 Permit). Phase I of the permitting program applied to municipal discharges of stormwater in urban areas where the population exceeded 100,000 persons.[2] Phase II of the municipal permit system went into effect in 1999 and applies to small municipality areas of less than 100,000 persons (i.e., Small MS4s). Participants in the NPDES MS4 program must develop and implement a comprehensive Storm Water Management Program that must include pollution prevention measures, treatment or removal techniques, monitoring, use of legal authority, and other appropriate measures to control the quality of storm water discharged to the storm drains and thence to waters of the U.S.

The SWRCB and the nine RWQCBs are responsible for implementing and enforcing the NPDES permit system in California (refer to additional details in the subsection “State Regulations,” below).

SECTION 401 WATER QUALITY CERTIFICATION OR WAIVER

Under Section 401 of the CWA, an applicant for a Section 404 permit (to discharge dredged or fill material into waters of the U.S.) must first obtain a certificate from the appropriate agency stating that the fill is consistent with the State’s water quality

[2] Phase I also applies to storm water discharges from a large variety of industrial activities, including general construction activity if the project would disturb more than 5 acres.

standards and criteria. In California, the authority to either grant water quality certification or waive the requirements is delegated by the SWRCB to the nine regional boards. Water quality in Sacramento County, including the Specific Plan Area, is under the jurisdiction of the Central Valley RWQCB.

SECTION 303(D) IMPAIRED WATERS LIST

Under Section 303(d) of the CWA, states are required to develop lists of water bodies that would not attain water quality objectives after implementation of required levels of treatment by point source dischargers (municipalities and industries). Section 303(d) requires that the state develop a TMDL for each of the listed pollutants. The TMDL is the amount of loading that the water body can receive and still be in compliance with water quality objectives. USEPA must either approve a TMDL prepared by the state or disapprove the state's TMDL and issue its own. NPDES permit limits for listed pollutants must be consistent with the waste load allocation prescribed in the TMDL. The goal of the TMDL program is that, after implementation of a TMDL for a given pollutant on the 303(d) list, the causes that led to the pollutant's placement on the list would be remediated.

Federal Antidegradation Policy

The Federal Antidegradation Policy (40 CFR 131.12) is designed to protect existing water uses, water quality, and national water resources. The federal policy directs states to adopt a statewide policy to protect and maintain water quality for existing in-stream uses and waters of exceptional recreational or ecological significance.

Federal Emergency Management Agency National Flood Insurance Program

FEMA administers the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP, 42 U.S.C. 4016[a]) to provide flood insurance to individuals within communities that adopt and enforce NFIP regulations that limit development in floodplains; federally backed flood insurance is only available within NFIP communities. FEMA also develops and issues Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs) that identify flood hazard zones in the community; the FIRMs at minimum, identify where the 1-in-100 annual exceedance probability flood event would occur, and sometimes other flood events. The design standard for flood protection covered by the FIRMs is established by FEMA with the minimum level of flood protection for new development determined to be the 1-in-100 annual exceedance probability (i.e., the 100-year flood event). As developments are proposed and constructed, FEMA is also responsible for issuing revisions to FIRMs, such as Conditional Letters of Map Revision (CLOMR) and Letters of Map Revision (LOMR) through the local agencies that work with the NFIP.

STATE

Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act

The Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act (Porter-Cologne Act) of 1969 is California's statutory authority for the protection of water quality. Under the Act, the State must adopt water quality policies, plans, and objectives that protect the State's waters for the use and

enjoyment of the people. Regional authority for planning, permitting, and enforcement is delegated to the nine RWQCBs. The RWQCBs are required to formulate and adopt water quality control plans for all areas in the region and establish water quality objectives in the plans. The Porter-Cologne Act sets forth the obligations of the SWRCB and RWQCBs to adopt and periodically update the basin plans. The Central Valley RWQCB regulates water quality in Sacramento County, including the Specific Plan Area.

Basin plans are the regional water quality control plans required by both the CWA and Porter-Cologne Act in which beneficial uses, water quality objectives, and implementation programs are established for each of the nine regions in California. The act also requires waste dischargers to notify the RWQCBs of such activities through the filing of Reports of Waste Discharge and authorizes the SWRCB and RWQCBs to issue and enforce waste discharge requirements (WDRs), NPDES permits, CWA Section 401 water quality certifications, or other approvals. The RWQCBs also have authority to issue waivers to WDRs for broad categories of "low threat" discharge activities that have minimal potential for adverse water quality effects when implemented according to prescribed terms and conditions.

State Water Resources Control Board

The SWRCB and its nine RWQCBs administer water rights and enforce pollution control standards throughout the state. SWRCB is responsible for granting of water right permits and licenses through an appropriation process following public hearings and appropriate environmental review by applicants and responsible agencies. In granting water right permits and licenses, SWRCB must consider all beneficial uses, including water for downstream human and environmental needs. In addition to granting the water right permits needed to operate new water supply projects, SWRCB also issues water quality-related certifications to developers of water projects under Section 401 of the CWA.

Water Quality Control Plan for the Sacramento and San Joaquin Rivers (Basin Plan)

The *Water Quality Control Plan for the Sacramento and San Joaquin River Basins (Basin Plan)* (Central Valley RWQCB 2019) identifies the beneficial uses of water bodies and provides water quality objectives and standards for waters in the Sacramento and San Joaquin hydrologic regions. State and federal laws mandate protecting designated "beneficial uses" of water bodies. State law defines beneficial uses as "domestic; municipal; agricultural and industrial supply; power generation; recreation; aesthetic enjoyment; navigation; and preservation and enhancement of fish, wildlife, and other aquatic resources or preserves" (Water Code Section 13050[f]).

The Basin Plan describes a set of designated beneficial uses for each water body. Beneficial uses help to define the resources, services, and qualities of the aquatic systems. Beneficial uses also serve as a basis for establishing water quality objectives and discharge prohibitions. The beneficial uses of any specifically identified water body generally apply to all tributary streams to that water body. The Basin Plan contains specific numeric water quality objectives that are applicable to each water body or portions of water bodies. Objectives have been established for bacteria, dissolved

oxygen, pH, pesticides, electrical conductivity, total dissolved solids, temperature, turbidity, and trace elements. Numerous narrative water quality objectives have also been established. Finally, the Basin Plan contains a set of implementation plans, which represent the Central Valley RWQCB's programs and specific plans of action for meeting water quality objectives and protecting beneficial uses.

National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Permit System

Waste Discharge Requirements for Construction

The SWRCB's statewide NPDES *General Permit for Stormwater Discharges Associated with Construction and Land Disturbance Activities* (Construction General Permit) (Order WQ 2022-0057-DWQ, NPDES Permit No. CAS000002) is applicable to all construction activities that would disturb one acre of land or more. Construction activities subject to the Construction General Permit include clearing, grading, stockpiling, and excavation. Dischargers are required to eliminate or reduce non-stormwater discharges to storm sewer systems and other waters.

Through the NPDES and WDR process, SWRCB seeks to ensure that the construction and post-construction conditions at a project site do not cause or contribute to direct or indirect impacts on water quality (i.e., pollution and/or hydromodification) upstream and downstream. To comply with the requirements of the Construction General Permit, project applicants must file a notice of intent with the SWRCB to obtain coverage under the permit; prepare a SWPPP; and implement inspection, monitoring, and reporting requirements appropriate to the project's risk level as specified in the SWPPP. The SWPPP includes a site map, describes construction activities and potential pollutants, and identifies BMPs that would be employed to prevent soil erosion and discharge of other construction-related pollutants that could contaminate nearby water resources, such as petroleum products, solvents, paints, and cement. Construction activities subject to the general construction activity permit include clearing, grading, stockpiling, and excavation. Dischargers are required to eliminate or reduce non-stormwater discharges to storm sewer systems and other waters. The permit also requires dischargers to consider the use of post-construction permanent BMPs that will remain in service to protect water quality throughout the lifespan of the project. All NPDES permits also have inspection, monitoring, and reporting requirements.

Waste Discharge Requirements for Operation

The SWRCB's Municipal Storm Water Permitting Program regulates stormwater discharges from municipal separate stormwater systems. USEPA defines an MS4 as a stormwater conveyance or system of conveyances including roads with drainage systems, municipal streets, catch basins, curbs, gutters, ditches, man-made channels, or storm drains. The SWRCB and the nine RWQCBs implement and enforce NPDES Phase I MS4 permits (serving municipalities over 100,000 people), and Phase II Small MS4 permits (for municipalities less than 100,000 people, and including non-traditional Small MS4s for such facilities such as military bases, public campuses, and prison and hospital complexes). The MS4 Permit specifies the actions necessary to reduce the discharge of pollutants in stormwater to the maximum extent practicable, in a manner designed to

achieve compliance with water quality standards and objectives, and methods to effectively prohibit non-stormwater discharges into municipal storm drain systems and watercourses within the permittees' jurisdictions.

The Central Valley RWQCB adopted a region-wide MS4 Phase 1 Permit on June 23, 2016. Sacramento County is a permittee under the MS4 Phase I permit, Order No. R5-2016-0040, *National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Permit and Waste Discharge Requirements General Permit for Discharges from Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems*, as amended by Order No. R5-2016-0040-010. Sacramento County and the Cities of Rancho Cordova, Folsom, Elk Grove, Citrus Heights, Galt, and Sacramento are co-permittees to the Sacramento Areawide NPDES MS4 permit. The permittees collectively formed the Sacramento Stormwater Quality Partnership (SSQP), to coordinate and implement permit compliance activities. A *Stormwater Quality Improvement Plan* developed for compliance with the NPDES permit is the guiding document for the permittees (SSQP 2009) and describes the activities that will be implemented to reduce pollutant discharges in urban runoff to the maximum extent practicable.

The SSQP subsequently prepared a *Hydromodification Management Plan* (SSQP 2017) that describes how the agencies intend to implement hydromodification management in accordance with the MS4 Permit to protect receiving streams from increased potential for erosion and other adverse impacts. The northern half of the Specific Plan Area is situated in an area that is subject to the requirements of the Hydromodification Management Plan (SSQP 2021). The *Sacramento Region Stormwater Quality Design Manual* (Stormwater Quality Design Manual) (SSQP 2021) is currently the guiding technical design document for development and major redevelopment in the Sacramento region. Post-construction stormwater quality controls for new development require the use of control measures set forth in the Stormwater Quality Design Manual. This includes sizing and design criteria for regional detention basins and design and maintenance criteria for on-site stormwater quality source, treatment, and runoff reduction measures.

The MS4 Permit specifies the actions necessary to reduce the discharge of pollutants in stormwater to the maximum extent practicable, in a manner designed to achieve compliance with water quality standards and objectives, and methods to effectively prohibit non-stormwater discharges into municipal storm drain systems and watercourses within the permittees' jurisdictions. The SSQP's Stormwater Quality Design Manual describes the methods by which new development and redevelopment will achieve compliance with the MS4 Permit. These methods include site design, source control, runoff reduction, stormwater treatment, and hydromodification management. Low Impact Development (LID) BMPs are also required. These BMPs must be designed to reduce runoff, treat stormwater, and provide hydromodification management to the extent feasible. The Stormwater Quality Design Manual provides specific LID site design measures as well as numeric sizing criteria for storm water retention and treatment. After implementation of site design measures, remaining runoff from impervious surfaces must be directed to one or more facilities designed to infiltrate, evapotranspire, and/or bioretain the runoff. The permit also includes site-specific water quality monitoring requirements

and reporting using the Stormwater Multiple Application and Report Tracking (SMARTS) System.

Sustainable Groundwater Management Act

In 2014, the California Legislature enacted a three-bill law (Assembly Bill 1739, Senate Bill [SB] 1168, and SB 1319), known as the SGMA. The SGMA is intended to empower local agencies to adopt groundwater sustainability plans that are tailored to the resources and needs of their communities, such that sustainable management would provide a buffer against drought and climate change, and ensure reliable water supplies regardless of weather patterns. The SGMA and corresponding regulations require that each high- and medium-priority groundwater basin is operated to a sustainable yield, balancing natural and artificial groundwater recharge with groundwater use to ensure undesirable results such as chronic lowering of groundwater levels, loss of storage, water quality impacts, land subsidence, and impacts to hydraulically connected streams do not occur. The SGMA is considered part of the statewide, comprehensive California Water Action Plan that includes water conservation, water recycling, expanded water storage, safe drinking water, and wetlands and watershed restoration.

California's 515 groundwater basins are classified into one of four categories; high-, medium-, low-, or very low-priority based on components identified in the California Water Code Section 10933(b). Basin priority determines which provisions of California Statewide Groundwater Elevation Monitoring (CASGEM) and the SGMA apply in a basin.

The SGMA required that local agencies form one or more Groundwater Sustainability Agencies to develop and implement Groundwater Sustainability Plans in high- and medium-priority groundwater basins throughout the State. Groundwater Sustainability Plans are not required for low- or very low-priority basins. Agencies located within high- or medium-priority basins were required to adopt GSPs by January 31, 2020 or January 31, 2022, respectively.[3] Local agencies have 20 years to fully implement GSPs.

The North American Subbasin is a high-priority basin. A Groundwater Sustainability Plan for the North American Subbasin has been prepared (GEI Consultants 2021) and was approved by DWR in 2023.

Local

Sacramento County General Plan

The *Sacramento County General Plan of 2005–2030* (Sacramento County 2011, as updated in 2017) includes the following policies related to hydrology and water quality that apply to the proposed Specific Plan.

[3] Unless the local agency submitted an Alternative as defined in the SGMA which has been approved by DWR.

CONSERVATION ELEMENT

Policy CO-1. Support conjunctive use water supply for development.

Policy CO-7. Support the Water Forum Agreement Groundwater Management Element. Prior to approving any new development, a water supply plan shall be approved that demonstrates consistency with an adopted groundwater management plan.

Policy CO-13. Support the Water Forum Agreement Conservation Element and the California Urban Water Conservation Council Best Management Practices for Water Conservation.

Policy CO-16. Ensure developments are consistent with the County Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance, which shall be updated as needed to conform to state law.

Policy CO-23. Development approval shall be subject to a finding regarding its impact on valuable water-supported ecosystems.

Policy CO-24. Comply with the Sacramento Areawide National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Municipal Stormwater Permit (NPDES Municipal Permit) or subsequent permits, issued by the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Board) to the County, and the Cities of Sacramento, Elk Grove, Citrus Heights, Folsom, Rancho Cordova, and Galt (collectively known as the Sacramento Stormwater Quality Partnership [SSQP]).

Policy CO-25. Support the preservation, restoration, and creation of riparian corridors, wetlands, and buffer zones.

Policy CO-26. Protect areas susceptible to erosion, natural water bodies, and natural drainage systems.

Policy CO-27. Support surface water quality monitoring programs that identify and address causes of water quality degradation.

Policy CO-28. Comply with other water quality regulations and NPDES permits as they apply to County projects or activities, such as the State's Construction General Permit and Aquatic Pesticides Permit.

Policy CO-29. Continue to support the County's participation in regional NPDES Municipal Permit compliance activities through collaborative efforts such as the Sacramento Stormwater Quality Partnership.

Policy CO-30. Require development projects to comply with the County's stormwater development/design standards, including hydromodification management and low impact development standards, established pursuant to the NPDES Municipal Permit. Low impact development design and associated landscaping may serve multiple purposes including reduction of water demand, retention of runoff, reduced flooding, and enhanced groundwater recharge.

Policy CO-31. Require property owners to maintain all required stormwater measures to ensure proper performance for the life of the project.

Policy CO-34. Development applications shall be subject to compliance with applicable sections of the California Water Code and Government Code to determine the availability of an adequate and reliable water supply through the Water Supply Assessment and Written Verification processes.

Policy CO-35. New development that will generate additional water demand shall not be approved and building permits shall not be issued if sufficient water supply is not available, as demonstrated by a Water Supply Assessment and Written Verification processes.

Policy CO-70. Community Plans, Specific Plans, Master Plans and development projects shall be reviewed for applicability of protection zones identified in this Element, including the Floodplain Protection Zone, Stream Corridor Ordinance, Cosumnes River Protection Combining Zone and the Laguna Creek Combining Zone.

Policy CO-71. Development design shall help protect natural resources by:

- Minimizing total built development in the floodplain, while designing areas of less frequent use that can support inundation to be permitted in the floodplain.
- Ensuring development adjacent to stream corridors and vernal pools provide, where physically reasonable, a public street paralleling at least one side of the corridor with vertical curbs, gutters, foot path, street lighting, and post and cable barriers to prevent vehicular entry.
- Projects adjacent to rivers and streams shall integrate amenities, such as trail connectivity, that will serve as benefits to the community and ecological function.
- Development adjacent to steam corridors and vernal pools shall be designed in such a manner as to prevent unauthorized vehicular entry into protected areas.

Policy CO-73. Secure easement or fee title to open space lands within stream corridors as a condition of development approval.

Policy CO-93. Discourage fill in the 100-year floodplain.

Policy CO-94. Development within the 100-year floodplain and designated floodway of Sacramento streams, sloughs, creeks or rivers shall be:

- Consistent with policies to protect wetlands and riparian areas; and
- Limited to land uses that can support seasonal inundation.

Policy CO-95. Development within the 100-year floodplain should occur in concert with the development of the Floodplain Protection Zone.

Policy CO-105a. Encourage flood management designs that respect the natural topography and vegetation of waterways while retaining flow and functional integrity.

Policy CO-106. Realigned or modified channels should retain topographic diversity including maintaining meandering characteristics, varied berm width, naturalized side slope, and varied channel bottom elevation.

Policy CO-107. Maintain and protect natural function of channels in developed, newly developing, and rural areas.

Policy CO-108. Channel lowering should occur after consideration of alternatives and only when it is necessary to accommodate the gravity drainage of storm runoff and/or accommodate flood flows under existing bridge structures.

Policy CO-109. Channel modifications should not prevent minimum water flows necessary to protect and enhance fish habitats, native riparian vegetation, water quality, or groundwater recharge.

Policy CO-110. Improvements in watercourses will be designed for low maintenance. Appropriate Manning's "n" 13 values will be used in design of the watercourses to reflect future vegetative growth (including mitigation plantings) associated with the low maintenance concept.

Policy CO-111. Channel modifications shall retain wetland and riparian vegetation whenever possible or otherwise recreate the natural channel consistent with the historical ecological integrity of the stream or river.

Policy CO-112. The use of concrete and impervious materials is discouraged where it is inconsistent with the existing adjacent watercourse and overall ecological function of the stream.

Policy CO-113. Encourage revegetation of native plant species appropriate to natural substrate conditions and avoid introduction of nonindigenous species.

Policy CO-114. Protect stream corridors to enhance water quality, provide public amenities, maintain flood control objectives, preserve and enhance habitat, and offer recreational and educational opportunities.

Policy CO-115. Provide setbacks along stream corridors and stream channels to protect riparian habitat functions.

- A functional setback of at least 100 feet and measured from the outside edge of the stream bank should be retained on each side of a stream corridor that prohibits development or agricultural activity. This buffer is necessary to protect riparian functions by allowing for the filtering of sediment, pesticides, phosphorus and

nitrogen, organic matter and other contaminates that are known to degrade water quality. This buffer also provides for the protection of vegetation along the stream bank which provides bank stability, erosion control and flood attenuation.

- A transitional setback of at least 50 feet in width beyond the functional buffer should be retained along all stream corridors. This buffer is necessary to protect hydrogeomorphic functions that regulate water temperature, regulate microclimate, maintain channel complexity and retain hydrologic flow regimes. This buffer also provides corridors to facilitate the movement of wildlife.
- An extended setback of at least 50 feet in width beyond the transitional setback should be retained along all stream corridors. This setback will allow for recreational uses such as bike, pedestrian and/or equestrian trails and will allow for the placement of infrastructure such as water and sewer lines.
- Stormwater discharge ponds or other features used for improving stormwater quality may be located within the extended or transitional setback area. However, in order to protect stream habitat and floodplain value, the width of the setback shall not be based upon the width of the pollutant discharge pond. The ponds shall be landscaped and maintained with vegetation native to the surrounding area. Detention ponds or other features implementing pollutant discharge requirements, other than approved regional stormwater quality practices that are designed and operated to complement the corridor functionally and aesthetically, are prohibited.
- Setback averaging within individual development projects or as otherwise specified in a County-adopted master plan will be permitted except when riparian woodland will be lost. The minimum width of setbacks cannot fall below 50 feet.
- Master drainage plans may provide for other standards that meet the intent of this policy.

Policy CO-117. Public roads, parking, and associated fill slopes shall be located outside of the stream corridor, except at stream crossings and for purposes of extending or setting back levees. The construction of public roads and parking should utilize structural materials to facilitate permeability. Crossings shall be minimized and be aesthetically compatible with naturalistic values of the stream channel.

Policy CO-118. Development adjacent to waterways should protect the water conveyance of the system, while preserving and enhancing the riparian habitat and its function.

Policy CO-120. Development projects adjacent to rivers and streams shall provide unencumbered maintenance access.

Policy CO-121. No grading, clearing, tree cutting, debris disposal or any other despoiling action shall be allowed in rivers and streams except for normal channel maintenance, restoration activities, and road crossings.

Policy CO-122. River and stream maintenance should allow natural vegetation in and along the channel to assist in removal of nutrients, pollutants, and sediment and to increase bank stabilization, while minimizing impacts on conveyance.

Policy CO-126. Prohibit obstruction or underground diversion of natural waterways.

SAFETY ELEMENT

Policy SA-5. A comprehensive drainage plan for major planning efforts shall be prepared for streams and their tributaries prior to any development within the 100-year floodplain, and/or the 200-year floodplain in areas subject to the Urban Level of Flood Protection, defined by full watershed development without channel modifications. The plan shall:

a. Determine the elevation of the future 100-year flood, and/or the 200-year flood in areas subject to the Urban Level of Flood Protection, associated with planned and full development of the watershed;

b. Determine the boundaries of the future 100-year floodplain, and/or the 200-year floodplain in areas subject to the Urban Level of Flood Protection, for both flood elevations (planned and full development) based on minimum 2-foot contour intervals;

c. Assess the feasibility of gravity drainage into the existing flowline of the stream;

d. Assess the feasibility of alternative means of drainage into the stream;

e. Identify potential locations for sedimentation ponds and other stormwater treatment facilities;

f. Determine practical channel improvements and/or detention basins to provide the flood control needs of the proposed development;

g. Determine the location and extent of marsh, vernal pool and riparian habitat;

h. Develop measures for protecting and mitigating natural habitat;

i. Develop measures for protecting and mitigating for federal and state-listed endangered species;

j. Develop and ensure implementation of measures that would reduce vector larvae;

k. Identify appropriate plant species to be included as part of the natural features of the comprehensive drainage plan.

Policy SA-9. New and modified bridge structures should minimize any increase in water surface elevations of the 100-year floodplain, or the 200-year floodplain in areas subject to the Urban Level of Flood Protection.

Policy SA-11. The County shall implement the improvement of natural drainage channels and certain floodplains for urbanized or urbanizing portions of the County to reduce local flooding. Such improvements shall comply with the General Plan policies contained in the Conservation Element, Urban Streams, and Channel Modification Section.

Policy SA-13. Where new upstream development in Sacramento County will increase or potentially impact runoff onto parcels downstream in a neighboring jurisdiction, such as the City of Sacramento, Sacramento County will coordinate with the appropriate neighboring jurisdiction to mitigate such impacts.

Policy SA-14. The County shall require, when deemed to be physically or ecologically necessary, all new urban development and redevelopment projects to incorporate runoff control measures to minimize peak flows of runoff and/or assist in financing or otherwise implementing Comprehensive Drainage Plans.

Policy SA-15. The County shall regulate, through zoning and other ordinances, land use and development in all areas subject to potential flooding and prohibit urban uses on unprotected flood land.

Policy SA-22a. Sacramento County will evaluate development projects and all new construction located within a defined Flood Hazard Zone (FHZ) to determine whether the 200-year Urban Level of Flood Protection or 100-year FEMA flood protection applies, and whether the proposed development or new construction is consistent with that standard. Prior to approval of development projects or new construction subject to either standard, the appropriate authority must make specific finding(s) related to the following:

a. Urban Level of Flood Protection standard (200-year) applies to projects in a Flood Hazard Zone that meet certain criteria, developed by the State of California Department of Water Resources, related to urbanization, watershed size, and potential flood depth.

b. Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) standard of protection (100-year) applies to projects in a Special Flood Hazard Area that are not subject to the Urban Level of Flood Protection.

Policy SA-22b. New development shall be elevated as required by the applicable flood standards (100-year, or 200-year in areas subject to the Urban Level of Flood Protection) and should be constructed to be resistant to flood damage consistent with the Floodplain Management Ordinance.

Sacramento County Land Grading and Erosion Control Ordinance

Sacramento County Code Title 16, Chapter 16.44, was enacted to minimize water quality degradation, minimize damage to and disruption of drainage flows, and to comply with the County's NPDES MS4 Permit. A Grading and Erosion Control Permit from the County is required if a project involves grading, filling, excavation, storage, or disposal of 350 cubic yards or more of soil or other earthen material, or if a project requires clearing and grubbing of one acre or more of land. Agricultural cropland is exempt from this requirement. The permit application must include copies of all applicable state and federal permits (such as CWA Section 404 permits for fill of wetlands), and proposed grading plans that include the following information (among other requirements):

- location of all watercourses, wetlands, and drainage systems;
- location of all roads and structures;
- proposed grading, slopes, and elevation shown by contours;
- quantity of material to be excavated;
- location, implementation schedule, and maintenance schedule of all erosion control measures and sediment control measures to be implemented or constructed prior to, during, or after the proposed activity;
- description of measures designed to control dust and stabilize the construction site road and entrance; and
- description of the location and methods of storage and disposal of construction materials.

Sacramento County Floodplain Management Ordinance

Sacramento County's Floodplain Management Ordinance (Sacramento County Code Title IX and Chapter 15.104) requires construction in flood hazard areas to be elevated at least 18 inches above the base flood elevation and generally prohibits development within regulatory floodways. The County requires a Floodplain Management Permit for any new construction, substantial improvements, or alteration of land within a special flood hazard area (FEMA Zones A, AO, Al-A30, AE, A99, AH, or AR). These standards control filling, grading, and other development which may increase flood damage; and are intended to prevent or regulate the construction of flood barriers that would unnaturally divert flood waters, or which may increase flood hazards in other areas. Per the Floodplain Management Ordinance, Section 905-01, a project applicant must apply for a Floodplain Management Permit for construction in any FEMA special flood hazard area, or local flood hazard area, and approval by the County's floodplain administrator is required. The permit application must include plans showing, among other things:

- elevations of proposed structures and the elevations of areas proposed for materials and equipment storage;
- the proposed elevation in relation to mean sea level, of the lowest floor of all structures;
- the proposed elevation in relation to mean sea level to which any structure will be floodproofed;
- the location, volume, and depth of proposed fill and excavation within the 100-year floodplain and floodway; and
- a description of the extent to which any watercourse will be altered or relocated as a result of project development.

Sacramento County Stormwater Ordinance

The County has established a Stormwater Ordinance (Sacramento County Code Chapter 15.12). The Stormwater Ordinance prohibits the discharge of unauthorized stormwater to the County's stormwater conveyance system and local creeks. It applies to all private and public projects in the county, regardless of size or land use type.

Stormwater Quality Design Manual for the Sacramento Region

The Sacramento Stormwater Quality Partnership, which includes Sacramento County and the Cities of Citrus Heights, Elk Grove, Folsom, Galt, Rancho Cordova, and Sacramento, has prepared a Stormwater Quality Design Manual for the Sacramento Region (Sacramento Stormwater Quality Design Partnership [SSQP] 2021). This manual is intended to satisfy the regulatory requirements of each jurisdiction's respective municipal stormwater permits. The manual outlines planning tools and requirements to reduce urban runoff pollution to the maximum extent practicable from new development and redevelopment projects.

New development is required to include treatment of urban runoff using the BMPs defined in the *Stormwater Quality Design Manual for the Sacramento Region*. The BMPs include a number of options for treatment, from simple grassy swales and rain gardens to more complex systems that use cisterns, pumps, and sand filters.

Sacramento Hydromodification Management Plan

The Sacramento County Stormwater Quality Partnership's *Hydromodification Management Plan* requires that projects within most areas must incorporate LID measures from a menu of improvements based on a credit system.

Impacts and Analysis

Significance Criteria

Based on Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, the proposed Specific Plan would have a significant impact related to hydrology and water quality if it would:

- violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality;
- substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin;
- substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would:
  i) result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site;
  ii) substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or offsite;
  iii) create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff; or
  iv) impede or redirect flood flows;
- in flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation; or
- conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan.

Issues Not Discussed Further

Risk Release of Pollutants from Inundation in a Tsunami or Seiche

The Specific Plan Area is not situated within a tsunami or seiche hazard zone; thus, there would be **no impact** related to these hazards.

Impact HWQ-1: Violate Water Quality Standards or Substantially Degrade Surface or Groundwater Quality

Construction

Construction associated with development in the Specific Plan Area would require demolition of existing buildings and existing paved parking areas and roadways, excavating, trenching, grading, staging construction equipment, and stockpiling materials, which would temporarily disturb surface soils. These activities would expose soil to the erosive forces of wind and water. The soil could be transported via overland flow to area waterways, and via stormwater drainage facilities to the North Sacramento Streams Group, NEMDC/Steelhead Creek, and ultimately to the Sacramento River, thereby increasing turbidity and degrading water quality.

Earthmoving activities associated with future development within the Specific Plan Area would require grading permits and thus subject to the County's Land Grading and Erosion Control Ordinance (Sacramento County Code Chapter 16.44). Although construction of

underground utilities does not require a grading permit, earthmoving activities associated with underground utilities are still subject to the standards and requirements contained in the County's Land Grading and Erosion Control Ordinance and Sacramento County Stormwater Ordinance (Sacramento County Code Chapter 15.12). Sacramento County Code Chapter 16.44 requires plans that must provide the location of on-site and surrounding watercourses and wetlands; the location, implementation schedule, and maintenance schedule of all erosion control measures and sediment control measures to be implemented or constructed prior to, during, or after the proposed construction activity; a description of measures designed to control dust and stabilize the construction site road and entrance; and a description of the location and methods of storage and disposal of construction materials. Control measures typically implemented to reduce the potential for construction-related erosion and potential sediment transport may include minimizing site disturbance, watering for dust control, controlling water flow from equipment wash water over the construction site, stabilizing bare soil, and ensuring proper site cleanup. Additional BMPs that could be implemented to reduce erosion may include silt fences, staked straw bales/wattles, silt/sediment basins and traps, geofabric, trench plugs, terraces, water bars, soil stabilizers and re-seeding and mulching to revegetate disturbed areas.

Future projects developed under the proposed Specific Plan would also be required to comply with the provisions of the SWRCB's National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) *General Permit for Storm Water Discharges Associated with Construction and Land Disturbance Activities* (Order WQ 2022-0057-DWQ, NPDES Permit No. CAS000002) (Construction General Permit). The Construction General Permit regulates stormwater discharges for construction activities under the CWA and applies to all land-disturbing construction activities that would disturb one acre or more of total land area. Project applicants must submit a notice of intent to discharge to the Central Valley RWQCB, and must prepare and implement a SWPPP that includes site-specific BMPs to minimize those discharges. All NPDES permits also have inspection, monitoring, and reporting requirements. The Central Valley RWQCB requires dischargers to implement construction and operational design features and BMPs that are specifically intended to reduce the potential for downstream hydromodification. The Construction General Permit also requires implementation of BMPs that are designed to prevent accidental spills of hazardous materials during the construction phase to the maximum extent practicable, and the SWPPP must include procedures for immediate cleanup should any releases occur.

With regard to the contaminated groundwater plume at Sacramento McClellan Airport, a small portion of which is located within the Specific Plan Area at the southern end along Myrtle Avenue, groundwater at this location is approximately 100–120 feet below the ground surface (DWR 2024). Therefore, construction activities in the Specific Plan Area, which would extend to a maximum depth of 20 feet below the ground surface for power poles or tall building foundations, would not encounter groundwater, including the contaminated groundwater plume.

Operation

Development in the Specific Plan Area could result in a minor increase in long-term operational discharges of urban contaminants into the stormwater drainage system and ultimate receiving waters compared to existing conditions, because most of the Specific Plan Area is already covered with buildings and pavement. More than 80 percent of Specific Plan Area properties are developed and fewer than 20 percent of the Specific Plan Area is vacant land. Construction within the Specific Plan Area could affect long-term water quality by adding impervious surfaces and additional urban stormwater runoff. New development has the potential to alter the types, quantities, and timing of contaminant discharges in stormwater runoff. Changes to a more developed state, if not properly managed, can adversely affect water quality. Sediment, trash, organic contaminants, nutrients, trace metals, and oil and grease compounds can degrade receiving water quality. Sources of these pollutants may be erosion from disturbed areas, deposition of atmospheric particles derived from automobiles or industrial sources, corrosion or decay of building materials, rainfall contact with toxic substances, and accidental spills of toxic materials on surfaces that receive rainfall and generate runoff. Specifically, sources of sediment from development include streets and parking lots, as well as destabilized landscape areas and disturbed areas where vegetation has been removed during the grading process. Sediments, in addition to being contaminants in their own right, transport other contaminants, such as trace metals, nutrients, and hydrocarbons that adsorb to suspended sediment particles. Urban contaminants typically accumulate during the dry season and may be washed off when adequate rainfall returns in the fall to produce a “first flush” of runoff. The amount of contaminants discharged in stormwater drainage from developed areas varies based on a variety of factors, including the intensity of urban uses such as vehicle traffic, types of activities occurring (e.g., office, commercial, industrial), types of contaminants used at a given location (e.g., pesticides, herbicides, cleaning agents, petroleum byproducts), contaminants deposited on paved surfaces, and the amount of rainfall. The major factor in this increase is the added amount of impervious surfaces, primarily taking the form of parking lots, driveways, streets, rooftops, and sidewalks.

Sacramento County has an NPDES Municipal Stormwater (MS4) Permit issued by the Central Valley RWQCB (Order No. R5-2016-0040-010). To comply with TMDLs established by the Basin Plan, the Municipal Stormwater Permit requires the County to reduce pollutants in operational stormwater discharges to the maximum extent practicable, and to effectively prohibit non-stormwater discharges, through management practices, control techniques and systems, design and engineering methods, and other such provisions. The County has adopted a Stormwater Management and Discharge Control Ordinance (Sacramento County Code Chapter 15.12), to implement the provisions of the MS4 permit. The ordinance requires dischargers to implement site-specific BMPs designed to reduce pollutants in operational stormwater runoff. The ordinance also includes inspection and monitoring requirements. The northern half of the Specific Plan Area is situated within an area that is subject to the County’s hydromodification management requirements, the requirements of which are set forth in detail in the *Stormwater Quality Design Manual for the Sacramento Region* (SSQP 2021). Furthermore, the County requires implementation of Low Impact Development (LID)

techniques designed to provide stormwater pre-treatment prior to discharge into the County storm drainage system. LID is a stormwater management strategy that emphasizes conservation and use of existing natural site features integrated with distributed, small-scale stormwater controls to more closely mimic natural hydrologic patterns in residential, commercial, and industrial settings. LID measures are typically integrated into site landscaping (including open space, yards, streetscapes, road medians, and parking lot and sidewalk planters) or into the design of paved and other impervious areas. The types of site-specific BMPs and LID techniques that may be implemented in the context of each development project, or that could be implemented by the County to provide areawide benefit to existing and new development, are contained in the *Stormwater Quality Design Manual for the Sacramento Region* (SSQP 2021). Examples include performance standards, source control BMPs, treatment BMPs, structural BMPs, operational BMPs, building material specifications or limitations, site design requirements, signage and marking, and associated maintenance programs or schedules.

In conclusion, compliance with the above-listed regulations, standards, ordinances, and permit terms would require future development projects to reduce pollution and stormwater runoff generated within the Specific Plan Area through implementation of operation-related LID technologies, hydromodification management, BMPs, and pre-treatment, along with preparation of a SWPPP with associated BMPs designed to control construction-related erosion and pollutants. Furthermore, preservation and restoration of stream corridors through the Specific Plan Area, which may include naturalized drainage features and habitat restoration as noted in the Specific Plan, would also help to protect water quality and preserve hydrologic functions. All the above measures would protect water quality as required by the Basin Plan. Therefore, implementation of the proposed Specific Plan would not violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality, and this impact would be **less than significant**.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required.

Impact HWQ-2: Impede Sustainable Groundwater Management of the Basin by Substantially Decreasing Groundwater Supplies or Interfering with Groundwater Recharge

Nearly all of the Specific Plan Area is developed with impervious surfaces in the form of buildings and pavement. Although a few undeveloped sites exist, most of the proposed development in the Specific Plan Area would involve redevelopment of existing impervious sites. Furthermore, the existing stream corridors associated with the North Sacramento Streams Group, which are the primary source of groundwater recharge, would be preserved, although the proposed Specific Plan could include trails and other recreational and open space improvements along the creek corridors. Thus, only a minor increase in impervious surfaces would occur with buildout of the Specific Plan, which would not substantially interfere with groundwater recharge.

Water for the Specific Plan Area is supplied now, and would continue to be supplied in the future, by the Sacramento Suburban Water District (SSWD). The Specific Plan Area is situated within SSWD's North Service Area. Groundwater is the primary source of water for the North Service Area. SSWD has a total of 82 active groundwater wells, 31 of which provide water for its North Service Area. The entirety of SSWD's service area is within the Sacramento Valley Groundwater Basin, North American Subbasin. Groundwater in the Specific Plan Area is managed by the Sacramento Groundwater Authority, which is a joint powers agency comprised of the cities of Citrus Heights, Folsom, and Sacramento, and the County of Sacramento. The Sacramento Groundwater Authority manages groundwater in accordance with the Water Forum Agreement, and the adopted Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GEI Consultants Inc. 2021) as required by the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act. The North American Subbasin is not in a condition of overdraft (Brown and Caldwell 2021).

Wood Rodgers (2026a) was retained to prepare a *Domestic Water Study* (Water Study) for the Specific Plan Area. The Water Study examined existing water demand in the Specific Plan Area and estimated water demand from development and fire flow available for development under the proposed Specific Plan, including:

- Average day demand = 1,542,289 gallons per day (1,727 acre-feet per year [afy])
- Maximum day demand = 2,930,350 gallons per day (2,035 gallons per minute)

In addition, water is required to meet fire flow requirements for the Specific Plan Area, which were assumed to range from 2,500 to 3,000 gallons per minute for 2 hours at the fire hydrant.

SSWD's *2020 Urban Water Management Plan* (UWMP) (Brown and Caldwell 2021) demonstrates water supply reliability in SSWD's service area for normal years, single-dry years, and droughts lasting at least 5 years over a 20-year planning horizon as required by California Water Code Sections 10631–10635. As shown in Table UT-1 (Chapter 18, "Utilities and Service Systems"), SSWD projects that it will have a water surplus of more than 54,000 afy in normal water years. In single-dry and multiple-dry years, SSWD has a surplus of over 9,000 afy (Brown and Caldwell 2021). Therefore, SSWD has sufficient water supply in all water year types to meet its existing and projected water demands, including the increased demand for potable water and fire flow from the proposed Specific Plan. Even after providing water for the projected infill and redevelopment in the Specific Plan Area, SSWD would still have a surplus of more than 7,000 afy in dry and multiple-dry years. Therefore, additional groundwater pumping from the North American Subbasin would not be required to supply the proposed Specific Plan, and thus the proposed Specific Plan would not substantially decrease groundwater supplies or impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin, and this impact would be **less than significant**.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required.

Impact HWQ-3: Substantially Alter Drainage Patterns or Add Impervious Surface Resulting in Substantial Erosion or Siltation

As discussed in detail in Impact HWQ-1 above, future development within the Specific Plan Area would result in excavation and grading activities during construction. Earthmoving activities at each site could result in erosion and siltation. However, as discussed in detail in Impact HWQ-1 above, each project applicant would be required to comply with Sacramento County Code Chapter 16.44 (Land Grading and Erosion Control) by preparing and submitting a Grading and Erosion Control Plan to the County Engineering Department for review and approval prior to issuance of building permits. The plan must contain BMPs that would be implemented to control erosion and off-site sediment transport. Projects that would disturb one acre or more would also be required to comply with the requirements of the SWRCB's Construction General Permit, which would require preparation of a SWPPP and implementation of site-specific BMPs designed to control construction-related erosion and sedimentation.

During the operational phase, a minor increase in impervious surfaces could occur that would result in increased stormwater runoff, which could result in downstream off-site erosion and siltation in existing streams and drainage channels. However, project applicants must comply with the County's Stormwater Management and Discharge Control Ordinance (Sacramento County Code Chapter 15.12) and implement source-control, LID, and hydromodification management BMPs (per the SSQP's Stormwater Quality Design Manual) as required by the MS4 Permit to protect water quality during a project's operational phase. Therefore, implementation of the proposed Specific Plan would not result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site, and this impact would be **less than significant**.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required.

Impact HWQ-4: Substantially Alter Drainage Patterns or Add Impervious Surfaces That Would Exceed Storm Drainage Systems, Substantially Increase the Rate or Amount of Surface Runoff Resulting in Flooding On- or Off-site, or Substantially Degrade Water Quality

Drainage System Capacity Analysis

As discussed in the Environmental Setting, there is an existing network of stormwater drainage facilities within the Specific Plan Area. The stormwater drainage conveyance facilities consist of underground pipelines, open channels, and watercourses. Stormwater also moves via overland flow.

Wood Rodgers was retained to prepare a *Master Drainage Study* (Wood Rodgers 2026b), which includes both a hydrologic analysis (related to stormwater runoff) and a hydraulic analysis (related to flooding) for the planned development in the Specific Plan Area. A summary of the results of the *Master Drainage Study* is presented below.

The results of the existing conditions modeling found that many locations within the existing storm drain system are undersized and are not able convey existing conditions flow as required by current published County drainage standards. Throughout all of the watersheds in the Specific Plan Area, existing conditions modeling demonstrated that 100-year water surface elevations exceeded the storm drainage rim or grate elevation, resulting in flooding of streets that was either within 1 foot of adjacent pad elevations or would completely inundate the street and therefore would not provide a drivable lane for emergency access vehicles.

For the proposed conditions modeling, watershed boundaries and parameters were created to reflect existing development plus anticipated future development in the Specific Plan Area. Two scenarios were modeled for the proposed conditions to address stormwater drainage system deficiencies:

1. Mitigation Scenario: Identifies drainage infrastructure improvements that new development projects within the Specific Plan Area would need to implement to offset their own increases in stormwater drainage (i.e., improvements required to avoid worsening existing conditions and required to reduce water surface elevations to existing conditions).

2. System Correction Scenario: Identifies the additional improvements needed to address existing deficiencies in the storm drain system and to ensure the system meets current County standards.

Both scenarios were modeled using County standards specified in the Sacramento City/County Drainage Manual (Sacramento County Department of Water Resources and City of Sacramento Division of Engineering Services 1996).

Two types of drainage improvements were identified to achieve the required reduction for the additional runoff volume that would result from the increase in impervious area within the Specific Plan Area and to meet the criteria listed in both scenarios above: (1) detention basins to capture additional runoff volume; and (2) replacement of storm drains with larger diameter pipes.

All proposed detention basins were modeled assuming 4:1 side slopes, a 3:1 length to width ratio, a gravity outlet, and to provide required freeboard for the 100-year 24-hour storm event. The final locations of any detention basins would be determined at the development project improvement plan stage. One detention basin for each of the surface water bodies within the Specific Plan Area plus Arcade Creek, would be needed, for a total of eight detention basins. Table HWQ-2 shows the total amount of detention basin storage and the linear feet of stormwater drainage improvements that would be needed under both modeled scenarios.

Table HWQ-2. Proposed Drainage System Improvements

Surface Waterbody (Modeled as Subwatershed)	Detention Basins (acre feet)		Drainage Pipelines (linear feet)	
	Mitigation Scenario	System Correction Scenario	Mitigation Scenario	System Correction Scenario
Arcade Creek	4.8	21.0	3,350	8,670
Magpie Creek	8.6	8.6	4,580	12,860
Unnamed Creek 01	8.4	8.4	510	770
Unnamed Creek 02	3.3	3.4	660	790
Unnamed Creek 03	12.0	12.0	2,260	3,290
Robla Creek	10.3	10.3	1,130	4,120
Unnamed Creek 04	10.7	10.7	2,440	2,910
Unnamed Creek 05	9.8	9.8	1,040	2,380

Source: Wood Rodgers 2026b:Table 3

Modeling results also demonstrate that the peak flow rates for each creek at the downstream limits of the Specific Plan Area with the proposed improvements would reduce peak flow rates under future developed conditions to a level that would be below existing conditions, for both modeled scenarios (Table HWQ-3).

Table HWQ-3. Developed Conditions Peak Flow Rates

Surface Waterbody (Modeled as Subwatershed)	Existing Conditions (cfs)	Mitigation Scenario (cfs)	Difference in Flow (cfs)	System Correction Scenario (cfs)	Difference in Flow (cfs)
Arcade Creek	372.0	371.8	**-0.2**	305.7	**-66.3**
Magpie Creek	1,034.7	1,012.2	**-22.5**	1,019.3	**-15.4**
Unnamed Creek 01	146.6	54.9	**-91.7**	55.1	**-91.5**
Unnamed Creek 02	80.9	68.1	**-12.8**	71.3	**-9.6**
Unnamed Creek 03	700.5	646.3	**-54.2**	648	**-52.5**
Robla Creek	389.8	386.3	**-3.5**	386.3	**-0.5**
Unnamed Creek 04	158.2	136.1	**-22.1**	153.5	**-4.7**
Unnamed Creek 05	144.8	87.6	**-57.2**	122.0	**-22.8**

Note: cfs = cubic feet per second
Source: Wood Rodgers 2026b:Table 4

Hydromodification

The change in runoff characteristics from a watershed caused by changes in land use conditions (i.e., urbanization) is known as hydromodification. If development projects do not address this change in runoff characteristics, a variety of problems can result including erosion and sedimentation. Development in the Specific Plan Area is subject to the requirements of the SSQP's Hydromodification Management Plan (SSQP 2021). In

Sacramento County, storms with increased potential for erosion (hydromodification) have been defined as storms producing 25 percent of the peak runoff of a 2-year storm up to and including the 2-year storm event. Wood Rodgers (2026b) evaluated the proposed Specific Plan's conformance with County hydromodification objectives using modeling that incorporates the proposed detention basins listed in Table HWQ-2. Modeling results shown in Table HWQ-3 demonstrate that the Specific Plan would meet hydromodification objectives through proposed outlet configurations at the proposed detention basins. Basin outlet configurations to ensure compliance with hydromodification objectives would be designed during the improvement plan stage for future development projects under the proposed Specific Plan.

Water Quality and Low Impact Development

Water quality treatment and LID measures are intended to promote evapotranspiration, infiltration, harvest/use, and bio-treatment (extended contact time with plant mediums) with the intent to compensate for changes in runoff due to land use changes. The *Stormwater Quality Design Manual for the Sacramento Region* (SSQP 2021) would serve as the regulatory document related to reducing the discharge of pollutants associated with stormwater drainage systems in the Specific Plan Area. The required treatment water quality volume and LID points would be calculated for each project using the County's LID Credits spreadsheet, and it is anticipated that LID credits for proposed improvement projects would be met through a combination of measures per the *Stormwater Quality Design Manual*. The final water quality methods and details would be determined at the improvement plans stage for individual projects within the Specific Plan Area, along with analyses as required by the County.

Summary

The County Department of Water Resources would evaluate future development projects within the Specific Plan Area on a case-by-case basis. Drainage infrastructure upgrades would be determined for future individual projects in accordance with Sacramento County Improvement Standards during the improvement plan process. The County's Stormwater Ordinance (prohibits the discharge of unauthorized stormwater to the County's stormwater conveyance system and local creeks. The County requires compliance with the Stormwater Quality Design Manual for the Sacramento Region , which identifies tools and requirements to reduce urban runoff pollution to the maximum extent practicable from new development and redevelopment projects. New development is required to include treatment of urban runoff using the BMPs defined in the Stormwater Quality Design Manual for the Sacramento Region. Because modeling has been performed to demonstrate that either detention basins or system-wide upgrades would appropriately detain peak flow rates, and would provide appropriate hydromodification management and water quality protection, and because individual projects under the proposed Specific Plan would be required to demonstrate consistency with adopted standards for stormwater management and water quality, this impact would be **less than significant**.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required.

IMPACT HWQ-5: SUBSTANTIALLY ALTER DRAINAGE PATTERNS OR ADD IMPERVIOUS SURFACE THAT WOULD IMPEDE OR REDIRECT FLOOD FLOWS OR RISK RELEASE OF POLLUTANTS DUE TO INUNDATION IN FLOOD HAZARD AREA

Most of the Specific Plan Area is developed, and there is an existing network of stormwater drainage facilities. The Master Drainage Study identifies improvements needed to avoid increasing stormwater drainage rates and reduce water surface elevations to existing conditions, including detention basins and replacement of storm drains with larger diameter pipes. The Drainage Study identifies improvements within each subwatershed and does not propose any overall changes in drainage patterns.

Most of the Specific Plan Area is outside of any mapped floodplains. The entirety of the Specific Plan Area is outside of the 200-year Urban Level of Flood Protection boundary. Areas along the north and middle branches of Robla Creek, and along Magpie Creek, have been classified by FEMA as special flood hazard Zones AE, AH, and Regulatory Floodways (Plate HWQ-2) (FEMA 2012). However, none of the development within the Specific Plan Area is proposed to occur within Regulatory Floodways. Development within the Specific Plan Area that occurs within FEMA 100-year floodplains would be subject to the County's Floodplain Management Ordinance (Municipal Code Title 16, Chapter 16.02, Section 16.02.060 [Ordinance SZC-2016-0023]), which requires a Floodplain Management Permit for any new construction, substantial improvements, or alteration of land within a special flood hazard area (FEMA Zones A, AO, Al-A30, AE, A99, AH, or AR). The permit application must include plans showing elevations of proposed structures and the elevations of areas proposed for materials and equipment storage; the proposed elevation in relation to mean sea level, of the lowest floor of all structures; the proposed elevation in relation to mean sea level to which any structure will be floodproofed; the location, volume, and depth of proposed fill and excavation within the 100-year floodplain and floodway; and a description of the extent to which any watercourse will be altered or relocated as a result of project development. Approval by the County's floodplain administrator is required prior to issuance of the permit. Future development compliance with the County's Floodplain Management Ordinance would ensure that impacts from impedance of flood flows and risk of pollutant release due to inundation would be **less than significant**.

MITIGATION MEASURES

No mitigation measures are required.

IMPACT HWQ-6: CONFLICT WITH A WATER QUALITY CONTROL PLAN OR SUSTAINABLE GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT PLAN

WATER QUALITY CONTROL PLAN

As discussed in detail in Impact HWQ-1 above, future development projects within the Specific Plan Area are required to comply with federal and state construction stormwater regulations, including the SWRCB's Construction General Permit and the County

Municipal Code requirements related to grading, and would include operational stormwater quality design measures per the SSQP's Stormwater Quality Design Manual to comply with the County's MS4 Permit, that would protect surface water and groundwater quality. Therefore, the proposed Specific Plan would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of the Basin Plan (Central Valley RWQCB 2019) and this impact would be **less than significant**.

Sustainable Groundwater Management Plan

As discussed in detail in Impact HWQ-2 above, the increase in impervious surfaces from proposed future development within the Specific Plan Area would be minimal and therefore a substantial decrease in groundwater recharge from implementing the proposed Specific Plan would not occur. Furthermore, SSWD has sufficient groundwater supplies available to meet the water demand associated with its existing and projected future development, including development in the Specific Plan Area, in all water years, and would still have a substantial surplus supply of groundwater available. Therefore, the proposed Specific Plan would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of the *Groundwater Sustainability Plan for the North American Subbasin* (GEI Consultants, Inc. 2021) and this impact would be **less than significant**.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required.

11 LAND USE AND PLANNING

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the existing setting related to land use and planning in the North Watt Avenue Specific Plan Area, and the potential for the proposed Specific Plan to physically divide an established community, or result in physical impact from a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect.

ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

PROJECT BACKGROUND

The proposed Specific Plan encompasses approximately 705 acres along a 4-mile segment of Watt Avenue north of Interstate-80 (I-80) to Antelope Road/U Street in the North Highlands community of unincorporated Sacramento County. The Specific Plan Area consists of a developed urban corridor containing commercial, residential, light-industrial, and institutional uses, as well as vacant and undeveloped parcels. Existing development includes one-story and multi-story commercial structures, surface parking areas, multifamily housing, single-family residential neighborhoods and employment uses. Parcels vary in size, configuration, and use, and development intensity is not uniform across the Specific Plan Area. Built features include shopping centers, stand-alone commercial buildings, small offices, industrial buildings, public facilities, and residential subdivisions located east and north of Watt Avenue.

Development that has occurred along Watt Avenue reflects the historical intent to act as a supportive role to operations that formerly occurred at the adjacent McClellan Air Force Base. In other words, the area provides convenient auto access to uses that would have served employees at McClellan. Since the closure of the air force base and its associated redevelopment with industrial and office uses—now known as McClellan Park (i.e., the McClellan Air Force Base/Watt Avenue Redevelopment Plan)—the County has led several planning efforts that included community outreach and workshops, which resulted in various approved plans and development codes for the North Watt Avenue “Corridor” (as identified in the 2030 General Plan) and the North Highlands community as a whole. These plans and codes include the following:

- North Watt Avenue Beautification Master Plan (2000)
- North Highlands Town Center Development Code (2008)
- North Watt Avenue Corridor Plan (2012)
- Re-Imagine North Watt Corridor Plan (2025)

The proposed North Watt Avenue Specific Plan would supersede the North Highlands Town Center Development Code and the North Watt Avenue Corridor Plan. The proposed

Specific Plan generally upholds the vision and goals of the Corridor Plan. The proposed Specific Plan also aims to streamline the development process by updating the Corridor Plan development standards to remove barriers to infill development consistent with the Board of Supervisors' 2024 Resolution regarding Housing and Infill Development (Sacramento County 2024), which directs staff to increase corridor development that can be built by-right, and to provide a flexible framework for development that allows innovation and encourages creative approaches.

EXISTING AND ADJACENT LAND USES

The Specific Plan Area consists of developed, low-scale commercial uses with expansive parking areas fronting North Watt Avenue. The portion of the Specific Plan Area formerly known as the North Highlands Town Center, located along Freedom Park Drive between Watt Avenue and 32nd Street, consists of several vacant parcels and a mix of low-density residential, auto-oriented uses, and County landmarks, including the Aerospace Museum of California. The southern portion of the Specific Plan Area, south of the Union Pacific Railroad main line and west of Watt Avenue, encompasses the "McClellan Industrial Park," which consists of light industrial and office uses and the North Area Recovery Station (solid waste transfer facility).

Surrounding land uses consist of the former McClellan Air Force Base to the west (now redeveloped with industrial and office uses and known as McClellan Park), single-family residential neighborhoods to the north and east, and I-80 to the south.

EXISTING LAND USE DESIGNATIONS AND ZONING

The 2030 General Plan land use designations for the Specific Plan Area include:

Most of the Specific Plan Area has the Transit Oriented Development land use designation. For the entire Specific Plan Area, existing land use designations, along with allowable uses and densities/intensities include (Sacramento County 2026a):

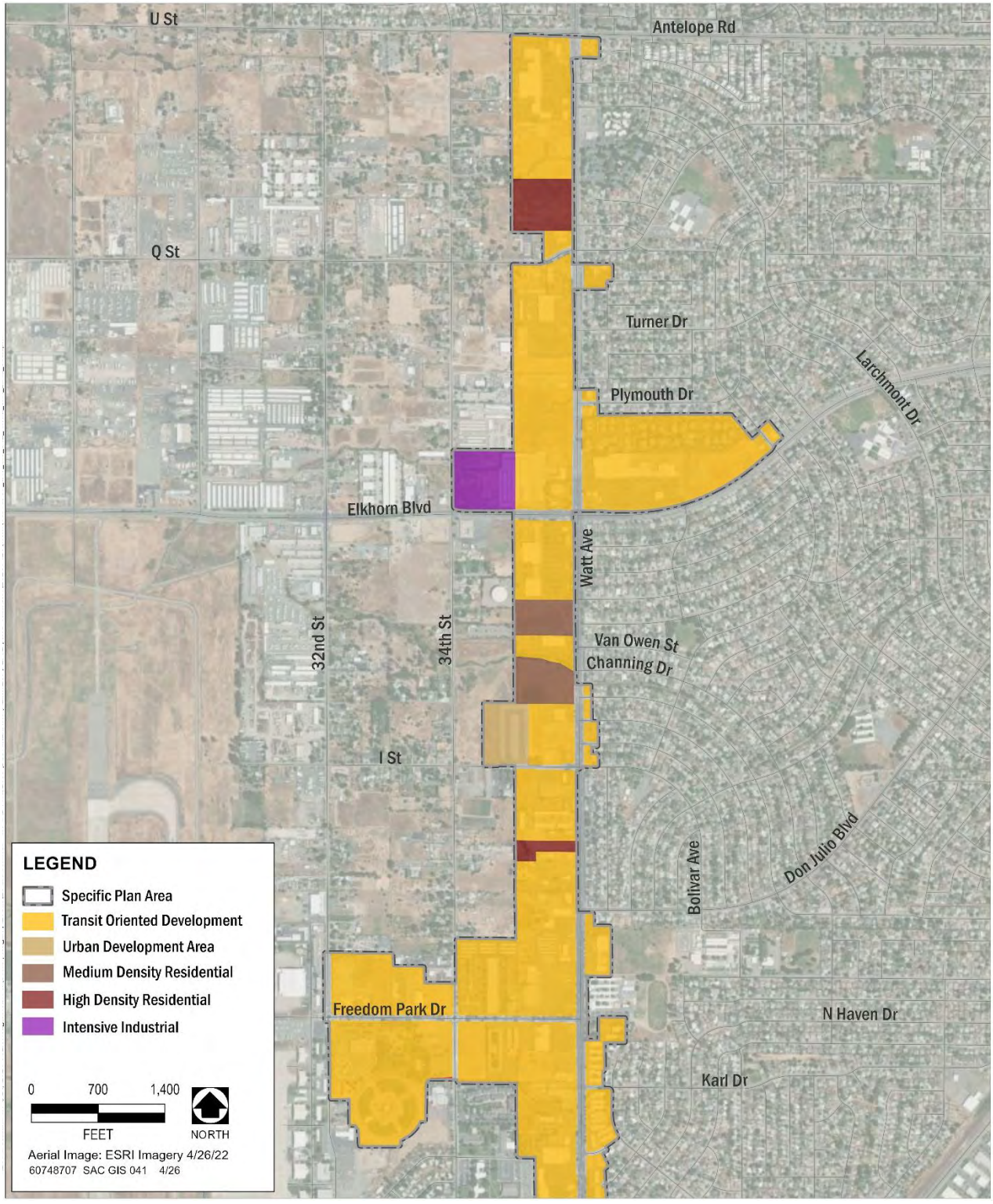
- **Transit Oriented Development**. The Transit Oriented designation delineates specific areas on the General Plan Land Use Diagram primarily associated with Transit Oriented Developments (TODs). However, the standards of this designation are appropriate for other developments that are near transit opportunities where a "pedestrian friendly" design is desired...The mix of uses can occur in a variety of ways; office or residential uses can be included in the same building, or possibly above retail (vertical mixed use). Mixing promotes functional integration of uses through vertical mixing or through site design. However, when differing uses are on the same site but separated by a wall or large expanse of parking, they are "multiple use" projects. These projects do not meet the intent of the mixed use designation because they lack the necessary functional integration.
- **Urban Development Area**. The Urban Development Area (UDA) designation indicates where the County will conduct studies leading to the appropriate configuration of urban land uses for the area, or will accept applications to prepare a Master Plan (such as a Specific Plan) for the area. These are areas that will be

converted to urban uses to accommodate the growth that is projected to occur during the 25-year planning period. Urban development and/or rezones cannot occur in these areas until a master plan has been approved and the UDA designation has been removed, unless the property is adjacent to existing urban development of similar intensity and is already included in water and sewer district service areas.

- **Medium Density Residential**. The Medium Density Residential designation provides for areas of attached units, including apartments and condominiums, along transit corridors and throughout the urban area. This designation establishes urban densities between thirteen and thirty dwelling units per acre, resulting in population densities ranging from approximately 32.5 to 73.5 persons per acre. Medium density development includes apartments, condominiums, and group housing. These uses are appropriate near commercial areas, transportation and transit corridors, and employment centers.
- **High Density Residential**. The High Density Residential designation establishes areas of higher density units primarily along transit corridors. This designation establishes urban densities ranging between thirty-one and fifty dwelling units per acre, resulting in population densities ranging from approximately 75 to 125 persons per acre. High density development includes multiple-floor apartments and condominiums, including mixed-use developments. High density uses are appropriate within the central portion of intensive commercial areas, along transportation/transit corridors and stops, and near major employment centers.
- **Intensive Industrial**. This land use designation allows for manufacturing and related activities including research, processing, warehousing, and supporting commercial uses, the intensive nature of which require urban services. Industrial Intensive areas are located within the urban portion of the county and receive an urban level of public infrastructure and services. Floor Area Ratios range from 0.15 to 0.80.
- **Commercial and Offices**. The Commercial and Office designation provides for a full range of neighborhood, community and regional shopping centers and a variety of business and professional offices. Uses include locally-oriented retail, professional offices, and regional commercial operations. The location and size of commercial areas is based upon accessibility, historic development patterns, community and neighborhood needs, and minimization of land use conflicts. Ideally, commercial areas are designed to integrate with the community, including the provision for pedestrian amenities. The standard for commercial Floor Area Ratios is between 0.25 and 2.5.

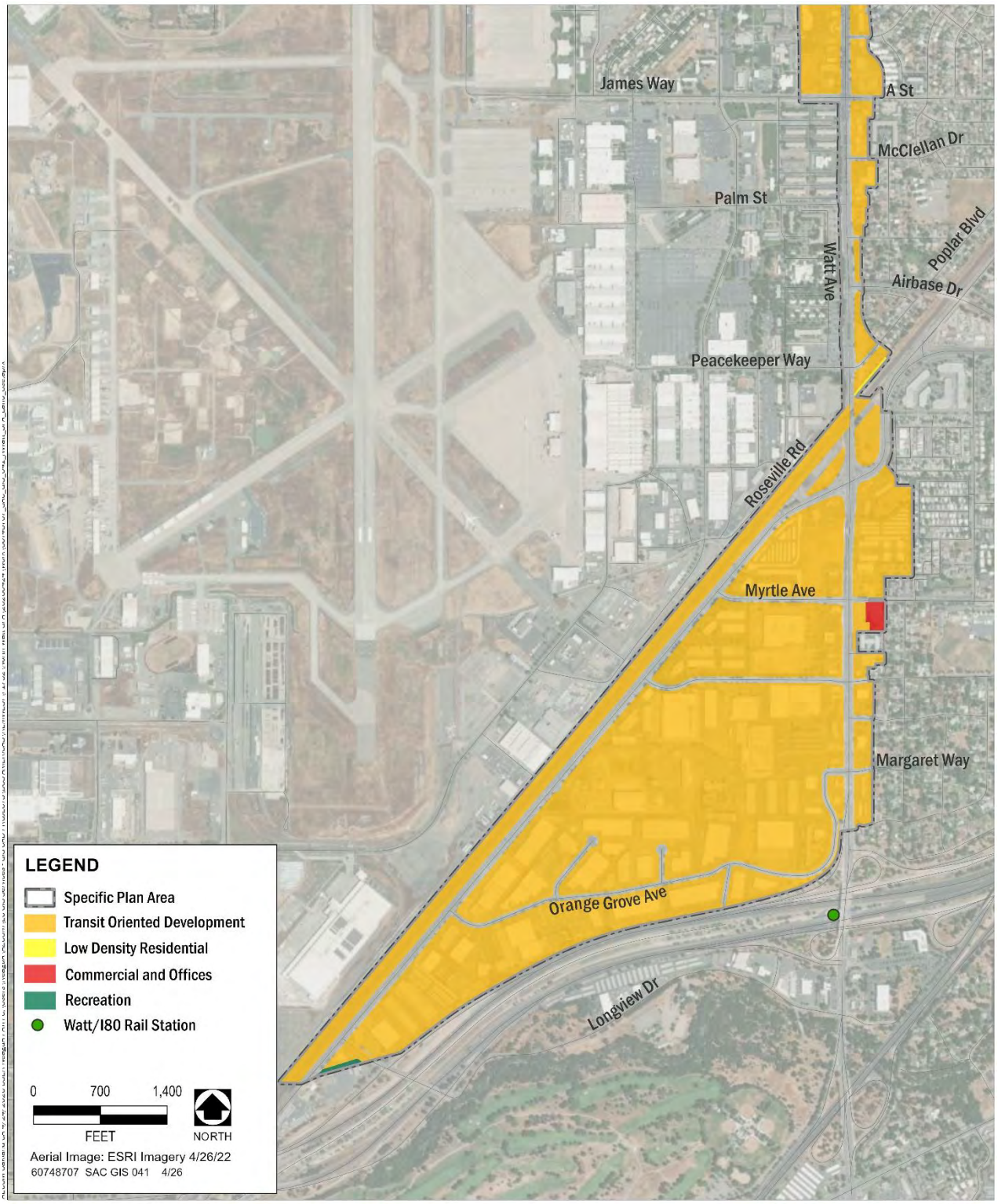
The Specific Plan Area is zoned Special Planning Area – both the North Highlands Town Center Special Planning Area (SPA) and the North Watt Avenue SPA (Sacramento County 2026b). Three parcels north of Elkhorn Boulevard and east of 34th Street included in the Specific Plan Area are zoned Light Industrial (M-1). Two parcels north of I Street, west of Watt Avenue, and east of 34th Street are zoned Light Industrial (M-1) and one parcel in the same area is currently zoned Agricultural-Residential 1 acre (AR-1) within the Specific Plan Area.

Plate LU-1a: Existing General Plan Land Use Designations (North)



Source: Sacramento County 2026a

Plate LU-1b: Existing General Plan Land Use Designations (South)



Source: Sacramento County 2026a

REGULATORY SETTING

FEDERAL

There are no federal regulations that apply to the evaluation of impacts related to land use and planning.

STATE

STATE PLANNING LAW

California Government Code Section 65300 et seq. requires cities and counties to adopt a comprehensive, long-term general plan to guide development. The general plan addresses physical development within and near a jurisdiction, covering topics such as land use, circulation, housing, conservation, open space, noise, and safety. It establishes goals, policies, and standards to shape the area's future over a typical 20-year period while allowing flexibility to achieve its vision.

The State Zoning Law (California Government Code Section 65800 et seq.) requires that zoning ordinances—laws defining allowable land uses within specific districts—must be consistent with the general plan and any applicable specific plans. When a general plan is amended, the zoning ordinance may need to be updated within a reasonable timeframe to ensure that the land uses designated in the general plan are permissible under the zoning ordinance (Government Code Section 65860, subdivision [c]).

The California Government Code (Title 7, Division 1, Chapter 3, Article 8, Sections 65450-65457) provides the authority for a jurisdiction to adopt a specific plan by ordinance (as a regulatory plan) or resolution (as a policy-driven plan). This allows a local land use agency to prepare specific plans as may be required for the systematic implementation of the general plan. Specific plans must identify and include:

- The distribution, location, and extent of the uses of land, including open space, within the area covered by the plan.
- The proposed distribution, location, and extent and intensity of major components of public and private transportation, sewage, water, drainage, solid waste disposal, energy, and other essential facilities proposed to be located within the area covered by the plan and needed to support the land uses described in the plan.
- The standards and criteria by which development will proceed, and standards for the conservation, development, and utilization of natural resources, where applicable.
- A program of implementation measures including regulations, programs, public works projects, and financing measures.
- A statement of the relationship of the specific plan to the general plan.

California Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act

The California Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act (Senate Bill [SB] 375) requires regional planning agencies to develop regional land use and transportation scenarios (sustainable communities strategies) that, if implemented, would meet passenger vehicle greenhouse gas emission reduction targets adopted by the California Air Resources Board. These scenarios reduce vehicle miles traveled through a broad range of strategies that promote bicycle, pedestrian, and transit access and shortening vehicular trips. SB 375 also allows projects that meet regional sustainable community standards to qualify for CEQA exemptions or streamlining.

State Housing Law

State law requires all local governments to plan to meet the housing needs of all households, including all income levels, and households and individuals with special needs. California's local governments meet this requirement, in part, by adopting housing plans as part of their general plan. While state law acknowledges that it is not the County's responsibility to actually construct housing appropriate for a variety of household incomes, state law dictates certain planning, zoning, financing, and infrastructure obligations for local agencies that encourage certain types, locations, and densities for housing production. State law directs local agencies such as Sacramento County on a wide variety of requirements for general plans, zoning, and community outreach.

Regional

SACOG 2025 Blueprint (Metropolitan Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy)

The focus of the SACOG 2025 Blueprint (MTP/SCS) is on the intersection of land use and transportation. The MTP/SCS:

- identifies the region's strategies for meeting the regional GHG emissions reduction target; establishes conformity with state and federal Clean Air Act requirements;
- provides the foundation for the regional housing needs allocation and establishes a plan for housing the population of the region; considers the impact of the plan on regional resources, including financial, biological, agricultural and farming resources; and
- identifies a transportation network to serve the transportation needs of the region, and to reduce passenger vehicle travel demand to, among other things, support achievement of the region's greenhouse gas emissions reduction target.

The MTP/SCS provides a 20-year transportation vision and corresponding list of projects and is federally required to be updated every four years. The current 2025 Blueprint (MTP/SCS) was adopted by the SACOG board in November 2025. The Blueprint is based on the following principles adopted in the 2020 MTP/SCS:

- increased housing and transportation options;

- inwardly focused growth and improved economic viability of rural areas;
- minimized direct and indirect transportation impacts on the environment;
- a transportation system that delivers cost-effective results and is feasible to construct and maintain;
- effective connections between people and jobs;
- improved opportunities for businesses and citizens to easily access goods, jobs, services, and housing; and
- real, viable choices for methods of travel.

The 2025 Blueprint (MTP/SCS), adopted in compliance with SB 375, includes a land use strategy to improve mobility and reduce travel demand from passenger vehicles by prioritizing compact and transit-oriented development, reducing growth in vehicle miles traveled and associated greenhouse gas emissions. The 2025 Blueprint also includes projections for the location of growth within the region, between jurisdictions, and among housing place types (i.e., infill and greenfield development). The 2025 Blueprint (MTP/SCS) adopted four strategic priorities that build on the principles of the prior MTP/SCS:

1. Build vibrant places for today's and tomorrow's residents.
2. Foster the next generation of mobility solutions.
3. Modernize the way we pay for transportation infrastructure.
4. Build and maintain a safe, equitable, and resilient multimodal transportation system.

Sacramento County General Plan Policy LU-113 commits the County to working with SACOG to support implementation of the Blueprint and General Plan Policy LU-120 requires evaluation of consistency with regional planning efforts.

An important implementation activity of the 2025 Blueprint is the Green Means Go program, which is a regional effort to accelerate infill development and electrify vehicle trips in locally adopted Green Zones. Green Zones are areas identified for infill development where future residents are likely to take fewer and shorter car trips than people in the surrounding community and the region. Further, Green Zones must be planned for growth and supported by local policies and actions that support increased development and redevelopment in the area, such as a specific plan.

The Specific Plan Area is within a Green Zone (SACOG 2026).

LOCAL

SACRAMENTO COUNTY GENERAL PLAN

The Sacramento County 2030 General Plan is a set of goals, objectives, policies, implementation measures and maps that form a blueprint for physical development in the unincorporated County. The General Plan addresses important community issues such as new growth, housing needs and environmental protection. The last comprehensive update was the 2030 General Plan, which was adopted in 2011, and included a new growth management strategy and a strong focus on addressing existing communities and revitalizing aging commercial corridors, including North Watt Avenue.

Particularly relevant policies of the General Plan that have directed the preparation of the proposed Specific Plan include:

Policy LU-3. It is the intent of the County to focus investment of public resources on revitalization efforts within existing communities, especially within commercial corridors, while also allowing planning and development to occur within strategic new growth areas.

Policy LU-4. The County shall give priority to residential development on vacant or underutilized sites within existing urban areas that have infrastructure capacity available.

Policy LU-11. It is the intent of the County to comprehensively plan for the revitalization of the targeted commercial corridors and invest the resources necessary to achieve the following: stimulate private investment; encourage development of vacant and underutilized parcels; support reuse and/or rehabilitation of abandoned or blighted buildings; encourage rezoning of excess industrial and commercial lands to allow for medium and high density residential or mixed use projects, and; avoid non transit supportive uses, such as industrial uses, low density residential, and uses that would necessitate large parking lots fronting on the street.

Policy LU-22. Specific Plans and Community Plans should provide a balance of employment, neighborhood services, and different housing types wherever feasible.

Policy LU-23. Providing compact, mixed use developments shall be an integral part of all master planning efforts for new growth areas and commercial corridors.

Policy LU-38. Community Plans, Specific Plans, and development projects shall be designed to promote pedestrian movement through direct, safe, and pleasant routes that connect destinations inside and outside the plan or project area.

The General Plan provides an inventory of land supply within the County and projects the amount and location of land and development that will be required to accommodate future populations and economic growth through 2030. The General Plan Land Use Element (Sacramento County 2022a) sets forth the County's vision for development of the vacant and underutilized land within existing commercial corridors, which offer an opportunity to accommodate future residential and commercial growth in compact, mixed-use developments that can positively contribute to the existing community.

The Land Use Element of the Sacramento County 2030 General Plan includes policies that are designed to promote reinvestment, infill development, and Transit Oriented Development in areas designated for higher-intensity residential and mixed-use development located within walking distance of existing or planned high-capacity transit facilities. Transit Oriented Development areas are designed to support efficient use of land and infrastructure, promote pedestrian- and bicycle-oriented environments, and reduce dependence on single-occupant vehicles through compact development patterns and transit accessibility.

As explained in the Land Use Element, "[l]ow-density, auto-oriented development on the urban fringe is not an inevitable byproduct of an increasing population [, but] sprawling and segregated…inefficient and unsustainable land uses are producing serious health, social, economic and environmental consequences… (Sacramento County 2022a, Land Use Element pages 1-2). The 2030 General Plan is designed to "rectify this status quo" of lower-density, greenfield development, by marshalling County resources and communicating the County's intent "to concentrate a portion of expected growth into previously urbanized areas; to grow intensively rather than extensively; to invest in and revitalize existing communities; to build stronger, more connected and balanced neighborhoods; and to ensure protection of the County's invaluable natural resources from urban encroachment" (Sacramento County 2022a, Land Use Element pages 1-2).

The General Plan clearly establishes that the "County is dedicated to planning for new development that is more compact, transit oriented, and features a mix of uses … [and that future development must target assets in existing communities, including vacant and underutilized parcels, old or historic structures ready for reuse or rehabilitation, and reinvestment in main streets and commercial corridors" (Sacramento County 2022a, Land Use Element page 6).

Throughout the General Plan, but in particular, within the Land Use Element, the County's policies address different aspects of focusing development away from greenfield areas and toward targeted infill investment areas, such as the Specific Plan Area, including the County's commitments to:

- Maintain or improve the character of existing communities. Plan for commercial corridor improvements and protection of natural resource and habitat corridors. Participate in regional planning efforts aimed at implementing more compact land use patterns and an efficient multi-modal transportation system.
- Infill vacant parcels and intensify development on underutilized lands where appropriate to maintain or improve the quality, character and identity of existing

neighborhoods and communities, as well as to relieve growth pressure on the urban fringe.

- Create "complete communities" that have a mixture of housing, jobs and retail amenities to reduce automobile dependence, support local commercial and employment opportunities, and create a jobs/housing balance.
- Stimulate reinvestment in targeted commercial corridors through comprehensive planning efforts with a strong focus on implementation.
- Provide the infrastructure and conditions necessary to encourage walking and biking as a means of travel, as well as to support enhanced transit service.
- Direct growth toward previously urbanized areas and strategic new growth areas to reduce sprawling development, strengthen existing communities, relieve traffic congestion, improve air quality, preserve open space and natural resources, protect valuable agriculture and rangelands, and realize economies of scale for infrastructure and services.

The first goal of the Land Use Element is a thorough, concise summary of the 2030 General Plan's growth management strategy: "Direct new growth to previously urbanized areas, planned growth areas and strategically located new growth areas to promote efficient use of land, to reduce urban sprawl and its impacts, to preserve valuable environmental resources, and to protect agricultural and rangeland operations" (Sacramento County 2022a, Land Use Element page 20). This goal is to be advanced through a variety of policies and implementation measures throughout the General Plan.

Policy LU-3 establishes the County's intent to focus investment of public resources on revitalization efforts within existing communities, especially within commercial corridors. Policy LU-4 establishes the County's priority to promote residential development on vacant or underutilized sites within existing urban areas that have infrastructure capacity available.[1] Policy LU-11 and its accompanying implementation measure effectively launch planning processes for the County's identified 14 commercial corridors, including North Watt Avenue (Sacramento County 2022a).

The County designates Watt Avenue within the Specific Plan Area as a Smart Growth Street Corridor (Sacramento County 2011). As discussed in the Circulation Element (Sacramento County 2022b), the concept of "Smart Growth Streets" expands on the Complete Streets concept. Although both Smart Growth Streets and Complete Streets are pedestrian, bicycle, and transit friendly, Smart Growth Streets integrate the street, the adjacent corridor, the surrounding community, and the natural environment, while allowing for more flexibility in the design of street and corridor improvements. The County has applied the Smart Growth Streets concept to the Specific Plan Area to support and encourage infill development and revitalization efforts. The Smart Growth Streets concept

[1] Policy LU-32 references Table 7 for specific density minimum density and intensity requirements within certain distances of different transit services, but also stipulates that these standards may be superseded by a Specific Plan. Policy LU-32 does not apply to the proposed Specific Plan.

is also intended to help implement SACOG's adopted 2025 Blueprint vision and concepts related to smart growth and transit-oriented development (Sacramento County 2022b).

The purpose of the County's Housing Element is to "identify and analyze existing and projected housing needs for all income groups [,]…to address the identified needs; and to provide enough sites for new housing development…" (Sacramento County 2022c). The County's Housing Element called for General Plan and zoning amendments to meet the Regional Housing Needs Allocation, including several sites within the Specific Plan Area. The General Plan amendments and zoning amendments increased the allowable density on identified properties within the County's Housing Element sites inventory.[2] These General Plan amendments and zoning amendments are now in effect.

Sacramento County Zoning Code

The County Zoning Code (County of Sacramento 2025) establishes land use zones and the standards and regulations for development in those zones within unincorporated Sacramento County. As noted in Section 1.7.3 of the County's Zoning Code, Specific Plans, such as the proposed Specific Plan, may propose development standards, allowable land uses, and other regulations that are tailored to a specific area, and that supplement or replace the provisions of the County's Zoning Code. The Specific Plan Area is zoned Special Planning Area – both the North Highlands Town Center SPA and the North Watt Avenue Corridor Plan area. The proposed Specific Plan would supersede existing zoning within the Specific Plan Area.

As noted above, the County's Housing Element called for rezoning to meet the Regional Housing Needs Allocation, including several sites within the Specific Plan Area. On August 20th, 2024, the Sacramento County Board of Supervisors adopted the rezoning program included in the Housing Element, which included five sites within the Specific Plan Area.[3] These sites were rezoned by the County to change the minimum density to either 22.5 dwelling units per acre or 30 dwelling units per acre:

- APN 208-0122-066 - 30 dwelling units per acre
- APN 208-0132-008 - 30 dwelling units per acre
- APN 208-0162-018 - 22.5 dwelling units per acre
- APN 208-0162-027 - 22.5 dwelling units per acre
- APN 215-0062-057 - 22.5 dwelling units per acre

[2] The five sites in the Specific Plan Area subject to General Plan and zoning amendments from Housing Element implementation were labeled Sites 68, 69, 70, 71, and 72. Sites 68, 69, and 72 were redesignated from TOD to HDR. Sites 70 and 71 was redesignated from TOD to MDR.

[3] The sites are identified in the Agenda Packet for the Board of Supervisors as a part of the Board's consideration of rezoning resolutions as Sites 68, 69, 70, 71, and 72.

North Highlands Community Plan

The North Highlands – North Central Area Community Plan was adopted originally in 1974 to protect operations at McClellan Air Force Base; expand public services for education, recreation, and public transit; eliminate blight and enhance landscaping; provide a variety of housing types; and protect agricultural operations in the plan area until such time as land is required for development (Sacramento County 1974). The Community Plan Area encompasses the Specific Plan Area and a much larger area surrounding the Specific Plan Area – from the County line in the north to the former McClellan Air Force Base to the west, Interstate 80 to the south, and Garfield Avenue to the east. The Community Plan proposes to improve bicycle access to destinations, such as schools, commercial districts, public facilities, parks and other destinations, including separated bicycle facilities for larger roadways.

Impacts and Analysis

Significance Criteria

For purposes of this EIR and consistent with the criteria presented in Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, impacts related to land use would be considered significant if implementation of the proposed Specific Plan would:

- Physically divide an established community; or
- Cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect.

Impacts related to safety and land use compatibility with the Sacramento McClellan Airport are addressed in DEIR Chapter 9, “Hazards and Hazardous Materials,” and Chapter 11, “Noise.”

Methodology

The evaluation of the potential land use impacts associated with implementation of the proposed Specific Plan is based on a review of planning documents, including the Sacramento County 2030 General Plan (Sacramento County 2022a and 2022b), the North Central Area Community Plan, the Sacramento County Zoning Code (Sacramento County 2025), and the SACOG 2025 Blueprint (MTP/SCS) (SACOG 2025). Please see Chapter 6, Climate Change, for an evaluation of consistency with the County’s Climate Action Plan. See Chapter 3, Aesthetics, for an evaluation of the proposed Specific Plan relative to adopted visual policies and standards and Chapter 20, Transportation, for a discussion related to the County’s designated Smart Growth Streets and transportation policies intended to mitigate environmental effects.

While an EIR may provide information regarding land use and planning issues, CEQA does not consider inconsistency with land use plans and policies to be a physical effect

on the environment, unless the plan or policy was adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating a significant environmental effect. Adverse physical effects on the environment that could result from implementation of the proposed North Watt Avenue Specific Plan are evaluated in the appropriate topical chapters of this EIR.

IMPACT LU-1: PHYSICALLY DIVIDE AN ESTABLISHED COMMUNITY

As discussed above, the County has identified commercial corridors such as North Watt Avenue for revitalization, and has engaged in many planning efforts to attract investment and infill development to the Specific Plan Area. The proposed North Watt Avenue Specific Plan would supersede the North Highlands Town Center Development Code and the North Watt Avenue Corridor Plan – two Special Planning Areas that had regulated development in the area.

The Specific Plan Area and adjacent neighborhoods are largely developed, with a few vacant lots and undeveloped parcels interspersed throughout. The proposed Specific Plan is intended to implement the General Plan for this corridor, and to accelerate infill development that will increase local economic activity, improve transit ridership, add housing near jobs and services, and create new public gathering spaces. The North Watt Avenue Specific Plan identifies public infrastructure improvements needed to support new infill development, along with strategies to fund and implement these improvements in ways that can attract private investment in both existing properties and future infill projects.

The proposed Specific Plan aims to remove development barriers and facilitate higher density and increased intensity of uses within the Specific Plan Area. Implementation of the proposed Specific Plan could accommodate a substantial amount of new housing units (assumed up to 7,260) and of new retail/commercial uses (assumed up to 1.9 million square feet) throughout the Specific Plan Area.

Future development projects within the Specific Plan Area would be supported by infrastructure improvements that would accommodate the proposed new land uses and enhance bicycle, pedestrian, and transit connections throughout the Specific Plan Area and surrounding neighborhoods. Development under the proposed Specific Plan would connect via access to the existing transportation network, and would not require substantial new transportation facilities that could divide any neighborhoods or other developed areas. The Re-Imagine North Watt Corridor Plan would introduce vehicular, bicycle, and pedestrian improvements to Watt Avenue, allowing for enhanced pedestrian and curbside activation strategies and urban greening to create a more dynamic and engaging streetscape. The Circulation and Public Realm Design section of the Specific Plan proposes improvements that improve bicycle and pedestrian connections within the Specific Plan Area and to adjacent neighborhoods, including recommendations from the County's Active Transportation Plan, as well as other safety and bicycle and pedestrian access improvements.

Implementation of the proposed Specific Plan would not introduce new barriers that would physically divide the established North Watt Avenue and North Highlands community, and this impact would be **less than significant**.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required.

Impact LU-2: Cause a Significant Environmental Impact Due to a Conflict with Any Land Use Plan, Policy, or Regulation Adopted for the Purpose of Avoiding or Mitigating an Environmental Effect

Consistency with Sacramento County 2030 General Plan

The 2030 General Plan calls out the North Watt Avenue corridor for reinvestment, and the proposed Specific Plan is designed to implement the General Plan for this corridor, and accelerate infill development that will increase local economic activity, improve transit ridership, add housing near jobs and services, and create new public gathering spaces. Table 4 in the Land Use Element identifies 125.5 acres of land area as vacant and underutilized within the North Watt area, and Policy LU-11 and related implementation measures establish the County's intent to stimulate private investment along North Watt Avenue and the other corridors through comprehensive planning, increasing residential land capacity, encouraging rezoning of land for high-density residential and mixed-use development, and offering incentives for development applications that are consistent with the resulting corridor plans, including the proposed Specific Plan.

The Land Use Element sets forth County policy on urban growth within the county, directing such growth to developed parts of the county, and areas of the county with existing infrastructure in place. The County's Urban Growth Accommodation Strategy, as addressed in the Land Use Element (Sacramento County 2022a:26), includes a goal to "on average, achieve buildout of vacant and underutilized infill parcels at existing zoned densities, while recognizing that individual projects may be approved or denied at higher or lower densities based on their community and site suitability." The Land Use Element defines "infill" to mean "any new development within an established urban area where basic urban infrastructure and services exist, including: development of vacant parcels, redevelopment of abandoned or derelict structures, and intensification of uses on underutilized lands" (Sacramento County 2022a:26). It is the strategy of the County to "accommodate as much residential, commercial, and employment capacity as feasible within the existing urban area during the timeframe of the [General] Plan to:

- implement the [SACOG] Blueprint Vision for more compact urban growth;
- upgrade the quality of existing neighborhoods and commercial corridors;
- enhance public transit use and efficiency;
- promote walking and biking as viable transportation alternatives;

- balance land uses and create a jobs/housing balance;
- utilize existing public infrastructure and services in an efficient manner; and
- provide a variety of household types affordable to all income groups within each community." (Sacramento County 2022a: 26)

Policy LU-3 establishes the County's intent to focus investment of public resources on revitalization efforts within existing communities, especially within commercial corridors. Policy LU-4 establishes the County's priority to promote residential development on vacant or underutilized sites within existing urban areas that have infrastructure capacity available. Policy LU-11 and its accompanying implementation measure effectively launch planning processes for the County's identified 14 commercial corridors, including North Watt Avenue.

Policy LU-22 directs Specific Plans to provide a balance of employment, neighborhood services, and different housing types. The proposed Specific Plan Area is currently jobs rich and provides more commercial services and retail than demand from local residents can currently support. The proposed Specific Plan facilitates a broad range of housing types, and is designed in particular to expedite housing construction near transit in the North Watt Avenue corridor. Policy LU-23 requires that compact, mixed use developments are a part of planning efforts for commercial corridors. Consistent with Policy LU-23, compact residential development and mixed-use development is the focus of the proposed Specific Plan, which proposes a broad variety of compact housing types and complementary non-residential development throughout the Mixed-Use Corridor and Mixed-Use Neighborhood Specific Plan Zoning Districts. The Mixed-Use Corridor Specific Plan Zoning District is intended to accommodate higher-intensity mixed-use development, allowing for a broad mix of residential and non-residential uses. The Mixed-Use Neighborhood Specific Plan Zoning District allows neighborhood-scale mixed-use development prioritizing housing, and allows smaller-scale, neighborhood-serving non-residential uses.

Policy LU-38 requires Specific Plans and development projects to promote pedestrian movement through direct, safe, and pleasant routes that connect destinations. The proposed Specific Plan facilitates development that primarily would gain access through the existing transportation network, which is proposed to be improved through recommendations from the County's Active Transportation Plan for new trails, bike lanes, and intersection improvements, as well as the County's implementation of the Re-imagine North Watt Avenue Corridor Plan, which would provide protected bicycle lanes and improved sidewalks along Watt Avenue.

The new housing in the Specific Plan area would be located in close proximity to existing jobs within the adjacent McClellan Park to the west (redevelopment of the former Mather Air Force Base), as well as the approximately 260-acre "McClellan Industrial Park" within the southern portion of the Specific Plan Area itself. The Specific Plan Area includes designated Smart Growth Streets, which are pedestrian, bicycle, and transit friendly, allow flexibility in design, and are designated for identified mixed-use corridors and major transit corridors (such as North Watt Avenue) to support and encourage infill development and

revitalization efforts. The Specific Plan promotes Transit Oriented Development by placing housing adjacent to existing developed transportation options (including bus service) and includes proposed improvements, specifically including pedestrian and bicycle improvements and street beautification. The proposed Specific Plan would implement the SACOG Blueprint Vision, promote transportation alternatives, improve the jobs/housing balance in North Highlands, and help meet the Regional Housing Needs Assessment for the unincorporated County (as discussed in DEIR Chapter 13, "Population and Housing"). Thus, the proposed Specific Plan would be consistent with County's 2030 General Plan.

Consistency with County Land Use Designations

The proposed Specific Plan includes a new General Plan land use designation for the Specific Plan Area: "North Watt Avenue Specific Plan." The existing Land Use Designations within the Specific Plan Area include (please refer to the description of these land use designations under the heading, Environmental Setting, for more detail):

- Transit Oriented Development
- Urban Development Area
- Medium Density Residential
- High Density Residential
- Intensive Industrial
- Commercial and Offices

The land use framework in the Specific Plan would be implemented through three proposed Specific Plan Zoning Districts (Table LU-1). The County has established allowable land use, development standards, and design standards for each zoning district for development projects under the proposed Specific Plan.

Table LU-1. Proposed Specific Plan Zoning Districts

Zoning District	Description
MU-C Mixed-Use Corridor	Higher-intensity mixed-use applied along the primary corridor and major transit streets. Allows a broad mix of residential and non-residential uses and applies the highest intensity and form standards to support corridor-scale development patterns
MU-N Mixed-Use Neighborhood	Neighborhood-scale mixed-use district that prioritizes housing and allows smaller-scale, neighborhood-serving non-residential uses. Applies standards intended to support compatibility with nearby residential areas.
EMP-Flex Employment Flex	Employment-focused district that allows a range of job-generating uses, with flexibility for modern industrial, office, service, and supporting commercial uses, with standards addressing access, loading/service functions, and land use compatibility.

Source: AECOM 2026

The proposed Specific Plan includes transit-supportive development, policies to improve the pedestrian environment, avoiding large expanses of surface parking, and revitalization of the corridor with mixed-use, retail, employment and residential uses that are both compact and transit oriented. As noted in the Land Use Element description of the Transit Oriented Development land use designation, "[t]he success of TODs are not dependent solely on transit… [as and] integrated mix of uses coupled with a pedestrian friendly design promotes pedestrian and bicycle use throughout the development" (Sacramento County 2022a:10). The proposed Specific Plan emphasizes pedestrian and bicycle travel by incorporating recommendations for bicycle and pedestrian facility improvements from the County's Active Transportation Plan and eliminating off-street parking requirements, among other features. The proposed Specific Plan is consistent with the density range provided for the Transit Oriented designation, as well: the 2030 General Plan identifies a range of 7 to 50 units per gross acre, which is consistent with the density and intensity standards of the proposed Specific Plan. Small portions of the Specific Plan Area are designated Medium Density Residential (13–30 dwelling units/acre) and High Density Residential (31–50 dwelling units/acre) and would be redesignated as "North Watt Avenue Specific Plan," but the proposed uses and allowable densities would be consistent with the existing (pre-Specific Plan) land use designations. A small portion of the Specific Plan Area northwest of the intersection of Elkhorn Boulevard and 34th Street is developed and has the Intensive Industrial designation, but would be changed to the North Watt Avenue Specific Plan land use designation and the Mixed-Use Corridor Zoning District. Depending on the existing uses in this area, properties may be subject to the County's Nonconformance provisions of the Zoning Code (Section 1.9), and would generally be allowed to continue assuming continued use with no expansions.

The proposed Specific Plan Chapter 2 (Land Use & Urban Design) sets forth the allowable land uses by district, and measurable requirements that would guide site planning, building form, and frontage design. The standards include density (units per acre, flood area ratio), building heights, setbacks, stepbacks, site/lot coverage, building design and access (e.g., façade, windows, lighting), parking, landscaping, screening, and open space, as well as use-specific standards. These standards support implementation of the land use vision, ensure consistency across development, and provide clear, measurable criteria for future project review.

Proposed improvements that would be located within the public right-of-way (e.g., street cross-sections, sidewalks, bikeways, transit facilities, and streetscape) are addressed in Specific Plan Chapter 3 (Circulation and Public Realm) and would be implemented through County-led capital projects and applicable frontage improvement requirements under the County Improvement Standards.

The proposed Specific Plan would provide for compact, land-efficient, mixed-use infill development, with a focus on residential development, and supportive multi-modal transportation improvements along North Watt Avenue that would encourage pedestrian, bicycle, and transit accessibility to nearby job-generating land uses. The proposed Specific Plan land use designation and proposed Specific Plan Zoning Districts are consistent with the existing land use designations within the Specific Plan Area.

Consistency with SACOG 2025 Blueprint (MTP/SCS)

The proposed Specific Plan accommodates substantial compact residential development and some non-residential development and new employment throughout the North Watt Avenue corridor. The new housing in the Specific Plan Area would be located in close proximity to transit and existing jobs within the adjacent McClellan Park to the west (redevelopment of the former Mather Air Force Base), as well as the approximately 260-acre "McClellan Industrial Park" within the southern portion of the Specific Plan Area itself. The following SACOG goals are related to land use and transportation planning and urban design throughout the SACOG region, including the Specific Plan Area, for the purposes of SACOG's 2025 Blueprint (MTP/SCS) (SACOG 2025):

- Provide increased housing and transportation options.
- Minimize direct and indirect transportation impacts on the environment.
- Construct a transportation system that delivers cost-effective results and is feasible to construct and maintain.
- Provide effective connections between people and jobs.
- Deliver improved opportunities for businesses and citizens to easily access goods, jobs, services, and housing.

By implementing these concepts, the Specific Plan would help improve the County's jobs-to-housing ratio and commute times, reduce traffic, and reduce the physical environmental impacts associated with long commutes and traffic such as air quality, noise, and GHG emissions. As noted, the Specific Plan Area is within a Green Zone, an area where SACOG intends to help accelerate infill development (SACOG 2026). The proposed Specific Plan has no conflicts with the 2025 Blueprint (MTP/SCS) and in fact is part of implementation of the 2025 Blueprint (SACOG 2025).

Consistency with the North Highlands Community Plan

Consistent with the North Highlands – North Central Area Community Plan, the proposed Specific Plan provides for transit-supportive development, and the County will accommodate improvements to bus stops as a part of implementation of the Re-imagine North Watt Corridor Plan. Consistent with the Community Plan, the proposed Specific Plan incorporates recommendations from the Active Transportation Plan and additional County-led improvements that will improve bicycle and pedestrian access and enhance safety, including separated bicycle facilities along North Watt Avenue. Consistent with the Community Plan, the Specific Plan proposes expansion of trail and other recreational spaces and improvements to existing recreational facilities to enhance service to Specific Plan residents and visitors.

Summary

The proposed Specific Plan would not conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect in a manner that would cause a significant environmental impact. Directing County resources to promote infill development along North Watt Avenue is a specific focus of the 2030 General Plan.

The Specific Plan proposal includes a new land use designation, “North Watt Avenue Specific Plan,” for the General Plan, but that new designation and the proposed Specific Plan would implement the goals and policies of the 2030 General Plan. This land use designation change would not conflict in any way with the General Plan. The proposed Specific Plan incorporates the Board of Supervisors’ direction for the Re-imagine North Watt Corridor Plan and includes recommendations from the County’s Active Transportation Plan. The proposed Specific Plan embodies the 2025 Blueprint principles (transportation choice, compact development, mixed-use development, housing choice and diversity, use of existing assets, natural resource conservation, and quality design) by promoting compact development in an existing developed area near high-quality transit service, accommodating demand for development in a developed area to help alleviate demand that might otherwise go to undeveloped areas of the county, facilitating a variety of housing types, and taking advantage of existing infrastructure to support development. The proposed Specific Plan supports North Highlands Community Plan policies to improve transit, add recreational spaces, and improve bicycle access. For these reasons, there is no conflict, and the impact would be **less than significant**.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required.

12 NOISE

INTRODUCTION

This section evaluates potential noise and vibration impacts associated with implementation of the proposed Specific Plan, consistent with CEQA. The analysis addresses both temporary construction-related and long-term operational noise and vibration impacts attributable to the proposed Specific Plan.

Existing conditions were documented through ambient noise measurements conducted at representative locations within the Specific Plan Area. Modeling of future construction and operational noise sources was performed using applicable federal and state methodologies, including the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Roadway Construction Noise Model (RCNM), the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment Manual (2018), the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) Transportation and Construction Vibration Guidance Manual (2020), and the FHWA Traffic Noise Model for traffic-related noise (Federal Highway Administration 1978).

Noise and vibration impacts are evaluated based on applicable federal, State, and County standards. Where predicted noise or vibration levels are found to exceed adopted thresholds, feasible mitigation measures are recommended to reduce potential impacts to a less-than-significant level. The analysis also addresses potential cumulative effects from anticipated development in combination with nearby transportation or infrastructure projects.

ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

ACOUSTIC FUNDAMENTALS

Noise is generally defined as sound that is loud, disagreeable, unexpected, or unwanted. Sound, as described in more detail below, is energy transmitted in the form of a wave that creates pressure variation in the air that the human ear can detect.

SOUND PROPERTIES

A sound wave is introduced into a medium (air) by a vibrating object.[1] Regardless of the type of source that creates the sound wave, the particles of the medium through which

[1] The vibrating object (e.g., vocal cords, the string and soundboard of a guitar, the diaphragm of a radio speaker) is the source of the disturbance that moves through the medium.

the sound moves are vibrating in a back-and-forth motion at a given frequency (pitch).[2] A commonly used unit for frequency is cycles per second, called hertz (Hz).[3]

A wave transports energy along a medium. The amount of energy carried by a wave is related to the amplitude (loudness) of the wave.[4]

SOUND AND THE HUMAN EAR

Because of the ability of the human ear to detect a wide range of sound-pressure fluctuations, sound-pressure levels are expressed in logarithmic units called decibels (dB).[5] Typical noise levels associated with various sources are shown on Plate NOI-1.

Because the human ear is not equally sensitive to all sound frequencies, a specific frequency-dependent rating scale was devised to relate noise to human sensitivity. A dBA scale performs this compensation by discriminating against frequencies in a manner approximating the sensitivity of the human ear. The basis for compensation is the faintest sound audible to the average ear at the frequency of maximum sensitivity. This dBA scale has been chosen by most authorities to regulate environmental noise. With respect to how humans perceive and react to changes in noise levels, a 1-dBA increase is imperceptible, a 3-dBA increase is barely perceptible, a 6-dBA increase is clearly noticeable, and a 10-dBA increase is subjectively perceived as approximately twice as loud (Egan 1988).[6]

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[2] The frequency of a wave refers to how often the particles vibrate when a wave passes through the medium. The frequency of a wave is measured as the number of complete back-and-forth vibrations of a particle per unit of time. If a particle of air undergoes 1,000 longitudinal vibrations in 2 seconds, then the frequency of the wave would be 500 vibrations per second.

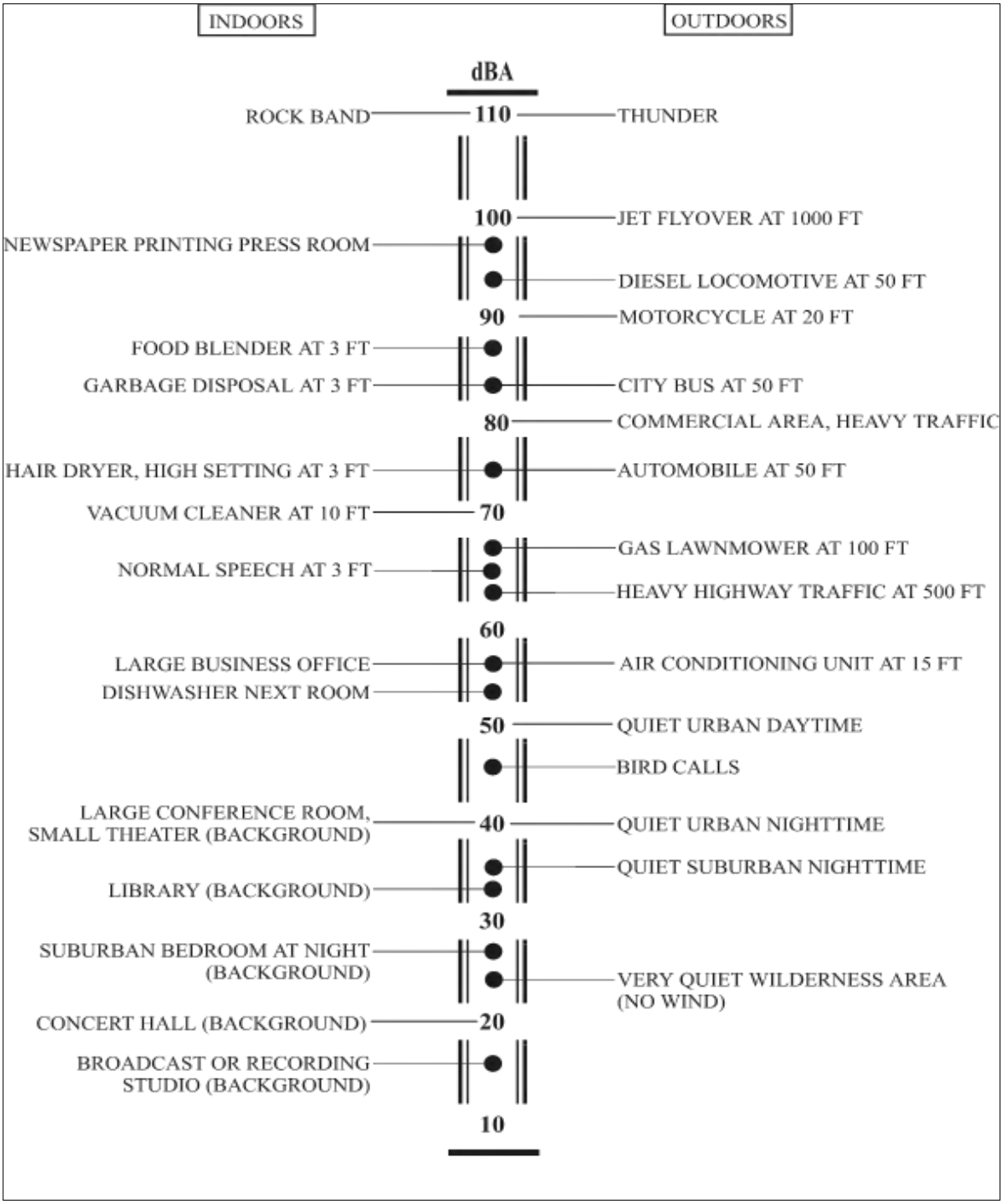
[3] Hertz (abbreviated: Hz) is the standard unit of measurement used for measuring frequency. Since frequency is measured in cycles per second, one hertz equals one cycle per second. Hertz is commonly used to measure wave frequencies, such as sound waves, light waves, and radio waves. For example, the average human ear can detect sound waves between 20 and 20,000 Hz. Sound waves close to 20 Hz have a low pitch and are called "bass" frequencies. Sound waves above 5,000 Hz have a high pitch and are called "treble" frequencies.

[4] A high-energy wave is characterized by high amplitude; a low-energy wave is characterized by low amplitude. The amplitude of a wave refers to the maximum amount of displacement of a particle from its rest position. The energy transported by a wave is directly proportional to the square of the amplitude of the wave. This means that a doubling of the amplitude of a wave is indicative of a quadrupling of the energy transported by the wave.

[5] The logarithmic decibel scale is used to avoid a very large and awkward range in numbers. The sound pressure level in decibels is calculated by taking the log of the ratio between the actual sound pressure and the reference sound pressure squared. The reference sound pressure is considered the absolute hearing threshold (Caltrans 2013). Use of this logarithmic scale reveals that the total sound from two individual sources, each measured at 65 A-weighted decibels (dBA), is 68 dBA, not 130 dBA; that is, doubling the source strength increases the sound pressure by 3 dBA.

[6] Table NOI-1 was developed on the basis of the reactions of test subjects to changes in the levels of steady-state pure tones or broadband noise and changes in levels of a given noise source. It is probably most applicable to noise levels in the range of 50–70 dBA, as this is the usual range of voice and interior noise levels.

Plate NOI-1: Typical Noise Levels



Notes:
dBA = A-weighted decibels
Source: Caltrans 2013

Table NOI-1: Subjective Reaction to Changes in Noise Levels of Similar Sources

Change in Level, dBA	Subjective Reaction	Factor Change in Acoustical Energy
1	Imperceptible (except for tones)	1.3
3	Just barely perceptible	2.0
6	Clearly noticeable	4.0
10	About twice (or half) as loud	10.0

Note: dBA = A-weighted decibels
Source: Egan 1988

SOUND PROPAGATION AND ATTENUATION

As sound (noise) propagates from the source to the receptor, the attenuation, or manner of noise reduction in relation to distance, is dependent on surface characteristics, atmospheric conditions, and the presence of physical barriers.[7] Sound travels uniformly outward from a point source in a spherical pattern with an attenuation rate of 6 dBA per doubling of distance (dBA/DD). However, from a line source (e.g., a road), sound travels uniformly outward in a cylindrical pattern with an attenuation rate of 3 dBA/DD. The characteristics of the surface between the source and the receptor may result in additional sound absorption and/or reflection. Atmospheric conditions such as wind speed, temperature, and humidity may affect noise levels. The presence of a barrier between the source and the receptor may also attenuate noise levels. The actual amount of attenuation depends on the size of the barrier and the frequency of the noise (Caltrans 2013).

NOISE DESCRIPTORS

The selection of a proper noise descriptor for a specific source depends on the spatial and temporal distribution, duration, and fluctuation of the noise. The noise descriptors most often encountered when dealing with traffic, community, and environmental noise are defined below (Caltrans 2013).

- **L_{max} (Maximum Noise Level):** The maximum instantaneous noise level during a specific period of time. The L_{max} may also be referred to as the "peak (noise) level."
- **L_{eq} (Equivalent Noise Level):** The average noise level. The instantaneous noise levels during a specific period of time in dBA are converted to relative energy values. From the sum of the relative energy values, an average energy value is calculated, which is then converted back to dBA to determine the L_{eq}. In noise environments that are determined by major noise events, such as aircraft overflights, the L_{eq} value is heavily influenced by the magnitude and number of single events that produce the high noise levels.
- **L_{dn} (Day-Night Noise Level):** The 24-hour L_{eq} with a 10-dBA "penalty" for noise events that occur during the noise-sensitive hours between 10:00 p.m. and 7:00

[7] The inverse-square law describes the attenuation caused by the pattern in which sound travels from the source to the receptor.

a.m. In other words, 10 dBA is "added" to noise events that occur in the nighttime hours, and this generates a higher reported noise level when determining compliance with noise standards. The L_{dn} attempts to account for the fact that noise during this specific period of time is a potential source of disturbance with respect to normal sleeping hours.

- **L_n (statistical descriptor):** The noise level exceeded "n" percent of a specific period of time. The L_{10}(t) is a statistical descriptor of the sound level exceeded for 10 percent of the time of the measurement period (t). It can be obtained using short-term measurements; however, it cannot be accurately added to or subtracted from other L_{10} measures or other descriptors. Typically, the L_{10} is about 3 dB(A) above the L_{eq} (t). The L_{50}(t) is a statistical descriptor of the sound level exceeding 50 percent of the time of the measurement period (t). The L_{90}(t) is a statistical descriptor of the sound level exceeding 90 percent of the time of the measurement period (t). This is considered to represent the background noise without the source in question. Where the noise emissions from a source of interest are constant (such as noise from a fan, air conditioner, or pool pump) and the ambient noise level has a degree of variability (for example, due to traffic noise), the L_{90} descriptor may adequately describe the noise source.

Community noise is commonly described in terms of the ambient noise level, which is defined as the all-encompassing noise level associated with a given noise environment. A common statistical tool to measure the ambient noise level is the average, or equivalent, sound level L_{eq}, which corresponds to a steady-state, A-weighted sound level containing the same total energy as a time-varying signal over a given time period (usually one hour). The L_{eq} is the foundation of the composite noise descriptors such as L_{dn} and CNEL, as defined above, and correlates well with community response to noise.

NEGATIVE EFFECTS OF NOISE ON HUMANS

Negative effects of noise exposure include physical damage to the human auditory system, interference, and disease. Exposure to noise may result in physical damage to the auditory system, which may lead to gradual or traumatic hearing loss. Gradual hearing loss is caused by sustained exposure to moderately high noise levels over a period of time; traumatic hearing loss is caused by sudden exposure to extremely high noise levels over a short period. Gradual and traumatic hearing loss both may result in permanent hearing damage. In addition, noise may interfere with or interrupt sleep, relaxation, recreation, and communication. Although most interference may be classified as annoying, the inability to hear a warning signal may be considered dangerous. Noise may also be a contributor to diseases associated with stress, such as hypertension, anxiety, and heart disease. The degree to which noise contributes to such diseases depends on the frequency, bandwidth, the level of the noise, and the exposure time (Caltrans 2013).

FUNDAMENTAL NOISE CONTROL OPTIONS

Any noise problem is generally composed of three basic elements: the noise source, a transmission path, and a receiver. The appropriate acoustical treatment for a given project should consider the nature of the noise source and the sensitivity of the receiver. The problem should be defined in terms of appropriate criteria (L_{dn}, L_{eq}, or L_{max}); the location

of the sensitive receiver (inside or outside); and the time that the problem occurs (daytime or nighttime). Noise control techniques should then be selected to provide an acceptable noise environment for the receiving property while remaining consistent with local accessibility, safety, and aesthetic standards, as well as practical structural and economic limits. Example noise control options are listed below.

- **Setbacks** - Noise exposure may be reduced by increasing the distance between the noise source and the receiving use. Setback areas can, for example, take the form of open space, frontage roads, recreational areas, and storage yards.
- **Barriers** - Shielding by barriers include placing walls, berms, or other structures (such as buildings) between the noise source and the receiver. The effectiveness of a barrier depends on blocking the line of sight between the source and receiver.
- **Site Design** - Buildings can be placed on a project site to shield other structures or areas from noise, and to prevent an increase in noise level caused by reflections. The use of one building to shield another can significantly reduce a project's overall noise control costs, particularly if the shielding structure is insensitive to noise.
- **Building Façades** - When interior noise levels are of concern in a noisy environment, noise reduction may be obtained through acoustical design of building façades. Standard construction practices provide a noise reduction of 10–15 dBA for building façades with open windows and a noise reduction of approximately 25 dBA when windows are closed (EPA 1974). Thus, an exterior-to-interior noise reduction of 25 dBA can be obtained by requiring that building design include adequate ventilation systems, which allows windows on a noise-affected façade to remain closed under any weather condition.
- **Vegetation** - Approximately 100 feet of dense foliage (so that no visual path extends through the foliage) is required to achieve a 5-dBA attenuation of traffic noise (Caltrans 2013).[8]

VIBRATION FUNDAMENTALS

Vibration is the periodic oscillation of a medium or object. The rumbling sound caused by the vibration of room surfaces is called structureborne noise (examples include footsteps on wooden floors or vibrations from heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) units or pumps). Similar to noise, groundborne vibration and groundborne noise can be generated from construction and operational sources. If vibration levels are high enough, groundborne vibration has the potential to damage structures, cause cosmetic damage (e.g., crack plaster), or disrupt the operation of vibration-sensitive equipment.

[8] The use of vegetation as a noise barrier should not be considered a practical method of noise control unless large tracts of dense foliage are part of the existing landscape. Vegetation can be used to acoustically "soften" intervening ground between a noise source and a receiver, increasing ground absorption of sound and thus increasing the attenuation of sound with distance.

Groundborne vibration and groundborne noise can also be a source of annoyance to individuals who live or work close to vibration-generating activities.

Groundborne noise is heard indoors when groundborne vibration propagates through the ground and is transmitted into buildings through foundations, walls, or subfloors.

Vibration Descriptors

As is the case with airborne sound, groundborne vibrations may be described by amplitude and frequency. Vibration levels are a measurement of the vibration magnitude in terms of velocity or acceleration, which describes the severity of the vibration without the frequency variable, and are usually expressed as a single number. Vibration amplitudes are usually expressed in peak particle velocity (PPV) or root mean square (RMS), as in RMS vibration velocity. PPV is defined as the maximum instantaneous positive or negative peak of a vibration signal. PPV and RMS are normally described in inches per second (in/sec). PPV is often used in monitoring of blasting vibration because it is related to the stresses that are experienced by buildings (FTA 2018).

Although PPV is appropriate for evaluating the potential for building damage, it is not always suitable for evaluating human response. It takes some time for the human body to respond to vibration signals. In a sense, the human body responds to average vibration amplitude. The RMS of a signal is the average of the squared amplitude of the signal, typically calculated over a period of 1 second. Like airborne sound, the RMS velocity is often expressed in decibel notation, as vibration decibels (VdB), which serves to compress the range of numbers required to describe vibration (FTA 2018). This is based on a reference value of 1 microinch per second (µin/sec).

Vibration Sources

Sources of groundborne vibrations include natural phenomena (e.g., earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, sea waves, landslides) or human-made causes (e.g., explosions, machinery, traffic, trains, construction equipment). Vibration sources may be continuous, or transient, or random. Continuous vibrations result from operating factory machinery, vibratory pile drivers, large pumps, horizontal directional drilling, and compressors. Transient vibrations are generated by explosions, blasting, impact pile driving, and wrecking balls. Random vibration can result from jackhammers, pavement breakers, and heavy construction equipment.

Construction activities can generate groundborne vibrations, which can pose a risk to nearby structures. Constant or transient vibrations can weaken structures, crack facades, and disturb occupants (FTA 2018). Heavy construction operations can cause substantial groundborne vibration in proximity to the source. The highest vibration levels are generated by impact equipment or heavy equipment, such as pile drivers or vibratory rollers, respectively.

The primary vibration sources associated with transportation include heavy truck and bus traffic along roadways and train traffic along rail lines. Vehicle traffic, including heavy trucks traveling on a highway, rarely generates vibration amplitudes high enough to cause

structural or cosmetic damage. In some cases, however, heavy trucks traveling over potholes or other discontinuities in the pavement have caused vibration high enough to result in complaints from nearby residents; these complaints typically can be resolved by smoothing the roadway surface. Freight trains, commuter trains, and light rail trains can also be sources of ground vibration.

Effects of Vibration

The effects of groundborne vibration include movement of building floors, rattling of windows, shaking of items that sit on shelves or hang on walls, and rumbling sounds. In extreme cases, vibration can damage buildings, although this is not a factor for most projects. Human annoyance from groundborne vibration often occurs when vibration exceeds the threshold of perception by only a small margin. A vibration level that causes annoyance can be well below the damage threshold for normal buildings.

Vibrations transmitted through the ground during construction equipment operations or transportation system operations may annoy people and detrimentally affect structures and sensitive devices. Where construction vibration does cause structural damage, it is through direct damage and/or vibration-induced settlement. Structural damage depends on the frequency of the vibration at the structure, as well as the condition of the structure and its foundation. Human annoyance by vibration is related to the number and duration of events. The more events or the greater the duration, the more annoying it will be to humans.

Table NOI-2 displays the reactions of people and the effects on buildings that continuous vibration levels produce. The annoyance levels shown in Table NOI-2 should be interpreted with care since vibration may be found to be annoying at much lower levels than those shown, depending on the level of activity or the sensitivity of the individual. To sensitive individuals, vibrations approaching the threshold of perception can be annoying. Low-level vibrations frequently cause irritating secondary vibration, such as a slight rattling of windows, doors, or stacked dishes. The rattling sound can give rise to vibration complaints, even when there is very little risk of actual structural damage.

“Architectural” damage can be classified as cosmetic only, such as minor cracking of building elements, while “structural” damage may threaten the integrity of a building. Safe vibration limits that can be applied to assess the potential for damaging a structure vary by researcher and there is no general consensus as to what amount of vibration may pose a threat for structural damage to a building. Construction-induced vibration that can be detrimental to the building is very rare and has only been observed in instances where the structure is in a high state of disrepair and the construction activity occurs immediately adjacent to the structure.

Table NOI-2: Effects of Various Vibration Levels on People and Buildings

Velocity Level, PPV (in/sec)	Vibration Level, VdB	Human Reaction	Effect on Buildings
0.01	68	Barely perceptible	No effect
0.04	80	Distinctly perceptible	Vibration unlikely to cause damage of any type to any structures
0.08	86	Distinctly perceptible to strongly perceptible	Recommended upper level of the vibration to which ruins and ancient monuments should be subjected
0.1	88	Strongly perceptible	Virtually no risk of damage to normal buildings
0.3	98	Strongly perceptible to Severe	Threshold at which there is a risk of damage to older residential structures
0.5	102	Severe – Vibration considered unpleasant	Threshold at which there is a risk of damage to newer residential structures

Notes:
In/sec=inches per second; PPV=peak particle velocity; VdB = Vibration Decibel
Source: Caltrans 2020

EXISTING CONDITIONS

EXISTING NOISE-SENSITIVE LAND USES

Noise-sensitive land uses generally consist of those where noise exposure would result in adverse effects on uses for which quiet is an essential element of their intended purpose. Residential dwellings are of primary concern because of the potential for increased and prolonged exposure of individuals to both interior and exterior noise. Other examples of noise-sensitive land uses include nursing homes, schools, hospitals, libraries, childcare facilities, and places of worship.

The Specific Plan Area is located in unincorporated Sacramento County along a four-mile segment of North Watt Avenue, extending from Interstate 80 to Antelope Road. Noise-sensitive land uses in the Specific Plan Area include single-family residential neighborhoods located east, and multi-family residential uses located both east and west of Watt Avenue, as well as community facilities such as the North Highlands Community Center, local parks, and schools. The nearest noise-sensitive land uses to the areas where construction is anticipated under the proposed Specific Plan are residences located adjacent to or within 50 feet of the roadway right-of-way, with some sensitive receptors located within approximately 100 to 200 feet of properties where development is anticipated under the proposed Specific Plan.

COMMUNITY NOISE SURVEY

To characterize existing noise conditions within the Specific Plan Area, a noise monitoring survey was conducted at representative locations throughout the corridor. The monitoring included both long-term and short-term measurements to capture temporal and spatial variations in the ambient noise environment.

- Long-term (24-hour) measurements were conducted at selected locations throughout the Specific Plan Area, with a focus on locations where the County anticipates future development under the proposed Specific Plan. These sites were selected to represent baseline noise conditions near existing residential areas, civic facilities, and infill opportunity sites.
- Short-term (15-minute to 1-hour) measurements were conducted at additional locations along arterial and local roadways, adjacent to sensitive land uses. These data supplemented the long-term monitoring and provided broader spatial coverage of the corridor.

The noise survey was conducted on August 19th through August 20th, 2025. The dominant noise source identified during the ambient noise survey was vehicular traffic noise on Watt Avenue.[9]

Community noise survey locations are shown in Plate NOI-2. The L_{eq}, and L_{max} values were taken at four long-term (LT) and six short-term (ST) ambient noise locations, with the results presented in Table NOI-3. During the survey, average daytime ambient noise levels ranged from 57 dB to 67 dB L_{eq}, with maximum noise levels that ranged from 69 dB to 90 dB L_{max}. Day-night noise levels ranged from 62 dB to 70 dBA L_{eq}.

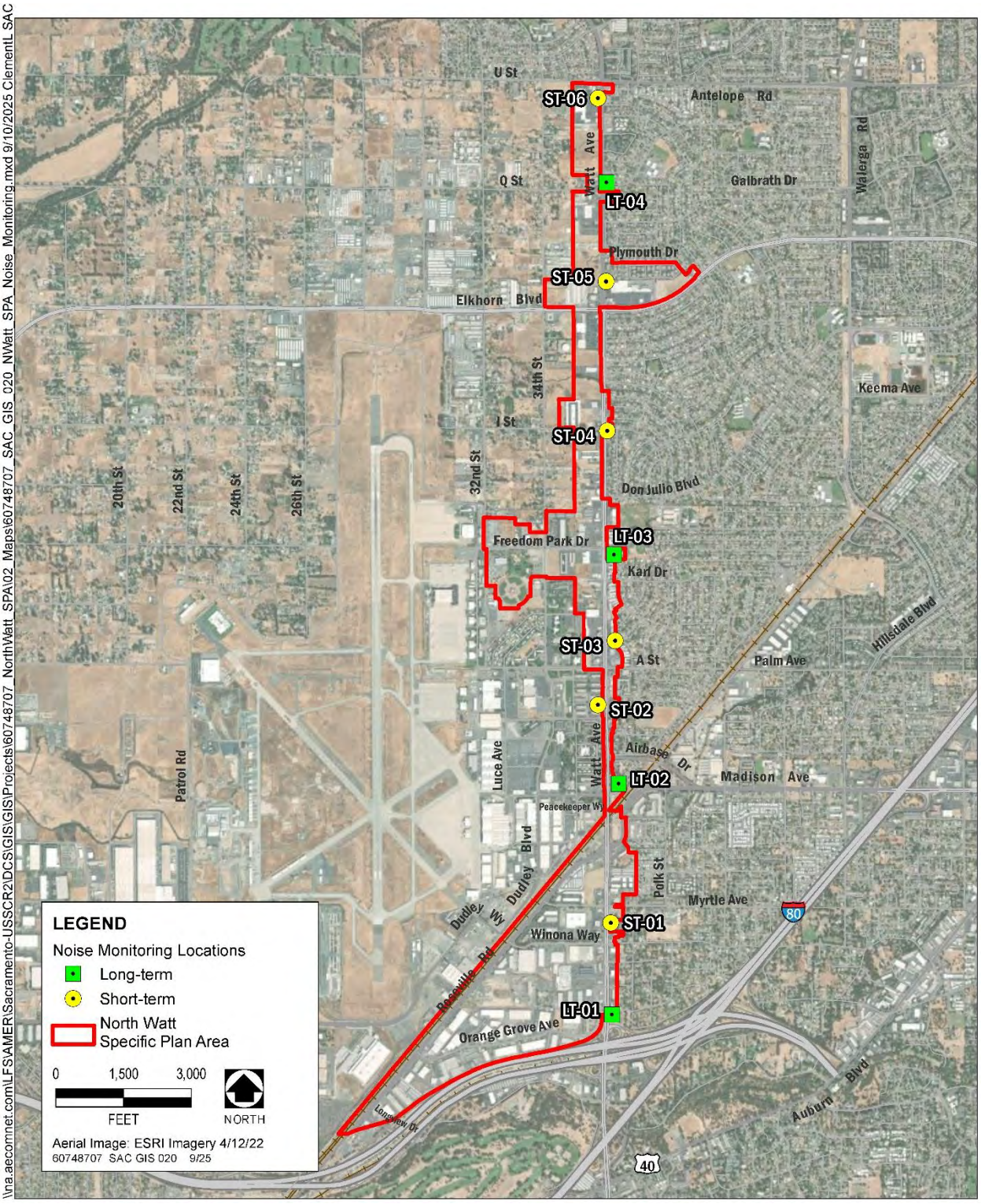
Table NOI-3: Summary of Measured Ambient Noise Levels, dBA

Site	Address	Start Time	Daytime L_{eq}	Daytime L_{max}	Nighttime L_{eq}	Nighttime L_{max}	L_{dn}
LT-01	3504 Jenny Lind Avenue, North Highlands	14:30	62	80	58	74	65
LT-02	Near 5200 Field Street, North Highlands	15:00	61	79	60	77	67
LT-03	6040 Watt Avenue, North Highlands	15:00	58	75	55	71	62
LT-04	3601 Bainbridge Drive, North Highlands	15:30	67	90	64	82	70
ST-01	4830 Watt Avenue, North Highlands	11:37	58	73	NA	NA	NA
ST-02	3427 Beech Street, McClellan Park	13:37	63	78	NA	NA	NA
ST-03	5651 North Haven Drive, North Highlands	14:04	57	69	NA	NA	NA
ST-04	Near 3600 Bolivar Avenue, North Highlands	14:27	67	80	NA	NA	NA
ST-05	Near 6920 Watt Avenue, North Highlands	14:49	65	86	NA	NA	NA
ST-06	Across Road near 7509 Oakvale Court, North Highlands	15:11	64	79	NA	NA	NA

Notes: dB = A-weighted decibels; L_{dn} = day-night average noise level; L_{eq} = the equivalent hourly average noise level; L_{max} = maximum noise level. Monitoring locations correspond to those depicted in Plate NOI-2. Daytime = 7:00 A.M. – 10:00 P.M. Nighttime = 10:00 P.M. – 7:00 A.M.
Source: Data collected by AECOM 2025

[9] Measurements of noise levels were taken in accordance with ANSI standards. Continuous 24-hour, long-term (LT) monitoring of noise levels was conducted at two locations, and 1-hour monitoring at one short-term (ST) location, using Larson Davis Laboratories (LDL) Model 820 sound-level meters. The sound-level meters were calibrated before and after use with an LDL Model CAL200 acoustical calibrator to ensure that the measurements would be accurate. The equipment used meets all pertinent specifications of the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) for Type 1 sound-level meters (ANSI S1.4-1983[R2006]).

Plate NOI-2: Noise Monitoring Locations



Source: AECOM 2025

Existing Noise Sources

The principal sources of noise in the Specific Plan Area are vehicular traffic along Watt Avenue and other adjacent arterial and collector roadways, which experience moderate to high volumes of daily traffic. Additional contributions to the ambient noise environment may include commercial and industrial operations within and near McClellan Business Park, particularly during daytime hours, as well as typical neighborhood activities from residential areas located along both sides of the corridor. Rail activity and occasional overhead aircraft may also contribute intermittently to the overall noise conditions but are considered secondary sources relative to roadway traffic.

Traffic

Existing vehicle traffic noise levels in the Specific Plan Area were modeled using the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)[10] Highway Traffic Noise Prediction Model (FHWA-RD-77-108) and County and Caltrans traffic counts.[11] Existing and future traffic cumulative noise levels under No Project and Plus Project conditions were based on SACSIM23 modeled traffic volumes.

Table NOI-4 summarizes the modeled existing traffic noise levels, provides noise levels from the centerline of roadways, and lists distances from the modeled roadway centerlines to the 60 dB, 65 dB, and 70 dBA L_{dn} noise contours. The extent to which noise-sensitive uses in the area are affected by existing traffic noise depends on their respective proximity to the roadways and their sensitivity to noise.

Table NOI-4: Summary of Modeled Levels of Existing Traffic Noise

No.	Roadway	Segment From	Segment To	Noise Level, dBA @ 100 Feet	Ft. to 70 dBA	Ft. to 65 dBA	Ft. to 60 dBA
1	32nd Street	Freedom Park Drive	I Street	56	4	14	43
2	32nd Street	I Street	Elkhorn Boulevard	60	9	30	94
3	32nd Street	Elkhorn Boulevard	Q Street	61	12	36	115
4	32nd Street	Q Street	U Street	52	2	5	16
5	34th Street	Freedom Park Drive	I Street	66	39	125	394
6	34th Street	I Street	Elkhorn Boulevard	67	46	145	460
7	34th Street	Elkhorn Boulevard	Q Street	65	33	103	327
8	34th Street	Q Street	U Street	62	17	53	168
9	A Street	Skvarla Avenue	Watt Avenue	45	0	1	3
10	Airbase Drive	Watt Avenue	Madison Avenue	69	86	271	858
11	Antelope Road	Watt Avenue	Walerga Road	70	103	325	1028

[10] The FHWA model is based on California Vehicle Noise (CALVENO) reference noise factors for automobiles, medium trucks, and heavy trucks, with consideration given to vehicle volume, speed, roadway configuration, distance to the receptor, and ground attenuation factors.

[11] https://data.saccounty.gov/datasets/traffic-count-data/explore?showTable=true

No.	Roadway	Segment From	Segment To	Noise Level, dBA @ 100 Feet	Ft. to 70 dBA	Ft. to 65 dBA	Ft. to 60 dBA
12	Antelope Road	Walerga Road	Don Julio Boulevard	71	128	404	1277
13	Antelope Road	Don Julio Boulevard	Roseville Road	74	263	831	2629
14	Antelope Road	Roseville Road	I 80 Westbound Ramps	74	265	838	2649
15	I-80 Eastbound	Fulton Avenue	Watt Avenue	81	1156	3657	11563
16	I-80 Westbound	Watt Avenue	Fulton Avenue	81	1182	3737	11818
17	Don Julio Boulevard	Watt Avenue	Walerga Road	66	38	120	379
18	Don Julio Boulevard	Walerga Road	Elkhorn Boulevard	63	21	65	207
19	Don Julio Boulevard	Elkhorn Boulevard	Antelope Road	70	112	354	1118
20	Dudley Boulevard	Freedom Park Drive	James Way	67	48	153	485
21	Dudley Boulevard	James Way	Palm Street	67	48	152	481
22	Dudley Boulevard	Palm Street	Peacekeeper Way	64	24	77	242
23	Dudley Boulevard	Peacekeeper Way	Dudley Way	67	50	158	501
24	Dudley Boulevard	Dudley Way	Winters Street	67	54	170	538
25	Elkhorn Boulevard	16th Street	32nd Street	73	179	567	1792
26	Elkhorn Boulevard	32nd Street	34th Street	72	153	483	1528
27	Elkhorn Boulevard	34th Street	Watt Avenue	71	120	378	1197
28	Elkhorn Boulevard	Watt Avenue	Thomas Drive	71	131	415	1312
29	Elkhorn Boulevard	Thomas Drive	Larchmont Drive	72	153	484	1530
30	Elkhorn Boulevard	Larchmont Drive	Walerga Road	73	194	613	1937
31	Elkhorn Boulevard	Walerga Road	Spring Drive	74	258	816	2579
32	Elkhorn Boulevard	Spring Drive	Don Julio Boulevard	75	297	940	2973
33	Elkhorn Boulevard	Don Julio Boulevard	Hillsdale Boulevard	76	432	1366	4321
34	Elkhorn Boulevard	Hillsdale Boulevard	I 80 Westbound Ramps	77	471	1490	4711
35	Elverta Road	16th Street	Watt Avenue	67	49	155	491
36	Freedom Park Drive	32nd Street	34th Street	56	4	14	43
37	Freedom Park Drive	34th Street	Watt Avenue	59	8	25	78
38	I Street	32nd Street	34th Street	58	6	20	64
39	I Street	34th Street	Watt Avenue	64	24	77	244
40	I-80 Eastbound	Raley Boulevard	Winters Street	78	576	1820	5756
41	I-80 Eastbound	Winters Street	Longview Drive	78	563	1782	5635
42	I-80 Eastbound	Longview Drive	Watt Avenue	76	415	1311	4147
43	I-80 Eastbound	Watt Avenue	Madison Avenue	78	687	2172	6869
44	I-80 Eastbound	Madison Avenue	Elkhorn Boulevard	79	782	2472	7819
45	I-80 Eastbound	Elkhorn Boulevard	Antelope Road	79	803	2539	8030

No.	Roadway	Segment From	Segment To	Noise Level, dBA @ 100 Feet	Ft. to 70 dBA	Ft. to 65 dBA	Ft. to 60 dBA
46	I-80 Eastbound	Antelope Road	Riverside Avenue	80	992	3138	9922
47	I-80 Westbound	Riverside Avenue	Antelope Road	79	734	2323	7345
48	I-80 Westbound	Antelope Road	Elkhorn Boulevard	79	757	2395	7574
49	I-80 Westbound	Elkhorn Boulevard	Madison Avenue	79	819	2591	8192
50	I-80 Westbound	Madison Avenue	Watt Avenue	76	422	1336	4223
51	I-80 Westbound	Watt Avenue	Longview Drive	78	616	1946	6155
52	I-80 Westbound	Longview Drive	Winters Street	77	473	1494	4726
53	I-80 Westbound	Winters Street	Raley Boulevard	78	615	1946	6152
54	James Way	Dudley Boulevard	Skvarla Avenue	43	0	1	2
55	Longview Drive	Roseville Road	I 80 Westbound Ramps	68	62	195	615
56	Longview Drive	I 80 Eastbound Ramps	Watt Avenue	63	22	70	222
57	Madison Avenue	Roseville Road	Airbase Drive	67	52	165	522
58	Madison Avenue	Airbase Drive	I 80 Westbound Ramps	72	172	545	1724
59	Myrtle Avenue	Roseville Road	Watt Avenue	52	2	5	16
60	Orange Grove Avenue	Roseville Road	Watt Avenue	67	51	162	514
61	Palm Street	Dudley Boulevard	Watt Avenue	63	18	58	183
62	Peacekeeper Way	Dudley Boulevard	Watt Avenue	61	14	43	135
63	Q Street	32nd Street	34th Street	61	14	43	137
64	Q Street	34th Street	Watt Avenue	65	29	93	294
65	Roseville Road	Tri Station Road	Longview Drive	72	153	483	1527
66	Roseville Road	Longview Drive	Orange Grove Avenue	71	119	375	1186
67	Roseville Road	Orange Grove Avenue	Winona Way	74	253	799	2527
68	Roseville Road	Winona Way	Watt Avenue	71	133	420	1328
69	Roseville Road	Watt Avenue	Madison Avenue	73	188	596	1885
70	Roseville Road	Madison Avenue	Oakhollow Drive	72	155	491	1552
71	Roseville Road	Oakhollow Drive	Andrea Boulevard	69	85	268	847
72	Roseville Road	Andrea Boulevard	Diablo Drive	68	60	189	598
73	Roseville Road	Diablo Drive	Antelope Road	72	159	504	1592
74	U Street	28th Street	32nd Street	55	3	10	31
75	U Street	32nd Street	34th Street	59	8	24	77
76	U Street	34th Street	Watt Avenue	61	12	38	120
77	Walerga Road	Oakhollow Drive	Don Julio Boulevard	69	74	236	745
78	Walerga Road	Don Julio Boulevard	Elkhorn Boulevard	70	91	287	908
79	Walerga Road	Elkhorn Boulevard	Antelope Road	72	146	461	1457
80	Watt Avenue	I-80 Westbound	I-80 Eastbound Ramps	75	291	921	2914

No.	Roadway	Segment From	Segment To	Noise Level, dBA @ 100 Feet	Ft. to 70 dBA	Ft. to 65 dBA	Ft. to 60 dBA
81	Watt Avenue	I-80 Westbound Ramps	Winona Way	71	115	362	1146
82	Watt Avenue	Winona Way	Myrtle Avenue	73	203	641	2025
83	Watt Avenue	Myrtle Avenue	Roseville Road	73	193	611	1934
84	Watt Avenue	Roseville Road	Airbase Drive	71	125	396	1252
85	Watt Avenue	Airbase Drive	A Street	70	104	328	1038
86	Watt Avenue	A Street	Don Julio Boulevard	72	144	454	1435
87	Watt Avenue	Don Julio Boulevard	I Street	72	141	447	1414
88	Watt Avenue	I Street	Elkhorn Boulevard	71	121	382	1209
89	Watt Avenue	Elkhorn Boulevard	Q Street	70	95	300	949
90	Watt Avenue	Q Street	Antelope Road	71	124	393	1244
91	Watt Avenue	Antelope Road	Elverta Road	70	108	341	1077
92	Watt Avenue	Elverta Road	PFE Road	68	65	207	655
93	Winona Way	Roseville Road	Watt Avenue	58	6	19	60

Notes: dB = A-weighted decibels; I-80 = Interstate 80; L_{dn} = day-night average noise level. The columns labeled "Ft. to" different contours represents the distance between the referenced roadway centerline and each noise contour.
Source: Data modeled by AECOM in 2026

RAILROAD

A Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) freight rail line crosses Watt Avenue in the southern portion of the Specific Plan Area. Train passbys along this corridor may intermittently contribute to the ambient noise environment, particularly in proximity to the crossing and adjacent parcels.

Although freight rail operations are infrequent compared to major commuter rail or light rail services, train horns, wheel squeal, and vibration from passbys may be audible at nearby sensitive land uses, especially during nighttime hours when background noise is lower. The crossing may also result in short-duration noise events from activated warning bells and gate mechanisms.

While there are no passenger rail stations within the Specific Plan Area, this active freight line represents a relevant noise source in the southern segment of the Specific Plan Area.

AIRCRAFT

The Specific Plan Area is located adjacent to the former McClellan Air Force Base (Sacramento County Department of Airports 2016). While the former Air Force Base historically generated substantial aircraft noise, it has since been decommissioned and redeveloped into a commercial development. The site continues to operate as Sacramento McClellan Airport, a public-use airport that accommodates a range of aviation activities, including general aviation, governmental operations, and seasonal aerial firefighting operations associated with the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) McClellan Airtanker Base. Small portions of the Specific Plan

Area are within the Overflight Zone associated with Sacramento McClellan Airport. Aircraft operations at the airport are substantially lower than under historical military use, but include periodic fixed-wing and helicopter activity, particularly during peak fire season when mobile air traffic control operations are in place. Available information indicates that aircraft activity is intermittent and varies seasonally, with increased activity during training and peak firefighting operations (CapRadio 2025).

Other airports in the region include Mather Airport and Sacramento International Airport. Mather Airport is located approximately eight miles southeast of the Specific Plan Area. According to the Sacramento County Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan (ALUCP), the Specific Plan Area is situated outside the 60 dB CNEL aircraft noise contour associated with Mather Airport, and is not subject to any land use compatibility restrictions related to airport noise. Sacramento International Airport, located approximately 11 miles west of the Specific Plan Area, also does not influence the Specific Plan Area with respect to aircraft noise exposure.

FIXED NOISE SOURCES

Fixed noise sources within and near the Specific Plan Area include a mix of commercial, light industrial, and utility-related activities including:

- Mechanical equipment (e.g., HVAC units, compressors, refrigeration systems);
- Trucking and delivery activity;
- Equipment yards and material handling;
- Waste management or public utility facilities; and
- Local commercial and service uses (e.g., auto shops, retail stores).

Although many of these operations occur indoors, exterior equipment and outdoor activity areas can result in intermittent or continuous noise. Noise levels may vary by time of day, season, and operational demand, and some sources may exhibit tonal or impulsive characteristics that are more noticeable to nearby receptors.

From a land use planning perspective, fixed-source noise control is focused on two objectives:

1. Preventing new noise-generating uses from locating adjacent to noise-sensitive land uses without adequate mitigation; and

2. Preventing new sensitive uses (e.g., residential, schools) from being developed near existing noise sources without consideration of potential exposure and incorporation of appropriate building or site-level noise attenuation.

Mitigation for fixed-source noise typically includes site planning, equipment enclosures, sound walls, and building façade treatments, where needed, to comply with the Sacramento County General Plan Noise Element performance standards.

REGULATORY SETTING

Various agencies have established noise guidelines and standards to protect citizens from potential hearing damage and other adverse physiological and social effects associated with noise and vibration. Following is a discussion of federal, State, and local noise regulations and guidelines. This information is intended to provide the regulatory context against which existing and future noise conditions can be compared.

FEDERAL

Although not directly applicable to the proposed Specific Plan, the research that supported the development of federal community noise standards is broadly applicable in understanding human response to different noise levels and is summarized below.

U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY NOISE CONTROL ACT

The Federal Noise Control Act of 1972 (Public Law 92-574) established a requirement that all federal agencies administer their programs to promote an environment free of noise that would jeopardize public health or welfare.[12] Although the EPA was given a major role in disseminating information to the public and coordinating federal agencies, each federal agency retains authority to adopt noise regulations pertaining to agency programs.[13]

In 1974, in response to the requirements of the federal Noise Control Act, the EPA identified indoor and outdoor noise level limits to protect public health and welfare (communication disruption, sleep disturbance, and hearing damage). Outdoor and indoor noise exposure limits of 55 dB L_{dn} and 45 dB L_{dn}, respectively, are identified as desirable to protect against speech interference and sleep disturbance for residential, educational, and healthcare areas. The sound-level criterion identified to protect against hearing damage in commercial and industrial areas is 70 dB 24-hour L_{eq} (both outdoors and indoors).

The EPA's Office of Noise Abatement and Control was established to coordinate federal noise control activities. In 1981, EPA administrators determined that subjective issues such as noise would be better addressed at lower levels of government. Consequently, in 1982 responsibilities for regulating noise control policies were transferred to state and local governments.

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[12] The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) was given the responsibility for providing information to the public regarding identifiable effects of noise on public health and welfare, publishing information on the levels of environmental noise that will protect the public health and welfare with an adequate margin of safety, coordinating federal research and activities related to noise control, and establishing federal noise emission standards for selected products distributed in interstate commerce. The Noise Control Act also directed that all federal agencies comply with applicable federal, State, interstate, and local noise control regulations.

[13] The EPA can, however, require other federal agencies to justify their noise regulations in terms of the Noise Control Act policy requirements.

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Noise Abatement and Control (24 CFR Part 51, Subpart B)

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has established guidelines for evaluating noise impacts on residential projects seeking financial support under various grant programs (HUD 2013), as summarized below:

- **Acceptable ≤ 65 dB.** Sites are generally considered acceptable for residential use if they are exposed to outdoor noise levels of 65 dB L_{dn} or less.
- **Normally Unacceptable 65–75 dB.** Sites are considered "normally unacceptable" if they are exposed to outdoor noise levels of 65–75 dB L_{dn}.
- **Unacceptable > 75 dB.** Sites are considered "unacceptable" if they are exposed to outdoor noise levels above 75 dB L_{dn}.

The HUD goal for the interior noise levels in residences is 45 dB L_{dn} or less (HUD 2015).

Federal Aviation Administration Airport Noise Compatibility Planning (14 CFR Part 159)

14 CFR Part 150, "Airport Noise Compatibility Planning" prescribes the procedures, standards, and methodology to be applied to airport noise compatibility planning activities. Noise levels below 65 dB L_{dn} are normally considered to be acceptable for noise-sensitive land uses.

Federal Highway Administration Procedures for Abatement of Highway Traffic Noise and Construction Noise Regulations (23 CFR 772)

FHWA regulations (23 CFR 772) specify procedures for evaluating noise impacts associated with federally funded highway projects and determining whether these impacts are sufficient to justify funding noise abatement. The FHWA noise abatement criteria are based on worst hourly L_{eq} sound levels, not 24-hour average values (e.g., L_{dn} or CNEL). The worst-hour L_{eq} criteria for residential, educational, and healthcare facilities are 67 dB outdoors and 52 dB indoors. The worst-hour L_{eq} criterion for commercial and industrial areas is 72 dB (outdoors).

Federal Transit Administration Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment (FTA Report No. 0123)

FTA procedures for the evaluation of noise from transit projects are specified in the document entitled, "Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment" (FTA 2018). The FTA noise impact criteria presented in this document address the following categories:

- **Category 1:** Buildings or parks, where quiet is an essential element of their purpose.

- **Category 2:** Residences and buildings where people normally sleep. This includes residences, hospitals, and hotels where nighttime sensitivity is assumed to be of utmost importance.
- **Category 3:** Institutional land uses with primarily daytime and evening use. This category includes schools, libraries, churches, and active parks.

The FTA noise impact threshold is a sliding scale based on existing noise exposure and land use of sensitive receivers. The basic concept of the FTA noise impact criteria is that more project noise is allowed in areas where existing noise is higher. However, in areas where existing noise exposure is higher, the allowable increase above the existing noise exposure decreases. For example, in an area with an existing noise level of 55 dBA, the allowable increase in noise level is 3 dBA, resulting in a total future noise impact threshold of 58 dBA. For an area with an existing noise level of 60 dBA, the allowable increase in noise level is only 2 dBA, resulting in a total future noise impact threshold of 62 dBA.

FTA CONSTRUCTION VIBRATION CRITERIA

The FTA Guidance Manual recommends using local construction noise limits, if possible. The primary concern regarding construction vibration is potential damage to structures. The thresholds for potential damage are much higher than the thresholds for evaluating potential annoyance used to assess impact from operational vibration.

Building damage criteria recommended by FTA are shown in Table NOI-5. The vibration limits recommended by the FTA represent levels at which a risk for damage would exist for each building category, not the level at which damage would occur.

Table NOI-5: FTA Construction Vibration Damage Criteria

Building Category	PPV (inch/second)	Approximate RMS Vibration Velocity Level[a]
I. Reinforced concrete, steel, or timber (no plaster)	0.5	102
II. Engineered concrete and masonry (no plaster)	0.3	98
III. Non-engineered timber and masonry buildings	0.2	94
IV. Buildings extremely susceptible to vibration damage	0.12	90

Notes:
[a] RMS vibration velocity level in VdB relative to 1 micro-inch/second.
FTA = Federal Transit Administration
PPV = peak particle velocity
RMS = root-mean-square
Vdb = vibration decibel(s)
Source: FTA 2018

To avoid temporary annoyance to building occupants during construction or construction interference with vibration-sensitive equipment, FTA recommends comparing the project construction-related VdB to the criteria shown in Table NOI-6 for frequent, occasional, and infrequent events. FTA defines frequent events as more than 70 events per day, occasional events as 30–70 events per day, and infrequent events as fewer than 30 events per day. It was conservatively assumed that the construction-related, vibration-generating activities under the proposed Specific Plan would fall under occasional events

as defined by FTA. The vibration annoyance criteria are shown in Table NOI-6 with 65 VdB for land use Category 1 and 78 VdB for land use Category 2.

Table NOI-6: FTA Vibration Impact Criteria

Land Use Category	Frequent Events[a]	Occasional Events[b]	Infrequent Events[c]
Category 1: Buildings where vibration would interfere with interior operations	65 VdB [d]	65 VdB [d]	65 VdB [d]
Category 2: Residences and buildings where people normally sleep	72 VdB	75 VdB	80 VdB
Category 3: Institutional land uses with primarily daytime uses	75 VdB	78 VdB	83 VdB

Notes: All impact levels in VdB; relative to 1 micro-inch/second.
[a] "Frequent events" is defined as more than 70 vibration events from the same source per day.
[b] "Occasional events" is defined as 30 to 70 vibration events from the same source per day.
[c] "Infrequent events" is defined as fewer than 30 vibration events from the same source per day.
[d] This criterion limit is based on levels that are acceptable for most moderately sensitive equipment, such as optical microscopes. Vibration-sensitive manufacturing or research would require detailed evaluation to define the acceptable vibration levels.
FTA = Federal Transit Administration
Vdb = vibration decibel(s)
Source: FTA 2018

STATE

STATE OF CALIFORNIA GENERAL PLAN GUIDELINES, GOVERNMENT CODE SECTION 65302 ET SEQ.

In 1971, the State required cities and counties to include noise elements in their general plans (Government Code Section 65302 et seq.). The State of California General Plan Guidelines (Office of Planning and Research 2017) identify guidelines for the noise elements of local general plans, including a sound level/land-use compatibility chart. The noise element guidelines identify the "normally acceptable" range of noise exposure for low-density residential uses as less than 60 dB L_{dn}, and the "conditionally acceptable" range as 55-70 dB L_{dn}. Overlapping noise level ranges are intended to indicate that local conditions (existing sound levels and community attitudes toward dominant sound sources) should be considered in evaluating land use compatibility at specific locations. The State's guidance for land use/noise compatibility is summarized in Table NOI-7.

CALIFORNIA NOISE INSULATION STANDARDS, CALIFORNIA CODE OF REGULATIONS PART 2, TITLE 24

Part 2, Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations "California Noise Insulation Standards" establishes minimum noise insulation standards to protect persons within new hotels, motels, dormitories, long-term care facilities, apartment houses, and dwellings

other than single-family residences. Under this regulation, interior noise levels attributable to exterior noise sources should not exceed 45 dB L_{dn} in any habitable room.[14]

Table NOI-7: Land Use Noise Compatibility Guidelines (CNEL or Ldn, dBA)

Land Use Category	Normally Acceptable[1]	Conditionally Acceptable[2]	Normally Unacceptable[3]	Clearly Unacceptable[4]
Residential-Low Density Single Family, Duplex, Mobile Home	<60	55–70	70–75	75+
Residential-Multiple Family	<65	60–70	70–75	75+
Transient Lodging, Motel, Hotel	<65	60–70	70–80	80+
School, Library, Church, Hospital, Nursing Home	<70	60–70	70–80	80+
Auditorium, Concert Hall, Amphitheater		<70	65+	
Sports Arenas, Outdoor Spectator Sports		<75	70+	
Playground, Neighborhood Park	<70		67.5–75	72.5+
Golf Courses, Stable, Water Recreation, Cemetery	<75		70–80	80+
Office Building, Business Commercial and Professional	<70	67.5–77.5	75+	
Industrial, Manufacturing, Utilities, Agriculture	<75	70–80	75+	

Notes: CNEL = Community Noise Equivalent Level; dBA = A-weighted decibels; L_{dn} = day-night average noise level.

1 Specified land use is satisfactory, based on the assumption that any buildings involved are of normal conventional construction, without any special noise insulation requirements.

2 New construction or development should be undertaken only after a detailed analysis of the noise reduction requirements is made and needed noise insulation features are included in the design. Conventional construction, but with closed windows and fresh air supply systems or air conditioning will normally suffice.

3 New construction or development should generally be discouraged. If new construction or development does proceed, a detailed analysis of the noise reduction requirements must be made and needed noise insulation features included in the design. Outdoor areas must be shielded.

4 New construction or development should generally not be undertaken.

Source: OPR 2017

Division of Aeronautics Noise Standards, California Code of Regulations Title 21, Chapter 5000

Title 21, Chapter 5000 of the California Code of Regulations identifies noise compatibility standards for airport operations. Section 5014 of the Code states that the standard for the acceptable level of aircraft noise for persons living in the vicinity of airports is established to be 65 dB CNEL. Residences, schools, hospitals, or places of worship exposed to aircraft noise levels exceeding 65 dB CNEL are deemed to be in a noise-impacted area. Airports operating within a noise-impacted area require a variance, as prescribed in Article 5 of Title 21, Chapter 5000 of the California Code of Regulations.

[14] Where such residences are located in an environment where exterior noise is 60 dB L_{dn} or greater, an acoustical analysis is required to ensure that interior levels do not exceed the 45 dB L_{dn} interior standard.

California Department of Transportation

For the protection of fragile, historic, and residential structures, Caltrans recommends for highway construction analysis a threshold of 0.2 in/sec PPV for normal residential buildings and 0.08 in/sec PPV for old or historically significant structures (Caltrans 2013). These standards are more stringent than the recommended guidelines established by the FTA, presented above. Table NOI-8 shows the general thresholds for structural responses to vibration levels.

Table NOI-8: Structural Responses to Vibration Levels, Peak Vibration Threshold (in/sec PPV)

Structure and Condition	Peak Vibration Threshold (in/sec PPV) Transient Sources	Peak Vibration Threshold (in/sec PPV) Continuous/Frequent Intermittent Sources
Extremely fragile historic buildings, ruins, ancient monuments	0.12	0.08
Fragile buildings	0.2	0.1
Historic and some old buildings	0.5	0.25
Older residential structures	0.5	0.3
New residential structures	1.0	0.5
Modern industrial/commercial buildings	2.0	0.5

Notes: in/sec = inches per second; PPV = peak particle velocity
Source: Caltrans 2020

Local

Airport Land Use Compatibility

The Sacramento Area Council of Governments serves as the Airport Land Use Commission (ALUC) for Sacramento, Sutter, Yolo, and Yuba counties. California's State Aeronautics Act establishes that ALUCs are responsible for developing Airport Land Use Compatibility Plans and reviewing proposed land uses in areas around public-use airports to ensure compatibility with airport operations.

Sacramento County General Plan

The General Plan Noise Element includes land use compatibility guidelines that establish acceptable noise exposure ranges for residential and other sensitive uses based on CNEL or L_{dn}. The County of Sacramento General Plan Noise Element contains policies related to land use and noise compatibility that are relevant to the proposed Specific Plan.

Policy NO-2. Proposals for new development within Sacramento County which may be affected by aircraft noise shall be evaluated relative to Table 4: Land Use Compatibility for Aircraft Noise, except in the following cases. Development proposals which may be affected by aircraft noise from Sacramento International Airport shall be evaluated relative to the Land Use Compatibility Plan prepared for Sacramento International Airport dated December 12, 2013, adopted herein by

reference. Development proposals which may be affected by aircraft noise from Mather Airport shall be evaluated relative to the Land Use Compatibility Plan prepared for Mather airport dated February 2021, adopted herein reference, as well as applicable footnotes in Table 4.

Policy NO-3. New residential development within the 60 CNEL noise contours adopted by the County for land use planning purposes at any airport or Helipad within Sacramento County shall be prohibited unless exceptions set forth in Table 4 below are found to be applicable. This policy is not applicable to Executive Airport.

Policy NO-6. Where a project would consist of or include non-transportation noise sources, the noise generation of those sources shall be mitigated so as not exceed the interior and exterior noise level standards of Table NOI-10 at existing noise-sensitive areas in the project vicinity.

Policy NO-7. The “last use there” shall be responsible for noise mitigation. However, if a noise generating use is proposed adjacent to lands zoned for uses which may have sensitivity to noise, then the noise generating use shall be responsible for mitigating its noise generation to a state of compliance with the Table NOI-10 standards at the property line of the generating use in anticipation of the future neighboring development.

Policy NO-8. Noise associated with construction activities shall adhere to the County Code requirements. Specifically, Section 6.68.090(e) addresses construction noise within the County.

Policy NO-12. All noise analyses prepared to determine compliance with the noise level standards contained within this Noise Element shall be prepared in accordance with Table NOI-11.

Policy NO-13. Where noise mitigation measures are required to satisfy the noise level standards of this Noise Element, emphasis shall be placed on the use of setbacks and site design to the extent feasible, prior to consideration of the use of noise barriers.

Policy NO-15. The County shall have the flexibility to consider the application of 5 dB less restrictive exterior noise standards than those prescribed in Table NOI-9 and Table NOI-10 in cases where it is impractical or infeasible to reduce exterior noise levels within infill projects to a state of compliance with the Table NOI-9 or Table NOI-10 standards. In such cases, the rational for such consideration shall be clearly presented and disclosure statements and noise easements should be included as conditions of project approval. The interior noise level standards of Table NOI-9 or Table NOI-10 would still apply. The maximum allowable long-term noise exposure permissible for non-industrial uses is 75 dB.

NO-16. The following sources of noise shall be exempt from the provisions of this Noise Element: Emergency warning devices and equipment

operated in conjunction with emergency situations, such as sirens and generators which are activated during power outages. The routine testing of such warning devices and equipment shall also be exempt provided such testing occurs during daytime hours.

Table NOI-9: Noise Standards for New Uses Affected by Traffic and Railroad Noise [Table 1 of the Sacramento County General Plan]

Land Use	Sensitive Outdoor Area - L_{dn}	Sensitive Interior Area - L_{dn}
All Residential	65	45
Transient Lodging	65	45
Hospitals & Nursing Homes	65	45
Theaters & Auditoriums	-	35
Churches, Meeting Halls, Schools, Libraries, etc.	65	40
Office Buildings	65	45
Commercial Buildings	-	50
Playgrounds, Parks, etc.	70	-
Industry	65	50

Source: County of Sacramento General Plan Noise Element 2017. Table 1.

Table NOI-10: Non-Transportation Noise Standards Sacramento County Noise Element Median (L_{50}) / Maximum (L_{max})[1] [Table 2 of the Sacramento County General Plan]

Receiving Land Use	Outdoor Area[2] Daytime	Outdoor Area[2] Nighttime	Interior[3] Day & Night	Interior[3] Notes
All Residential	55 / 75	50 / 70	35 / 55	
Transient Lodging	55 / 75	---	35 / 55	4
Hospitals & Nursing Homes	55 / 75	---	35 / 55	5, 6
Theaters & Auditoriums	---	---	30 / 50	6
Churches, Meeting Halls, Schools, Libraries, etc.	55 / 75	---	35 / 60	6
Office Buildings	60 / 75	---	45 / 65	6
Commercial Buildings	---	---	45 / 65	6
Playgrounds, Parks, etc.	65 / 75	---	---	6
Industry	60 / 80	---	50 / 70	6

Notes:

1 The Table NOI-10 standards shall be reduced by 5 dB for sounds consisting primarily of speech or music, and for recurring impulsive sounds. If the existing ambient noise level exceeds the standards of Table NOI-10, then the noise level standards shall be increased at 5 dB increments to encompass the ambient.

2 Sensitive areas are defined acoustic terminology section.

3 Interior noise level standards are applied within noise-sensitive areas of the various land uses, with windows and doors in closed positions.

4 Outdoor activity areas of transient lodging facilities are not commonly used during nighttime hours.

5 Hospitals are often noise-generating uses. The exterior noise level standards for hospitals are applicable only at clearly identified areas designated for outdoor relaxation by either hospital staff or patients.

6 The outdoor activity areas of these uses (if any), are not typically utilized during nighttime hours.

7 Where median (L_{50}) noise level data is not available for a particular noise source, average (L_{eq}) values may be substituted for the standards of this table provided the noise source in question operates for at least 30 minutes of an hour. If the source in question operates less than 30 minutes per hour, then the maximum noise level standards shown would apply.

Source: County of Sacramento General Plan Noise Element 2017. Table 2.

Table NOI-11: Requirements for Acoustical Analyses Prepared in Sacramento County
[Table 3 of the Sacramento County General Plan]

An acoustical analysis prepared pursuant to the Noise Element shall:
A. Be the responsibility of the applicant.
B. Be prepared by qualified persons experienced in the fields of environmental noise assessment and architectural acoustics.
C. Include representative noise level measurements with sufficient sampling periods and locations to adequately describe local conditions.
D. Estimate projected future (20-year) noise levels in terms of the Standards of Table 2, and compare those levels to the adopted policies of the Noise Element.
E. Recommend appropriate mitigation to achieve compliance with the adopted policies and standards of the Noise Element.
F. Estimate interior and exterior noise exposure after the prescribed mitigation measures have been implemented.

Sacramento County Noise Control Ordinance

Noise control regulations in Sacramento County are specified under Chapter 6.68 of the County Code. The ordinance contains performance standards for the purpose of preventing unnecessary, excessive and offensive noise levels at sensitive receptors within the county. Table NOI-12 includes excerpts from the Noise Control Ordinance.

Table NOI-12: Excerpts from the County of Sacramento Noise Control Ordinance

Noise Area	County Zoning Districts	Time Period	Exterior Noise Standard
1	RE-1, RD-1, RE-2, RD-2, RE-3, RD-3, RD-4, R-1-A, RD-5, R-2, RD-10, R-2A, RD-20, R-3, R-D-30, RD-40, RM-1, RM-2, A-1-B, AR-1, A-2, AR-2, A-5, AR-5	7 a.m.–10 p.m.	55 dB
1	RE-1, RD-1, RE-2, RD-2, RE-3, RD-3, RD-4, R-1-A, RD-5, R-2, RD-10, R-2A, RD-20, R-3, R-D-30, RD-40, RM-1, RM-2, A-1-B, AR-1, A-2, AR-2, A-5, AR-5	10 p.m.–7 a.m.	50 dB

The Noise Ordinance prohibits noise generation that would increase the noise level on affected properties based on the duration and level of noise increase, limiting the allowable noise increase to:

- 0 dB for a cumulative period of 30 minutes per hour
- 5 dB for a cumulative period of 15 minutes per hour
- 10 dB Cumulative period of 5 minutes per hour
- 15 dB for a cumulative period of 1 minute per hour
- 20 dB increase shall not be exceeded for any time per hour

Section 6.68.090(e) of the Sacramento County Code establishes conditions that are considered exempt from the associated provisions. Pursuant to Sacramento County Code

Section 6.68.090, construction activities are generally exempt from noise limits only when conducted between 6:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. on weekdays and between 7:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. on weekends. Construction occurring outside these hours is considered a violation and may result in enforcement action.

The Sacramento County Code also regulates noise-generating mechanical equipment. Section 6.68.120 Machinery, Equipment, Fans, and Air Conditioning prohibits the operation any mechanical equipment, pump, fan, air conditioning apparatus, stationary pumps, stationary cooling towers, stationary compressors, similar mechanical devices, or any combination thereof that would cause any noise level to exceed 60 dB at any point at least one foot inside the property line of an affected residential property and three to five feet above ground level; 55 dB in the center of a neighboring patio three to five feet above ground level; and 55 dB outside of the neighboring living area window nearest the equipment location.

Sacramento County Zoning Code

The Sacramento County Zoning Code, Table 5.8.B requires multi-family residential projects proposing dwelling units within 25 feet of an Arterial or Thoroughfare functional classification from the County's Circulation Diagram to submit an acoustical analysis demonstrating façade construction will be such that interior noise levels will not exceed 45dB L_{dn} under future (cumulative case) traffic conditions. While this requirement is not related to an impact under CEQA, which focuses on impacts of projects on the environment rather than impacts of the environment on projects, this EIR provides information relevant to this Zoning Code requirement – in particular traffic noise levels at different distances from each affected roadway under long-term, cumulative conditions.

Impacts and Analysis

Significance Criteria

Based on Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, general standards for ambient noise degradation, and the local standards identified above, the proposed Specific Plan would have a significant noise impact if it would result in:

- Generate a substantial temporary increase in noise levels at noise-sensitive land uses in excess of the following standards:
    - Construction noise would result in a significant impact if activities were to take place between the hours of 8:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m. on weekdays and between the hours of 8:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. on Saturday and Sunday, and
    - Exceed nighttime exterior noise standards of 50 dB L_{50} or 70 dB L_{max} described in the County General Plan standards (Table NOI-10).
- Generate short-term construction vibration or expose sensitive land uses to long term operational vibration sources that exceed:

  - For non-engineered timber and masonry buildings: 0.2 PPV, inches/second; for engineered concrete and masonry: 0.3 PPV, inches/second; and for reinforced concrete, steel, or timber, 0.5 PPV, inches/second (Table NOI-5)
  - For human response: 72 VdB for frequent events for residences (i.e., more than 70 events per day), 75 VdB for residences for occasional events (i.e., 30-70 events), and 80 VdB for residences infrequent events (i.e., fewer than 30 events per day)
  - For human response: 75 VdB for frequent events for non-residential buildings (i.e., more than 70 events per day), 78 VdB for non-residential buildings for occasional events (i.e., 30-70 events), and 83 VdB for non-residential buildings infrequent events (i.e., fewer than 30 events per day)
- Generate a substantial permanent increase in traffic noise levels at noise-sensitive land uses in excess of the following standards established by the County General Plan:
  - Exceed the noise standard of 65 dB L_{dn} for residential uses pursuant to General Plan Policy NO-1 (Table NOI-9); or
- Generate a substantial permanent increase in stationary noise at noise-sensitive uses in excess of the following standards established by the County:
  - nighttime exterior noise standards of 50 dB L_{50} or 70 dB L_{max} or daytime standards of 55 dB L_{50} or 75 dB L_{max} (Table NOI-10)
  - County Code Section 6.68.120 Machinery, Equipment, Fans, and Air Conditioning
    - 60 dB at any point at least one foot inside the property line of the affected residential property and three to five feet above ground level;
    - 55 dB in the center of a neighboring patio three to five feet above ground level;
    - 55 dB outside of the neighboring living area window nearest the equipment location.
- Expose noise-sensitive land uses, including people residing or working in the area, to excessive airport noise levels (e.g., 60 dB CNEL) pursuant to General Plan Policy NO-2.

METHODOLOGY

The analysis summarized in this chapter uses a combination of field measurements, predictive modeling, and reference data. To establish baseline conditions, ambient noise measurements were conducted at representative locations throughout the Specific Plan Area. Predictive modeling was then used to evaluate potential increases in noise from construction activities, traffic, and future operations.

For roadway traffic noise analysis, future traffic noise levels were based on the same SACSIM23 roadway volume data used in Chapter 16, Transportation.

Construction Noise

Construction noise levels were estimated using the FHWA RCNM, developed in support of the FHWA Construction Noise Handbook (2006). This model provides standardized noise levels (L_{max} and L_{eq}) and usage factors for typical construction equipment, allowing for the prediction of hourly equivalent sound levels at varying distances from the source.

Modeling inputs included:

- Equipment types by construction phase (e.g., dozer, loader, grader, backhoe, concrete truck)
- Operating cycles based on FHWA-recommended usage factors
- Construction activity duration and equipment clustering assumptions
- Distance from construction activities to the nearest sensitive receptors, based on site plans and parcel-level data

This approach ensures consistency with best practices for assessing construction noise impacts on adjacent residential and community land uses.

Construction Vibration

Construction-related groundborne vibration was evaluated using methods and criteria provided in the FTA Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment Manual (2018) and the Caltrans Transportation and Construction Vibration Guidance Manual (2020).

Traffic Noise

Traffic-related operational noise was evaluated using the FHWA Traffic Noise Model (FHWA-RD-77-108) or equivalent spreadsheet-based methods. Inputs were based on the transportation analysis conducted to support this EIR and include:

- Average Daily Traffic (ADT) volumes
- Vehicle mix and speeds
- Projected increases in traffic due to buildout of the proposed Specific Plan
- Distances from roadway centerlines to receptors
- Shielding from intervening structures or terrain

Operational Noise

Operational noise from future land uses (e.g., commercial or mixed-use development) was assessed using noise reference levels for common equipment and activities, including:

- Rooftop HVAC units

- Delivery truck operations
- Outdoor dining and gathering areas
- Parking lot and circulation noise

Modeling accounted for:

- Operational hours
- Shielding by buildings or walls
- Receptor proximity and line-of-sight conditions

ISSUES NOT DISCUSSED FURTHER

Operational Vibration. The long-term operation of uses allowed under the proposed Specific Plan would not include any major new sources of groundborne noise or vibration. Maintenance vehicles and delivery trucks would be restricted to public streets, and the limited number of trips generated would not have the potential to substantially increase vibration levels at adjacent land uses.

IMPACT NOI-1: GENERATE CONSTRUCTION NOISE THAT EXCEEDS COUNTY STANDARDS

Development projects anticipated under the proposed Specific Plan and infrastructure improvement projects required to support future development will increase short-term noise levels for noise-sensitive receptors adjacent to future construction sites. Construction noise impacts primarily result when construction activities occur during noise-sensitive times of the day (early morning, evening, or nighttime hours), the construction occurs in areas immediately adjoining noise sensitive land uses, or when construction durations last over extended periods of time. If construction activities were implemented during more noise-sensitive hours, construction source noise levels could also result in annoyance and/or sleep disruption to occupants of existing and proposed noise-sensitive land uses and create a substantial temporary increase in ambient noise levels.

Noise-generating construction activities would include site grading and excavation, installation of infrastructure, building erection, paving, and landscaping. The highest construction noise levels are typically generated during grading and excavation, and relatively lower noise levels typically occur during building construction. Movements of construction-generated traffic could expose sensitive receptors to noise levels along on- and off-site roadways, but even with an assumed construction-related traffic volume of 500 vehicles daily, the noise level increase would be less than 3 dB, which is barely perceptible and less than significant.

On-site construction equipment operates in two modes: mobile and stationary. Mobile equipment sources move around a construction site performing tasks in a recurring manner (e.g., loaders, graders, dozers). Stationary equipment operates in a given location for an extended period of time to perform continuous or periodic operations.

Thus, determining the location of stationary sources, or the effective acoustical center of operations for mobile equipment during various phases of the construction process is necessary. Operational characteristics of heavy construction equipment are additionally typified by short periods of full-power operation followed by extended periods of operation at lower power, idling, or powered-off conditions.

Without noise control, large pieces of earth-moving equipment, such as graders, excavators, and dozers, generate maximum noise levels of 85 dBA to 90 dBA at a distance of 50 feet (refer to Table NOI-13) (EPA 1971). Typical hourly average construction-generated noise levels are about 80 dBA to 85 dBA, measured at a distance of 50 feet from the site during busy construction periods. Certain types of construction require pile driving, which could produce very high noise levels of approximately 105 dB at 50 feet.

The nearest noise-sensitive uses to the Specific Plan Area are single-family residences located approximately 50 to 100 feet to the east and west of Watt Avenue. Noise from localized point sources (such as construction sites) typically decreases by 6 dB with each doubling of distance from source to receptor. Therefore, an attenuation rate of 6 dB per doubling of distance was assumed and accounted for in construction operation noise level predictions. Specific Plan-related construction noise level of 85 dBA, L_{eq} at 50 feet from typical construction activities would result in 79 dBA, L_{eq} at 100 feet, and 73 dBA, L_{eq} at 200 feet. Also, Specific Plan-related construction noise level of 105 dBA, L_{eq} at 50 feet from pile driving activities would result in 99 dBA, L_{eq} at 100 feet, and 93 dBA, L_{eq} at 200 feet. While there are relatively few noise-sensitive receptors within the Specific Plan Area today, future residences could be located within 50 feet of construction noise sources.

Existing measured ambient noise levels in the Specific Plan Area range from 57 dBA, L_{eq} to 67 dBA, L_{eq} (Table NOI-3). Construction noise levels of 85 dBA, L_{eq} (typical construction) and 105 dBA, L_{eq} (pile driving) at 50 feet, would substantially exceed the ambient noise levels. Also, construction noise levels of 79 dBA, L_{eq} at 100 feet, and 73 dBA, L_{eq} at 200 feet from typical construction activities; and construction noise level of 99 dBA, L_{eq} at 100 feet, and 93 dBA, L_{eq} at 200 feet from pile driving activities would exceed the measured existing ambient noise levels.

Pursuant to County Code Section 6.68.090, construction noise occurring between 6:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. Monday through Friday and between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday is exempt from noise regulations. Construction noise occurring during daytime construction hours would be relatively less disruptive compared to other more noise-sensitive times of day, and would be temporary. Relatively higher noise levels associated with grading and excavation would occur for only a portion of the construction phase of future projects under the proposed Specific Plan, and would, in general, be followed by relatively lower noise levels typically occur during building construction and other phases. Due to the temporary nature of construction, and the fact that daytime hours are relatively less noise-sensitive times of day, noise impacts associated with construction occurring consistent with the daytime hours specified by the Sacramento County Code are considered less than significant.

Table NOI-13: Typical Construction Equipment Noise Levels

Equipment Item	Typical Maximum Noise Level (dB) at 50 Feet
Earthmoving	
Backhoes	80
Bulldozers	85
Front Loaders	80
Graders	85
Paver	85
Roller	85
Scrapers	85
Tractors	84
Slurry Trencher	82
Dump Truck	84
Pickup Truck	55
Materials Handling	
Concrete Mixer Truck	85
Concrete Pump Truck	82
Crane	85
Man Lift	85
Stationary Equipment	
Compressors	80
Generator	82
Pumps	77
Impact Equipment	
Compactor	80
Jack Hammers	85
Impact Pile Drivers (Peak Level)	95
Pneumatic Tools	85
Rock Drills	85
Other Equipment	
Concrete Saws	90
Vibrating Hopper	85
Welding Machine / Torch	73

Notes: dB = A-weighted decibels

Noise levels are for equipment fitted with properly maintained and operational noise control devices, per manufacturer specifications.

Source: FTA 2018.

However, if construction activities occur during the more noise-sensitive evening and nighttime hours, construction noise levels could exceed the County's nighttime noise standard of 50 dB L_{eq} (Table NOI-10) at noise-sensitive uses. This is a **significant** impact.

MITIGATION MEASURES

NOI-1: Implement Noise-Reducing Construction Practices for Nighttime Construction

This mitigation measure shall apply to development projects and infrastructure improvement projects where construction outside of permitted construction hours (i.e., between 8:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m. Monday through Friday and between 8:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. on Saturdays and Sundays) is required due to special construction needs or to avoid disruption to traffic.

- The use of impact equipment (e.g., pile drivers) is prohibited during the hours of 8:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m. on Monday through Friday, and between 8:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. on Saturday and Sunday.

- Noise-reducing enclosures or acoustical barriers designed to result in a minimum 10-dB reduction shall be installed as close as possible to noise-generating equipment (e.g., compressors and generators) wherever noise-generating equipment is within clear line-of-sight of any noise-sensitive use within 250 feet.

- Written notification of construction activities shall be provided to all noise-sensitive receptors located within 850 feet of planned nighttime construction activities. Notification shall include anticipated dates and hours during which construction activities are anticipated to occur. Recommendations to assist noise-sensitive land uses in reducing interior noise levels (e.g., closing windows and doors) shall also be included in the notification. The applicant and/or contractor shall provide proof of notification to the County one week prior to the scheduled nighttime construction activities.

The County has also included Mitigation Measure NOI-2 to reduce daytime construction noise levels near schools.

NOI-1b: Implement Noise-Reducing Construction Practices Near Schools

This mitigation measure shall apply to development projects and infrastructure improvement projects where construction would occur within 200 feet of the edge of an occupied school classroom building.

- **At least 10 business days before construction begins, provide written notification to the affected school district identifying the anticipated construction schedule, major noise-generating activities, and a construction contact person.**

- **Locate stationary noise-generating equipment and construction staging areas as far as feasible from occupied classrooms and outdoor instructional areas.**

- **Maintain construction equipment in accordance with manufacturer specifications, including mufflers and other noise-reduction devices.**

- **Coordinate with the affected school district to identify testing periods and other particularly noise-sensitive instructional activities. Schedule particularly disruptive activities outside these periods where feasible.**

- **Install noise-reducing enclosures or acoustical barriers designed to result in a minimum 10-dB reduction as close as feasible to stationary noise-generating equipment (e.g., compressors and generators).**

Significance after Mitigation

With implementation of Mitigation Measure NOI-1, the use of impact equipment (e.g., pile drivers), which would produce the highest noise levels, would be prohibited during relatively more sensitive nighttime hours of the day. When installed properly, acoustic barriers can reduce construction noise levels by up to 10 dB (EPA 1971). This mitigation measure would reduce the potential impact. While mitigation imposed within this EIR will reduce noise exposure for noise-sensitive uses during nighttime construction, there is no additional feasible mitigation available that would entirely avoid short-term impacts or mitigate the potential impact associated with nighttime construction to less than significant. The impact is considered **significant and unavoidable.**

Impact NOI-2: Generate Excessive Construction Vibration

Construction activities have the potential to result in varying degrees of temporary groundborne vibration, depending on the specific construction equipment used, the location of construction activities relative to sensitive receptors, the operations/activities involved, and the construction type of buildings (heavier construction and construction with shorter spans experience relatively less vibration). Vibration generated by construction equipment spreads through the ground and diminishes in magnitude with increases in distance. The type and density of soil can also affect the transmission of energy. Table NOI-14 provides vibration levels at 25 feet for impact and heavy construction equipment, in terms of PPV (for structural damage) and VdB (for human annoyance).

Table NOI-14: Typical Vibration Levels for Construction Equipment

Equipment	PPV at 25 Feet (in/sec)	Approximate L_v at 25 Feet
Pile Driver (Impact) – Upper Range	1.518	112
Pile Driver (Impact) – Typical	0.644	104
Pile Driver (Sonic) – Upper Range	0.734	105
Pile Driver (Sonic) – Typical	0.170	93
Vibratory Roller	0.21	94
Large Bulldozer	0.089	87
Caisson Drilling	0.089	87
Truck	0.076	86
Jackhammer	0.035	79
Small Bulldozer	0.003	58
Significance Threshold	0.2	80

Notes: in/sec = inches per second; Lv = the velocity level in decibels referenced to 1 microinch per second and based on the root mean square velocity amplitude; PPV = peak particle velocity
Sources: FTA 2018, Caltrans 2020.

The required construction equipment for development projects and infrastructure improvements under the proposed Specific Plan could include pile drivers, loaded trucks, bulldozers, and vibratory rollers. Vibration levels associated with the use of typical construction equipment, such as loaded trucks, jackhammers, and bulldozers ranges from 58 to 87 VdB and 0.003 to 0.089 PPV, inches/second at 25 feet. Vibration levels are higher for certain types of construction equipment that are less commonly needed. A vibratory roller is used for compaction and produces vibration levels of 94 VdB and 0.21 PPV, inches/second at 25 feet. Pile driving is not likely to be required for development projects within the Specific Plan Area based on the likely type of construction, but if this construction technique for foundations is required in the future, this would produce relatively high levels of vibration, from 93 to 112 VdB and 0.170 to 1.518 PPV, inches/second at 25 feet. Typical construction equipment, such as loaded trucks, jackhammers, and bulldozers, generates vibration levels that decrease quickly over distance whereas pile driving activities generate significantly more vibration energy and requires more distance to decrease the vibration levels.

The vibration-sensitive uses (buildings) closest to sites within the Specific Plan Area are the residential dwellings approximately 50 feet east of Watt Avenue. At distances of 50 feet, 100 feet, and 200 feet, the most substantial vibration generated by construction equipment would be from pile drivers – with typical vibration levels from impact pile drivers of 0.23, 0.08, and 0.03 PPV, inches/second and 95, 86, and 77 VdB, respectively. While it is very unlikely to be required for development projects under the proposed Specific Plan, in certain instances, depending on the soil type, building height and type, pile driving may be required. The vibration levels from vibratory roller operation would generate vibration levels of 0.074, 0.03, and 0.009 PPV, inches/second and 85, 76, and 67 VdB at distances of 50, 100, and 200 feet, respectively. It is not known at this time if use of a

vibratory roller would be required and to what extent vibratory roller activity would occur. However, if these construction techniques are needed, vibration levels due to construction would exceed the thresholds of building damage for structures that would occur within 95 feet for pile driver, and within 26 feet for vibratory rollers. For the human response threshold, assuming frequent events (i.e., more than 70 events per day), an impact could occur within 291 feet for typical impact pile driving and within 135 feet for use of a vibratory roller. This impact would be **significant**.

MITIGATION MEASURES

NOI-2: Implement Measures to Reduce Groundborne Noise and Vibration Levels

Project applicants or contractor(s) for projects proposing pile driving within 291 feet of an existing building and use of a vibratory rollers within 135 feet of an existing building shall develop and implement a vibration control plan to avoid damage to any buildings and avoid human disturbance according to the following performance standards:

- Building damage: less than 0.5 PPV, inches/second for reinforced concrete, steel, or timber; less than 0.3 PPV, inches/second for engineered concrete and masonry; and 0.2 PPV, inches/second for non-engineered timber and masonry buildings

- For human response: 72 VdB for frequent events for residences (i.e., more than 70 events per day), 75 VdB for residences for occasional events (i.e., 30-70 events), and 80 VdB for residences infrequent events (i.e., fewer than 30 events per day)

- For human response: 75 VdB for frequent events for non-residential buildings (i.e., more than 70 events per day), 78 VdB for non-residential buildings for occasional events (i.e., 30-70 events), and 83 VdB for non-residential buildings infrequent events (i.e., fewer than 30 events per day)

The vibration control plan shall establish setback distances, equipment limitations, alternatives to pile driving, monitoring vibration and making adjustments in the field, and other measures demonstrated to be effective in avoiding building damage and causing human annoyance according to the performance standards.

Minimum setbacks and limitations on equipment shall be established by a qualified geotechnical engineer or ground vibration specialist to ensure against any structural damage to any adjacent buildings based on the proposed equipment use and locations, the type and duration of the foundation/compacting activity, weight and type of construction equipment, on-site and adjacent soil conditions, and the type of construction of the nearby structures.

Vibration-inducing activity using pile driving within 291 feet of an existing building or use of a vibratory rollers within 135 feet of an existing building above shall be monitored, and if vibration levels would exceed the performance standards,

additional feasible measures, including decreasing the frequency of disturbances for human response, shall be incorporated.

Vibration-inducing vibratory and impact activities (e.g., pile driving, vibratory rollers, jack hammers) shall be limited to the daytime hours between 6:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. Monday through Friday and between 8:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday.

Significance after Mitigation

Implementation of Mitigation Measure NOI-2 would substantially limit the effects of groundborne vibration on sensitive receptors. The impact of vibration decreases with distance, and establishing setbacks based on site-specific conditions to achieve the specified performance standards would reduce the impact. Limitations on the use of equipment and implementation of alternatives to pile driving such as jetting, cast-in-place or auger cast piles, non-displacement piles, pile cushioning, torque or hydraulic piles and alternatives to traditional vibratory equipment would substantially reduce the potential impact. Vibration-inducing activity is limited to relatively less sensitive daytime hours, which would reduce this potential impact. Mitigation Measure NOI-2 requires use of alternative methods, where feasible, which would reduce the number and amplitude of impacts required to seat the pile. Monitoring vibration activities and making adjustments to reduce vibration effects would also reduce the potential impact. While pile driving is not likely to be necessary for construction within the Specific Plan Area, in the unlikely event that this method of construction is required, and in the event that the use of vibratory rollers directly adjacent to buildings is required, while Mitigation Measure NOI-2 would reduce potential vibration impacts from construction activities, the County cannot demonstrate that all potential mitigation strategies would be feasible or that an impact would be avoided in every case. The impact is **significant and unavoidable**.

Impact NOI-3: Generate a Substantial Permanent Increase in Traffic Noise Levels

Development within the Specific Plan Area would generate additional vehicle trips. Land use development that results in traffic changes can result in increases in long-term traffic noise levels along roadway segments within and adjacent to the Specific Plan Area. Vehicular transportation demand associated with development under the proposed Specific Plan would increase traffic noise levels compared with existing conditions. However, the proposed Specific Plan would be developed over many years, and comparing long-term traffic noise levels with buildout of the proposed Specific Plan to existing conditions would not provide realistic information. Therefore, the right-most column in Table NOI-15 compares 2050 conditions with no development in the Specific Plan Area to 2050 conditions with full buildout of the proposed Specific Plan. As shown in Table NOI-15, increases in traffic noise levels vary by roadway segment, with some segments experiencing increases of 3 dB or greater, which would be considered perceptible, and a smaller number of segments experiencing increases of 5 dB or greater, which would be considered clearly noticeable.

Table NOI-15: Proposed Specific Plan 60 dBA, 65 dBA, and 70 dBA L_{dn} Traffic Noise Contours

No.	Roadway	From	To	Existing Noise Level (L_{dn}, dBA) @ 100 Feet	2050 No Specific Plan Noise Level (L_{dn}, dBA) @ 100 Feet	2050 with Specific Plan Noise Level (L_{dn}, dBA) @ 100 Feet	Increase dBA (2050 No Project to with Project)
1	32nd Street	Freedom Park Drive	I Street	56	58	62	4
2	32nd Street	I Street	Elkhorn Boulevard	60	62	64	2
3	32nd Street	Elkhorn Boulevard	Q Street	61	63	65	2
4	32nd Street	Q Street	U Street	52	55	56	1
5	34th Street	Freedom Park Drive	I Street	66	68	69	1
6	34th Street	I Street	Elkhorn Boulevard	67	67	68	1
7	34th Street	Elkhorn Boulevard	Q Street	65	66	67	1
8	34th Street	Q Street	U Street	62	64	68	4
9	A Street	Skvarla Avenue	Watt Avenue	45	53	64	11
10	Airbase Drive	Watt Avenue	Madison Avenue	69	70	71	1
11	Antelope Road	Watt Avenue	Walerga Road	70	71	72	1
12	Antelope Road	Walerga Road	Don Julio Boulevard	71	71	72	1
13	Antelope Road	Don Julio Boulevard	Roseville Road	74	75	75	0
14	Antelope Road	Roseville Road	I 80 Westbound Ramps	74	75	75	0
15	Business I-80 Eastbound	Fulton Avenue	Watt Avenue	81	81	81	0
16	Business I-80 Westbound	Watt Avenue	Fulton Avenue	81	81	81	0
17	Don Julio Boulevard	Watt Avenue	Walerga Road	66	66	67	1
18	Don Julio Boulevard	Walerga Road	Elkhorn Boulevard	63	64	65	1
19	Don Julio Boulevard	Elkhorn Boulevard	Antelope Road	70	71	72	1
20	Dudley Boulevard	Freedom Park Drive	James Way	67	68	70	2
21	Dudley Boulevard	James Way	Palm Street	67	68	64	-4
22	Dudley Boulevard	Palm Street	Peacekeeper Way	64	63	64	1
23	Dudley Boulevard	Peacekeeper Way	Dudley Way	67	69	69	0

No.	Roadway	From	To	Existing Noise Level (Ldn, dBA) @ 100 Feet	2050 No Specific Plan Noise Level (Ldn, dBA) @ 100 Feet	2050 with Specific Plan Noise Level (Ldn, dBA) @ 100 Feet	Increase dBA (2050 No Project to with Project)
24	Dudley Boulevard	Dudley Way	Winters Street	67	70	70	0
25	Elkhorn Boulevard	16th Street	32nd Street	73	73	74	1
26	Elkhorn Boulevard	32nd Street	34th Street	72	72	72	0
27	Elkhorn Boulevard	34th Street	Watt Avenue	71	72	73	1
28	Elkhorn Boulevard	Watt Avenue	Thomas Drive	71	72	73	1
29	Elkhorn Boulevard	Thomas Drive	Larchmont Drive	72	73	73	0
30	Elkhorn Boulevard	Larchmont Drive	Walerga Road	73	74	74	0
31	Elkhorn Boulevard	Walerga Road	Spring Drive	74	74	74	0
32	Elkhorn Boulevard	Spring Drive	Don Julio Boulevard	75	75	75	0
33	Elkhorn Boulevard	Don Julio Boulevard	Hillsdale Boulevard	76	77	77	0
34	Elkhorn Boulevard	Hillsdale Boulevard	I 80 Westbound Ramps	77	77	77	0
35	Elverta Road	16th Street	Watt Avenue	67	68	68	0
36	Freedom Park Drive	32nd Street	34th Street	56	58	62	4
37	Freedom Park Drive	34th Street	Watt Avenue	59	62	66	4
38	I Street	32nd Street	34th Street	58	61	59	-2
39	I Street	34th Street	Watt Avenue	64	49	58	9
40	Interstate 80 Eastbound	Raley Boulevard	Winters Street	78	78	78	0
41	Interstate 80 Eastbound	Winters Street	Longview Drive	78	78	78	0
42	Interstate 80 Eastbound	Longview Drive	Watt Avenue	76	76	76	0
43	Interstate 80 Eastbound	Watt Avenue	Madison Avenue	78	78	78	0
44	Interstate 80 Eastbound	Madison Avenue	Elkhorn Boulevard	79	79	79	0
45	Interstate 80 Eastbound	Elkhorn Boulevard	Antelope Road	79	79	79	0
46	Interstate 80 Eastbound	Antelope Road	Riverside Avenue	80	80	80	0
47	Interstate 80 Westbound	Riverside Avenue	Antelope Road	79	79	79	0
48	Interstate 80 Westbound	Antelope Road	Elkhorn Boulevard	79	79	79	0

No.	Roadway	From	To	Existing Noise Level (Ldn, dBA) @ 100 Feet	2050 No Specific Plan Noise Level (Ldn, dBA) @ 100 Feet	2050 with Specific Plan Noise Level (Ldn, dBA) @ 100 Feet	Increase dBA (2050 No Project to with Project)
49	Interstate 80 Westbound	Elkhorn Boulevard	Madison Avenue	79	79	79	0
50	Interstate 80 Westbound	Madison Avenue	Watt Avenue	76	76	76	0
51	Interstate 80 Westbound	Watt Avenue	Longview Drive	78	78	78	0
52	Interstate 80 Westbound	Longview Drive	Winters Street	77	77	77	0
53	Interstate 80 Westbound	Winters Street	Raley Boulevard	78	78	78	0
54	James Way	Dudley Boulevard	Skvarla Avenue	43	52	63	11
55	Longview Drive	Roseville Road	I 80 Westbound Ramps	68	67	68	1
56	Longview Drive	I 80 Eastbound Ramps	Watt Avenue	63	64	64	0
57	Madison Avenue	Roseville Road	Airbase Drive	67	68	68	0
58	Madison Avenue	Airbase Drive	I 80 Westbound Ramps	72	73	73	0
59	Myrtle Avenue	Roseville Road	Watt Avenue	52	39	41	2
60	Orange Grove Avenue	Roseville Road	Watt Avenue	67	67	68	1
61	Palm Street	Dudley Boulevard	Watt Avenue	63	64	65	1
62	Peacekeeper Way	Dudley Boulevard	Watt Avenue	61	60	60	0
63	Q Street	32nd Street	34th Street	61	58	63	5
64	Q Street	34th Street	Watt Avenue	65	65	63	-2
65	Roseville Road	Tri Station Road	Longview Drive	72	72	73	1
66	Roseville Road	Longview Drive	Orange Grove Avenue	71	71	71	0
67	Roseville Road	Orange Grove Avenue	Winona Way	74	74	75	1
68	Roseville Road	Winona Way	Watt Avenue	71	72	72	0
69	Roseville Road	Watt Avenue	Madison Avenue	73	73	73	0
70	Roseville Road	Madison Avenue	Oakhollow Drive	72	72	72	0
71	Roseville Road	Oakhollow Drive	Andrea Boulevard	69	70	70	0
72	Roseville Road	Andrea Boulevard	Diablo Drive	68	69	69	0
73	Roseville Road	Diablo Drive	Antelope Road	72	73	73	0

No.	Roadway	From	To	Existing Noise Level (Ldn, dBA) @ 100 Feet	2050 No Specific Plan Noise Level (Ldn, dBA) @ 100 Feet	2050 with Specific Plan Noise Level (Ldn, dBA) @ 100 Feet	Increase dBA (2050 No Project to with Project)
74	U Street	28th Street	32nd Street	55	56	56	0
75	U Street	32nd Street	34th Street	59	61	61	0
76	U Street	34th Street	Watt Avenue	61	62	67	5
77	Walerga Road	Oakhollow Drive	Don Julio Boulevard	69	69	69	0
78	Walerga Road	Don Julio Boulevard	Elkhorn Boulevard	70	70	70	0
79	Walerga Road	Elkhorn Boulevard	Antelope Road	72	72	72	0
80	Watt Avenue	Interstate 80 Westbound	I 80 Eastbound Ramps	75	75	75	0
81	Watt Avenue	I 80 Westbound Ramps	Winona Way	71	71	72	1
82	Watt Avenue	Winona Way	Myrtle Avenue	73	74	74	0
83	Watt Avenue	Myrtle Avenue	Roseville Road	73	74	74	0
84	Watt Avenue	Roseville Road	Airbase Drive	71	71	70	-1
85	Watt Avenue	Airbase Drive	A Street	70	71	68	-3
86	Watt Avenue	A Street	Don Julio Boulevard	72	72	73	1
87	Watt Avenue	Don Julio Boulevard	I Street	~~72~~71	72	72	0
88	Watt Avenue	I Street	Elkhorn Boulevard	71	72	72	0
89	Watt Avenue	Elkhorn Boulevard	Q Street	70	71	71	0
90	Watt Avenue	Q Street	Antelope Road	71	73	71	-2
91	Watt Avenue	Antelope Road	Elverta Road	70	72	72	0
92	Watt Avenue	Elverta Road	PFE Road	68	72	72	0
93	Winona Way	Roseville Road	Watt Avenue	58	58	58	0

Notes: dB = A-weighted decibels; L_{dn} = day-night average noise level.
Source: Data modeled by AECOM in 2026

Buildout of the Specific Plan Area and cumulative regional growth would increase traffic volumes along existing and planned roadway segments, which could increase traffic noise levels at nearby noise-sensitive land uses. These increases may result in noise levels that exceed applicable Sacramento County standards for exterior noise exposure, which identify 65 dBA L_{dn} as the compatibility standard for residential outdoor activity areas. Policy NO-15 of the General Plan provides that the County shall have the flexibility to consider the application of 5 dB less restrictive exterior noise standards in cases where it is impractical or infeasible to reduce exterior noise levels within infill projects.

The predicted traffic noise levels shown in Table NOI-15 represent conservative potential noise exposure at a reference distance of 100 feet from the roadway centerline. The analysis assumes that it is acoustically hard ground conditions and does not account for localized shielding effects from existing or future buildings or other barriers that may reduce actual noise exposure. As a result, the noise levels presented represent a worse-case condition for comparative purposes.[15]

The "Increase" column in Table NOI-15 represents the change in traffic noise level (L_{dn}) between the 2050 Cumulative condition with no development within the Specific Plan Area and the 2050 Cumulative condition with full buildout of the Specific Plan Area. As shown in Table NOI-15, some roadway segments would experience increases in traffic noise levels of 5 dB or greater relative to existing conditions. These increases would be considered clearly noticeable and would represent a substantial increase in ambient noise levels. In addition, several roadway segments would experience noise levels at or above 65 dBA L_{dn} at distances where existing noise-sensitive land uses are located. For the following roadway segments, development within the Specific Plan Area would result in a clearly noticeable increase in traffic noise: I Street between 34th Street and Watt Avenue; A Street between Skvarla Avenue and Watt Avenue; James Way between Dudley Boulevard and Skvarla Avenue; Freedom Park Drive between 34th Street and Watt Avenue; Q Street between 32nd Street and 34th Street; U Street between 34th Street and Watt Avenue; 32nd Street between Freedom Park Drive and I Street; 34th Street between Q Street and U Street; and Freedom Park Drive between 32nd Street and 34th Street. The predicted 65 dBA noise contour for these affected roadway segments under 2050 conditions with full buildout of the Specific Plan Area would range from 21 to 189 feet from the roadway centerlines.

Most of these roadways do not have existing fronting residential development or other noise-sensitive uses. There is one home at the intersection of I Street and 34th Street and a church on I Street between 34th Street and Watt Avenue, but noise-sensitive areas are outside of the predicted 65-dBA noise contour. There are homes on Q Street between 32nd Street and 34th Street but all but one of the residential buildings are outside of the 65-dBA noise contour and all noise-sensitive backyard areas are outside of the 65-dBA

[15] In some locations, minor decreases in traffic noise levels are predicted due to localized changes in traffic distribution; however, these decreases do not affect the overall impact conclusion. This effect is particularly evident on certain low-volume local roadway segments where small changes in assigned trips can result in relatively large percentage differences in segment-level traffic volumes.

noise contour. Several homes on U Street between 34th Street and Watt Avenue are within the 65-dBA noise contour, including noise-sensitive backyard areas. There are some homes on 32nd Street between Freedom Park Drive and I Street, but they are not within the predicted 65-dBA noise contour under 2050 conditions with full buildout of the Specific Plan Area. There are some homes on 34th Street between Q Street and U Street, and some residential buildings and backyard noise-sensitive areas are within the predicted 65-dBA noise contour under 2050 conditions with full buildout of the Specific Plan Area. There is one church on Freedom Park Drive between 32nd Street and 34th Street just outside of the predicted 65-dBA noise contour. Because traffic associated with development under the proposed Specific Plan would increase traffic noise such that noise-sensitive portions of residential properties could be exposed to noise in excess of County standards, this is considered a **significant** impact.

Future noise-sensitive land uses developed within the Specific Plan Area may also be exposed to elevated traffic noise levels, particularly where located in proximity to major roadways. However, such exposure would be addressed through compliance with applicable regulatory standards to ensure acceptable interior and exterior noise levels.

Mitigation Measures

No feasible mitigation is available. Mitigation of future traffic noise impacts at existing noise-sensitive uses is infeasible for noise-sensitive portions of properties, such as backyards, because the County does not control these private properties and because constructing barriers to attenuate noise in outdoor gathering areas would be expensive, would create visibility barriers, could require tree removal, and could interfere with fire or public utilities access. Mitigation with new noise barriers is infeasible due to right-of-way constraints, access requirements for vehicles, pedestrians, bicycles, and emergency services, and the limited effectiveness of barriers where openings are required. In addition, barriers may conflict with adopted policies promoting pedestrian and bicycle connectivity and urban design objectives. Mitigation is also infeasible because it can require expensive, invasive structural retrofits. Other measures, such as quiet pavement, may be costly, temporary, difficult to implement, or ineffective when engine noise is a source of traffic noise. Because no feasible mitigation is available, this impact is considered **significant and unavoidable.**

Impact NOI-4: Expose New or Existing Sensitive Receptors to New Stationary Noise Sources that Exceed County Standards

The proposed Specific Plan would facilitate the development of residential, commercial, office, open space and recreation, and institutional and public facilities that will have stationary sources of noise that could exceed the 55 dB L_{eq} daytime and 45 dB L_{eq} nighttime thresholds at neighboring noise-sensitive uses. The long-term operation of these uses could result in noise from, but not limited to, the following potential sources:

- landscape and building maintenance activities (e.g., hand tools, power tools, lawn and garden equipment);

- mechanical equipment (e.g., pumps, generators heating, ventilation, and cooling systems);
- garbage collection;
- parking lots; and
- commercial and office activities, including parking activities and loading.

Landscape and Building Maintenance Activities

Landscape maintenance activities include the use of leaf blowers, cleaning parking lots, power tools, and gasoline-powered lawn mowers in areas that could adversely affect noise-sensitive uses. Landscape maintenance could temporarily affect neighboring properties. Such activities could result in intermittent noise levels of approximately 88.3 dB at 6.5 feet. Based on an equipment noise level of 88.3 dB, the use of such equipment, assuming a noise attenuation rate of 6 dB per doubling of distance from the source, would result in exterior noise levels of approximately 70.1 dB at 50 feet. Such activities are intermittent and would occur during the daytime, which is a less noise-sensitive time of day.

The County exempts activities conducted on parks, public playgrounds and school grounds. The County's Noise Ordinance (Sacramento County Code Section 6.68.090 h) exempts noise associated with maintenance of residential properties between 6:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. on weekdays and between 7:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. on Saturdays and Sundays.

Mechanical Equipment

The operation of mechanical equipment at residences, commercial facilities, offices, and public facilities (e.g., electrical substations, HVAC, sewer lift stations) is another non-transportation noise source. The operation of mechanical equipment (e.g., heating, ventilation, and cooling systems) could result in intermittent noise levels of approximately 56 to 92 dB at 3 feet depending mostly on the type and size of equipment (EPA 1971, Carrier 2022, Lennox 2023, Lennox 2024). Based on this equipment noise level, the operation of such equipment, assuming a noise attenuation rate of 6 dB per doubling of distance from the source, may result in exterior noise levels of up to approximately 60 dB at 95 feet, but the actual noise level would depend on the type of equipment, whether equipment is placed in the open, on a rooftop, near a single flat wall, or in a corner with two adjacent flat walls, or in another setting. Residential HVAC units produce much lower noise levels and would not generally require any shielding or roof placement. Larger capacity commercial HVAC systems generate higher noise levels, but would typically be located at the rooftop of commercial buildings and shielded by other buildings or enclosures, which would typically reduce the HVAC to below the County Code Section 6.68.120 standard of 60 dB at any point at least one foot inside the property line of an affected residential property. Although these types of equipment are typically shielded from direct exposure (e.g., housed on rooftops, in equipment rooms, or in exterior enclosures), the actual placement of such equipment is not known at this time. It is possible that noise levels could exceed the applicable standards at the proposed noise-

sensitive receptors (equipment noise of 60 dB at any point at least one foot inside the property line of an affected residential property). The impact is **potentially significant**.

Solid Waste Collection Activities

Solid waste collection activities (e.g., emptying large refuse dumpsters, possible multiple times per week, and the shaking of containers with a hydraulic lift), could result in instantaneous maximum noise levels of approximately 89 dB L_{max} at 50 feet. Such activities are anticipated to be very brief, intermittent, and would occur during daytime hours, which are considered to be less noise-sensitive times of day. Garbage collection activities are infrequent, – typically once per week – and therefore would not be expected to exceed daily noise standards. Noises would typically emanate from public rights-of-way, which would normally be separated from outdoor gathering spaces associated with residential uses. Noise associated with garbage collection would not be expected to create single-event noise that would be substantially disruptive to daily activities or cause sleep disturbance.

Parking Lots

Parking lots and parking structures include noise sources such as vehicles entering/exiting the lot, alarms/radios, and doors slamming. According to the FHWA, parking lots with a maximum hourly traffic volume of approximately 1,000 vehicles per hour either entering or exiting the lot could result in a peak hour and daily noise levels between approximately 56 dB L_{eq} and 63 dB L_{dn} at 50 feet. The Specific Plan does not require off-street parking, but development under the proposed Specific Plan may entail off-street surface parking. The number of parking spaces for new development under the proposed Specific Plan would not likely generate 1,000 vehicle entries or exits per hour, and therefore noise levels would be substantially lower than 63 dB L_{dn} at 50 feet and would instead be similar to existing ambient conditions.

Commercial and Office Activities

Commercial and office noise sources include loading docks, and the operation of trash compactors and air compressors. Such activities could result in intermittent noise levels of approximately 91 dB L_{max} at 50 feet (EPA 1971) and high single-event noise levels from backup alarms from delivery trucks during the more noise-sensitive hours of the day.

Assuming a noise attenuation rate of 6 dB per doubling of distance from the source, the related noise level of 91 dB at 50 feet, would result in 73 dB at 400 feet and 69 dB at 600 feet, which would exceed the County's nighttime exterior noise standards of 50 dB L_{50} or 70 dB L_{max} or daytime standards of 55 dB L_{50} or 75 dB L_{max}. The impact is considered **potentially significant.**

Other Activities and Events

School-related events and public events could include voices and amplified music/speaker systems. Such sources could result in noise levels of approximately 60–75 dB L_{eq} at 50 feet. The County's Noise Ordinance exempts from regulation school bands, school athletic and school entertainment events; outdoor gatherings, public

dances, shows and sporting and entertainment events, provided said events are conducted pursuant to a license or permit by the County; and activities conducted on parks, public playgrounds and school grounds, provided such parks, playgrounds and school grounds are owned and operated by a public entity or private school.

Mitigation Measures

NOI-4: Implement Measures to Reduce Potential Exposure of Sensitive Receptors to Non-Transportation Source-Generated Noise

- All commercial mechanical equipment that could generate noise above County standards in areas adjacent to existing noise-sensitive uses (e.g., HVAC units, compressors, pumps, and generators) shall be shielded with material appropriate to attenuate noise to block the line of sight between these noise sources and outdoor activity areas of adjacent noise-sensitive land uses.

- Projects proposing loading docks within 600 feet of occupied noise-sensitive uses shall construct enclosures or provide structural shielding for all loading dock activity areas of sufficient height and length to break the line-of-sight between the loading dock and outdoor activity areas of noise-sensitive receptors.

Significance after Mitigation

Compliance with Mitigation Measure NOI-4 would reduce non-transportation source noise levels. Noise associated with mechanical equipment and commercial and office activities would be reduced to **less than significant**.

Impact NOI-5: Expose People Residing or Working in the Specific Plan Area to Excessive Aircraft Noise

Future development within the Specific Plan Area would occur in proximity to Sacramento McClellan Airport, which continues to support general aviation, governmental aviation, and seasonal CAL FIRE aerial firefighting operations. Aircraft overflights, including periodic fixed-wing airtanker and helicopter operations, would result in intermittent aircraft-generated noise within portions of the Specific Plan Area. Although aircraft activity is substantially reduced compared to historical military operations at the former McClellan Air Force Base, aircraft overflights remain a source of intermittent noise within portions of the Specific Plan Area. One approximately 17-acre portion of the Specific Plan Area (parts of 16 parcels) is within the 60 dB CNEL noise contour associated with Sacramento McClellan Airport, and this is within the Employment Flex (EMP-Flex) Specific Plan Zoning District, which does not allow residential development or other noise-sensitive uses (SACOG 2023). Aside from the 17-acre area, no other portion of the approximately 705-acre Specific Plan Area is within the 60, 65, 70 dB CNEL noise contours associated with Sacramento McClellan Airport.

Sacramento County General Plan Noise Element Policy NO-3 prohibits new residential development within the 60 CNEL noise contours adopted by the County for land use planning purposes at airports within Sacramento County, except where applicable

exceptions apply. Policy NO-4 requires new residential development within adopted Airport Policy Area boundaries, but outside the 60 CNEL contour, to provide interior noise insulation to achieve 45 dB CNEL, provide buyer notification, and record an avigation easement. As noted above, the proposed Specific Plan does not allow residential development within areas identified as being within the 60 CNEL contour, which is consistent with County General Plan Policies NO-2 through NO-4. Small portions of the Specific Plan Area are within the Overflight Zone associated with Sacramento McClellan Airport. Future development proposed within areas affected by airport noise contours would be subject to review for consistency with applicable airport land use compatibility requirements, County noise policies, and applicable building standards which would provide compatible interior noise environments (California Building Standards Commission 2019).

Aircraft activity at Sacramento McClellan Airport is intermittent and varies seasonally. Available information indicates that McClellan is generally a non-towered airport, but mobile air traffic control operations are used during higher-activity periods associated with CAL FIRE operations, including training and peak firefighting periods. During these periods, aircraft activity may include airtankers, helicopters, general aviation aircraft, business jets, and other aircraft associated with airport operations. These operations can generate short-term elevated noise levels during takeoff, landing, and low-altitude overflight events; however, such events are episodic and do not represent continuous aircraft noise exposure conditions comparable to historical military operations or major commercial airport operations.

Implementation of the proposed Specific Plan would not alter Sacramento McClellan Airport operations, increase aircraft activity, or change flight patterns. The potential for aircraft noise exposure would be addressed through applicable Sacramento County airport land use compatibility policies and noise insulation requirements. The proposed Specific Plan does not allow noise-sensitive uses in areas that could be substantially affected by airport noise. The impact would be **less than significant**.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required.

13 POPULATION AND HOUSING

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the existing setting related to population, housing, and employment in the North Watt Avenue Specific Plan Area, and the potential for the proposed Specific Plan to induce substantial unplanned population growth or to displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere.

ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

POPULATION TRENDS

Sacramento County is a member jurisdiction of the Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG), which includes six counties and 22 cities. Table PH-1 shows the population trends in Sacramento County as compared to the other counties in the SACOG region from 2015–2025. All of the SACOG counties experienced population growth over the last 10 years, with the highest percentage growth in Placer and Yuba Counties (Table PH-1). Population growth within Sacramento County has been approximately seven percent between 2015 and 2025, which is essentially the median within the six-county region.

Table PH-1: Population in SACOG Region

County	2015	2020	2025	Percent Change
El Dorado County	180,914	191,185	190,770	5.4
Placer County	373,578	404,739	421,446	12.8
Sacramento County	1,495,130	1,585,055	1,604,745	7.3
Sutter County	95,421	99,633	100,257	5.0
Yolo County	208,343	216,403	225,433	8.2
Yuba County	75,374	81,575	85,023	12.8

Sources: California Department of Finance (DOF) 2025a: Table E-8, DOF 2025: Table E-5

SACOG = Sacramento Area Council of Governments

Table PH-2 shows the population trends of the incorporated cities within Sacramento County as well as the population of the unincorporated county, from 2015–2025. Aside from the small city of Isleton in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta, all other cities and the unincorporated county experienced population growth over the last 10 years. The largest growth rates were in Folsom and Rancho Cordova (Table PH-2). Population growth in unincorporated Sacramento County has been strong, but less than most of the incorporated cities in the county, at approximately three percent between 2015 and 2025.

Table PH-2: Population in Sacramento County – Cities and Unincorporated County

Geographic Area	2015	2020	2025	Percent Change
Citrus Heights	85,608	87,721	86,280	0.7
Elk Grove	164,437	176,349	182,842	11.1
Folsom	76,980	82,908	92,577	20.2
Galt	24,388	25,469	26,092	6.9
Isleton	788	795	764	-3.0
Rancho Cordova	71,389	79,144	85,451	19.6
Sacramento	487,794	520,252	527,979	8.2
County Unincorporated	584,607	612,417	602,760	3.1

Sources: DOF 2025a: Table E-8, DOF 2025: Table E-5

HOUSING

According to the California Department of Finance (DOF), there were 229,403 housing units in unincorporated Sacramento County in 2025 and a vacancy rate of 3.7 percent (DOF 2025a). Table PH-3 shows the changes in housing unit types in the unincorporated county between 2015 and 2025. Over the last 10 years, the number of housing units in the unincorporated county increased by 3 percent, with the largest increase in single-family detached housing (Table PH-3).

Table PH-3: Housing Units by Type in Unincorporated Sacramento County

Housing Type	2015	2020	2025	Percent Change
Single-Family Detached Units	143,218	146,553	149,309	4.2
Single-Family Attached Units	14,372	14,698	14,730	2.4
Two to Four Units	18,458	18,359	18,379	-0.4
Five+ Units	39,951	40,155	40,404	1.1
Mobile Units	6,586	6,536	6,563	-0.3
Total	**222,585**	**226,301**	**229,403**	**3.0**

Sources: DOF 2025a: Table E-8, DOF 2025: Table E-5

EMPLOYMENT

According to the Sacramento County Housing Element of 2021−2029 (Sacramento County 2022b), there were 249,282 jobs held by unincorporated Sacramento County residents in 2017. As shown in Table 12 of the Housing Element, the 2020 Economic Overview for the county projects the educational services, and health care and social assistance industries will be the fastest growing sectors between 2020 and 2023.

Construction, and professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services are projected to be the next fastest growing sectors.

Based on data from the American Community Survey from 2020–2024, North Highlands (Census Designated Place) had 22,435 people over the age of 16 employed in the civilian labor force (DOF 2025c). During this same period, Sacramento County as a whole had 751,850 people over the age of 16 employed in the civilian labor force, and the unincorporated county had 275,254 people in the labor force (DOF 2025c).

JOBS/HOUSING RELATIONSHIP

While trends related to remote work are dynamic at this time, there are still environmental consequences related to the relationship between the location, job types, and housing in a community. A closer match between the number and types of jobs and the number of households and interests, educational background, and skills of the local labor force can help to alleviate traffic congestion; shorten commute times; and reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT), air pollutant emissions, and noise associated with vehicular travel. Balancing jobs and housing in a smaller area can increase opportunities to bike or walk to work instead of driving, and placement of transit-supportive housing densities near high-quality transit, such as that which exists in the Specific Plan Area, can provide opportunities for more employees to access jobs via public transit.

A more favorable relationship between jobs and housing can be created by more housing that is the right type and affordability level for workers in a defined geographic area. Alternatively, improving the jobs and housing balance could focus more on adding employment in a defined area that provides jobs that match the education and employment skills of the local population. An area that has too many jobs compared to the number of housing units is likely (in the absence of offsetting factors) to experience substantial in-commuting and escalations in housing prices. Conversely, if an area has relatively few jobs in comparison to the number of employed residents, many of the workers may need to commute to jobs outside of their area of residence. To maximize the environmental benefits of a jobs-housing balance, there needs to be a nexus between the types and cost of housing proposed to be located near jobs to be provided, the education/skills required by those jobs relative to the local labor force, and the income levels associated with those jobs.

Beyond the locational relationship between jobs and housing, there is also an important relationship between jobs and workers. Housing has long been used as a proxy for workers and worker residences. In reality, the number of workers per household varies widely across regions based on a variety of demographic factors (such as age and education/skills), and different housing types have the capacity to accommodate different numbers of workers.

One measure of jobs-housing balance is an index based on the ratio of employed residents (influenced by the number of homes) to jobs in the area. An index of 1.0 indicates the supply of jobs and employed residents (labor force) is balanced. An index above 1.0 indicates there are more jobs than employed residents and may suggest that

many employees are commuting in from outside the community. An index below 1.0 indicates there are more employed residents than jobs and may suggest that many residents commute to jobs outside the community. The Specific Plan Area is very jobs-rich today, providing approximately five jobs for every employed resident.

The real relationship between jobs and housing is far more complex than the ratio portrays. Even with a relative numeric balance, there can still be substantial commuting activity if the types of jobs are not matched with the skills and experience of the local labor force. The number of workers per household varies, and different housing types accommodate different numbers of workers.

Finally, no formula can capture the complex human decision-making process of where to live and where to work. For households with choices regarding employment and housing, lifestyle factors (good schools, community amenities and culture, available housing types, etc.) can outweigh the convenience of living closer to work.

REGIONAL PROJECTIONS

SACOG is an association of local governments in the six-county Sacramento region that includes El Dorado, Placer, Sacramento, Sutter, Yolo, and Yuba counties. SACOG is responsible for the development and implementation of the Metropolitan Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (MTP/SCS). The focus of the MTP/SCS is on the intersection of land use and transportation: it identifies the region's strategies for meeting the regional greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions reduction target; establishes conformity with state and federal clean air act requirements; provides the foundation for the regional housing needs allocation and establishes a plan for housing the population of the region; and identifies a transportation network to serve the transportation needs of the region, and to reduce VMT to, among other things, support achievement of the region's GHG emissions reduction target. The MTP/SCS provides a 20-year transportation vision and corresponding list of projects and is federally required to be updated every four years. The current 2025 Blueprint (MTP/SCS) was adopted by the SACOG Board in November 2025 (SACOG 2025a).

Projections from the 2025 Blueprint for population, employment, and housing in the six-county Sacramento region, and in unincorporated Sacramento County through 2050, are shown in Table PH-4 and Table PH-5, respectively. As shown, the SACOG region is expected to continue to grow through 2035 and 2050, increasing in population by 13 percent between 2020 and 2035 and by 23 percent between 2020 and 2050, with similar growth in the number of jobs and housing units. Unincorporated Sacramento County is also anticipated to grow, under the Blueprint scenario developed by SACOG, but less than the region as a whole, with population growth of 6 percent between 2020 and 2035 and 12 percent between 2020 and 2050, and job growth of 10 percent between 2020 and 2035 and 18 percent between 2020 and 2050 (SACOG 2025b).

Table PH-4: SACOG Population, Jobs, and Housing Projections for the Six-County Sacramento Region

Year	Population	Jobs	Housing Units
2020	2,540,353	1,127,570	951,615
2035	2,879,733	1,283,570	1,107,620
2050	3,120,053	1,390,570	1,229,633

Source: SACOG 2026

SACOG = Sacramento Area Council of Governments

Table PH-5: SACOG Population, Jobs, and Housing Projections for Unincorporated Sacramento County

Year	Population	Jobs	Housing Units
2020	606,066	214,740	224,640
2035	641,755	235,695	241,210
2050	678,394	254,330	260,250

Source: SACOG 2026

SACOG = Sacramento Area Council of Governments

REGULATORY SETTING

FEDERAL

FAIR HOUSING ACT

The federal Fair Housing Act (42 U.S.C. 3601 et seq.), enacted in 1968, prohibits discrimination by direct providers of housing, such as property owners and real estate companies as well as other entities, such as municipalities, banks or other lending institutions and homeowners insurance companies whose discriminatory practices make housing unavailable to persons because of race or color, religion, sex, national origin, familial status, or disability.

STATE AND REGIONAL

CALIFORNIA HOUSING ELEMENT REQUIREMENTS AND REGIONAL HOUSING NEEDS ASSESSMENT

California law (Government Code Section 65580, et seq.) requires cities and counties to include a Housing Element as a part of their General Plans to address housing conditions and needs in the community. Housing Elements are prepared approximately every eight years, following timetables set forth in the law. The Housing Element must identify and analyze existing and projected housing needs and “make adequate provision for the existing and projected needs of all economic segments of the community,” among other

requirements. The County adopted its current Housing Element on March 8, 2022 (Sacramento County 2022).

In accordance with California housing law, a Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) is established for each region in the state by the California Department of Housing and Community Development. The RHNA for the 2021−2029 planning period for SACOG's six-county region is 153,512 housing units.

The overall allocation of housing units is divided into four income categories:

- Very low-income: up to 50 percent of median countywide income, which also includes extremely low-income at less than 30 percent of median countywide income (Health and Safety Code Section 50105);
- Low-income: 50 to 80 percent of median countywide income (Health and Safety Code Section 50079.5);
- Moderate-income: 80 to 120 percent of median countywide income (Health and Safety Code Section 50093); and
- Above moderate-income: over 120 percent of median countywide income.

The 2021−2029 RHNA for unincorporated Sacramento County is 21,272 new units, which is an increase of 7,428 units over the previous 2013−2021 planning period of 13,844 units. As a percentage of the 153,512 units in the SACOG region, unincorporated Sacramento County is assigned approximately 14 percent of units. The unincorporated Sacramento County allocation is a one percent increase from its regional share in the prior cycle. And, while the overall number of units allocated to the unincorporated county is substantially increased (including the total number of affordable units needed), the share of very low- and low-income units decreased by 5.1 percent from 38.7 to 33.6 percent from the previous cycle allocation.

2025 Blueprint (Metropolitan Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy)

The MTP/SCS provides a 20-year land use and transportation scenario based on the following Blueprint principles.

- **Transportation Choice**. Developments should encourage people to walk, bike, use public transit, or carpool to their destinations.
- **Compact Development.** Creating environments that are more compactly built and use space in an efficient but attractive manner helps to encourage more walking, biking, and transit use and shorter auto trips.
- **Mixed-Use Development.** Building homes, shops, entertainment, offices, and even light industrial uses near each other can create active, vital neighborhoods. The mix of uses can occur on many different scales and be either vertical (such as a single building with a ground floor business and residences on upper floors) or

horizontal (with a combination of uses in close proximity). Mixed use projects function as local activity centers, contributing to a sense of community, where people tend to walk or bike to destinations and interact more with each other.

- **Housing Choice and Diversity**. Providing a variety of places where people can live—apartments, townhomes, condominiums and single-family detached homes of varying lot sizes—creates opportunities for the variety of people who need them: families, singles, seniors and people with special needs.
- **Use of Existing Assets.** In urbanized areas, development on infill or vacant lands, intensification of the existing use (for example, adding additional buildings to a low-density shopping center), or redevelopment can make better use of existing public infrastructure, including roads.
- **Natural Resource Conservation.** Developments should incorporate public use open space (such as parks, town squares, trails, and greenbelts) to help create a sense of community and attractive neighborhoods. Additionally, conserving natural places and resources including open space, agriculture, and wildlife and habitat areas contributes to improving quality of life by providing cleaner air and outdoor experiences.
- **Quality Design.** The design details of any land development (such as relationship to the street, placement of garages, facades, sidewalks, street widths, landscaping, etc.) are all factors that influence the attractiveness of living in a compact development and facilitate the ease of walking within and in and out of a community.

As observed in the 2025 Blueprint, the regions, economic, fiscal, and environmental goals require a focus on development in already developed areas – uncoordinated development in greenfield areas at the periphery of the urban development footprint "can result in longer trips because homes are located farther from common destinations…puts a strain on the transportation network, increases air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions, adds to public health costs, reduces safety, and reduces economic productivity as households spend more time in their vehicles." (SACOG 2025a, page 27).

One important implementation strategy for the MTP/SCS is the Green Means Go program, which is designed to accelerate investment in targeted infill development areas by providing infrastructure funding, technical assistance and policy support (SACOG, no date). Member jurisdictions with SACOG, such as the County, have identified areas that are appropriate for infill development, but that face market or other barriers to infill development. As a critical implementation component first referenced in the 2020 MTP/SCS, Green Means Go is moving the region toward the goal of at least one third of new dwelling units being constructed in existing developed areas (centers, corridors, or established communities).

The Specific Plan Area is a Green Means Go zone.

LOCAL

SACRAMENTO COUNTY GENERAL PLAN

The Sacramento County 2030 General Plan provides an inventory of land supply within the County and projects the amount and location of land and development that will be required to accommodate future populations and economic growth through 2030. The land use strategies and policies of the Sacramento County 2030 General Plan (Sacramento County 2022a) are designed to promote the efficient use of land, encourage economic vitality and job growth, reduce urban sprawl and its impacts, preserve habitat and open space, and protect agricultural and rangeland operations. The General Plan Land Use Element (Sacramento County 2022a) sets forth the County's vision for development of the vacant and underutilized land within existing commercial corridors, which offer an opportunity to accommodate future residential and commercial growth in compact, mixed-use developments that can positively contribute to the existing community. General Plan Policy LU-11 and its accompanying implementation measure effectively launch planning processes for the county's identified 14 commercial corridors, including North Watt Avenue.

The Housing Element is one of eight mandatory elements of the General Plan. The purpose of the Housing Element is to identify and analyze existing and projected housing needs for all income groups; to include goals, policies and programs to address the identified needs; and to provide enough sites for new housing development to occur during the 2021−2029 planning period (Sacramento County 2022b).

The County's Housing Element called for rezoning to meet the Regional Housing Needs Allocation, including sites within the Specific Plan Area. On August 20th, 2024, the Sacramento County Board of Supervisors adopted the rezoning program included in the Housing Element, which included five sites within the Specific Plan Area, which were rezoned by the County to change the minimum density to either 22.5 dwelling units per acre or 30 dwelling units per acre. Please see Chapter 12 of this EIR, Land Use and Planning, for more details.

IMPACTS AND ANALYSIS

SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA

The significance criteria used to evaluate a project's impact to population and housing under CEQA are based on Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines. Accordingly, a significant impact related to population and housing would occur if the proposed Specific Plan would:

- induce substantial unplanned population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure;
- displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere.

METHODOLOGY AND ASSUMPTIONS

The proposed North Watt Avenue Specific Plan's effects related to population and housing were evaluated by assessing anticipated population growth under the proposed North Watt Avenue Specific Plan in relation to adopted regional and local growth projections, including projections in the SACOG MTP/SCS. While an EIR may provide information regarding economic and social changes resulting from a project, which may include land use, socioeconomic, population, employment, or housing issues, CEQA does not recognize these issues as direct physical effects on the environment (CEQA Guidelines Sections 15064[d][1][e]). Physical environmental impacts that could result from changes in population related to the proposed North Watt Avenue Specific Plan are evaluated and disclosed in the appropriate topical chapters in this EIR.

The information and analysis included in this section was developed based on a review of the proposed North Watt Avenue Specific Plan, 2025 Blueprint (SACOG 2025a), and the Sacramento County 2030 General Plan (Sacramento County 2022a, 2022b).

IMPACT PH-1: INDUCE SUBSTANTIAL UNPLANNED POPULATION GROWTH

As described in EIR Chapter 2, "Project Description," the proposed Specific Plan would guide future redevelopment on 705 acres along a 4-mile segment of Watt Avenue in unincorporated Sacramento County. The Specific Plan Area is located in the community of North Highlands. The southern portion of the Specific Plan Area, south of the Union Pacific Railroad Main Line and west of Watt Avenue, encompasses an existing industrial park.

The proposed Specific Plan is consistent with the vision and goals of the 2012 North Watt Avenue Corridor Plan (Corridor Plan) and aims to streamline the development process by removing barriers to infill development; establishing clear, predictable standards; creating better certainty for property owners, builders, and developers; and making projects more feasible while encouraging reinvestment. The Specific Plan does not mandate or propose a certain amount of development, but the County has used development assumptions to help inform the analysis throughout this EIR. Between present and 2050, the County assumes that between 2,100 and 7,260 new dwelling units could be constructed within the Specific Plan Area, providing opportunity for between 3,600 and 19,600 new residents, depending on future housing types and household sizes. Up to 1.9 million square feet of new non-residential building space could be constructed within the Specific Plan Area, and up to 745,000 square feet of non-residential building space could be demolished on underutilized properties to accommodate new development. New development within the Specific Plan Area could provide opportunities for between 1,470 and 3,190 new jobs.

SACRAMENTO COUNTY 2030 GENERAL PLAN

The first goal of the 2030 General Plan Land Use Element (Sacramento County 2022a) is to develop an orderly pattern of land use that concentrates urban development, enhances community character and identity through the creation and maintenance of neighborhoods, is functionally linked with transit, promotes public health, and protects the

county's natural, environmental, and agricultural resources. As explained under the first goal of the Land Use Element and throughout the 2030 General Plan, the County's growth strategy is focused on compact, land-efficient development, primarily in existing developed areas, not just for improving the quality of life of existing developed areas, but also to "protect valuable agricultural and rangelands, conserve natural areas and resources, reduce travel distances, reduce air pollutant emissions, conserve energy, and enhance the efficiency of providing infrastructure and services" (Sacramento County 2022a, Land Use Element, page 18). The 2030 General Plan is intended to avoid the problems created by "low-density, auto-dependent land use patterns that characterize the last several decades of urban development in California," in order to "protect open space and natural resources, our needs to protect human health and produce housing that supports a growing population and economy, and our ability to pay for the infrastructure to support that development pattern" (Sacramento County 2022a, Land Use Element, page 18).

The 2030 General Plan includes land use strategies that address the need to accommodate projected population and employment growth in areas where the appropriate level of public infrastructure and services are or will be available; develop land use patterns that maximize the benefits of new and existing development while maintaining the quality, character, and identity of neighborhood and community areas; and reinvest in and revitalize existing communities through planning strategies that addresses housing, economic development, commercial development, employment opportunities, public facilities, and infrastructure improvements. As noted in the Land Use Element, one of the primary objectives of the General Plan is "utilizing vacant and underutilized lands to accommodate future economic and population growth" (Sacramento County 2022a, Land Use Element, page 19).

The 2030 General Plan accommodates urban growth within the unincorporated Sacramento County through Commercial Corridor Planning, which provides for new residential and commercial growth in compact, mixed-use developments. The 2030 General Plan notes that accommodating new growth within commercial corridors is intended to benefit the existing community through increased local economic activity, improved transit ridership, and additional housing near employment opportunities, resulting in reduced commute traffic (i.e., vehicle miles traveled [VMT]). The 2030 General Plan identifies 14 target corridors, including North Watt Avenue (Sacramento County 2022a: Figure 4). The General Plan seeks a proactive approach for reinvestment in existing developed communities that prioritizes County resources, both staffing and financial, "so that reinvestment in existing communities is not overshadowed by planning and development activity in new growth areas" (Sacramento County 2022a, Land Use Element, page 25). The proposed Specific Plan itself represents an investment of County resources for reinvestment, and the Specific Plan proposes additional strategies to make transportation, water, sewer, and drainage improvements to accelerate infill development along the North Watt Avenue corridor.

REGIONAL HOUSING NEEDS

A discussed in the "Regulatory Setting" above, the 2021−2029 RHNA identifies the need for a total of 21,272 units within the unincorporated portions of Sacramento County to

accommodate the projected overall housing demand (Sacramento County 2022b). As a percentage of the 153,512 units in the SACOG region, unincorporated Sacramento County has been assigned approximately 14 percent of the units. The proposed Specific Plan would provide between 2,100 and 7,260 dwelling units, which could meet up to one-third of the unincorporated County's identified RHNA, and would provide additional capacity for future RHNAs.

SACOG Blueprint and MTP/SCS

SACOG's 2025 Blueprint (MTP/SCS) is a regional transportation plan and land use strategy designed to build more vibrant places, accommodate changes in transportation and transportation funding, and build a safe and reliable multi-modal transportation system. The 2025 Blueprint (MTP/SCS) focuses on:

- increased housing and transportation options;
- inwardly-focused growth and improved economic viability of rural areas;
- minimized direct and indirect transportation impacts on the environment;
- a transportation system that delivers cost-effective results and is feasible to construct and maintain;
- effective connections between people and jobs;
- improved opportunities for businesses and citizens to easily access goods, jobs, services, and housing; and
- real, viable choices for methods of travel.

The 2025 Blueprint (MTP/SCS) includes a land use strategy to improve mobility and reduce travel demand from passenger vehicles by prioritizing compact and transit-oriented development, thereby reducing the growth in VMT and associated greenhouse gas emissions. The 2025 Blueprint (MTP/SCS) also includes projections for the location of growth within the region, between jurisdictions, and among place types (i.e., infill and greenfield development) (SACOG 2025a).

The proposed North Watt Avenue Specific Plan (for the "North Watt Avenue Corridor") is specifically identified in the 2025 Blueprint for future redevelopment of up to 7,200 dwelling units, with a range of housing types at densities that support transit (SACOG 2025a:135). In addition, the County anticipates, and the proposed Specific Plan is designed primarily to accommodate relatively more compact housing types – townhomes, small-lot homes, condominiums, and multi-family dwelling units of different types. This is consistent with an aspect of the strategy reflected in the 2025 Blueprint – as noted, between present and 2050 (SACOG 2025a, pages 18-19):

> "[o]ur region's population is getting older, along with the rest of the nation [and] the Sacramento region is echoing national trends that show household sizes shrinking…Changing demographics will mean a wider range of housing needs and desires than today's population…The combined impact of demographic shifts and likely preference changes that are already unfolding on the national

> stage means that providing an increased number of smaller homes as a complement to the existing supply of large homes will improve the region's ability to house more of its new residents and attract members of a highly skilled workforce, many of whom are looking for vibrant walkable communities where they can live, work, and play. Over the next 10 to 20 years, Baby Boomers will be looking to downsize while Gen Z is coming into its prime 'household formation' years. These two groups will thus be competing for the same limited housing stock. Baby Boomers, typically with more resources, will likely outcompete younger generations for these smaller homes. This competition, shrinking household sizes, and the increasing challenge of affordability will all increase the demand for small-lot single-family and attached housing through 2050."

The proposed Specific Plan would provide a range of substantial new housing opportunities, particularly for smaller housing units, in an existing developed corridor with transportation options and jobs, and therefore would be consistent with, and would advance the following objectives of the SACOG 2025 Blueprint (MTP/SCS):

- Provide increased housing and transportation options in close proximity to multi-modal transit.
- Minimize direct and indirect transportation-related impacts on the environment.
- Provide effective connections between people and jobs.
- Deliver improved opportunities for businesses and citizens to easily access goods, jobs, services, and housing.

Jobs-Housing Relationship

As noted previously under "Environmental Setting," there are environmental consequences related to the relationship between jobs and housing in a community. A closer match between the number and types of jobs and the number of households and interests, educational background, and skills of the local labor force can reduce VMT and air pollutant emissions and noise associated with vehicular travel. The Specific Plan Area and vicinity is a jobs-rich area.[1] More than 95 percent of the jobs within the Specific Plan Area are filled by those living outside of the Specific Plan Area. Within Sacramento County as a whole, more than 40 percent of jobs are filled by those living outside of the county (U.S. Census 2023). With the proposed Specific Plan, the County proposes to remove barriers to infill development, provide clear guidance for development, and identify resources for improvements within the Specific Plan to help attract investment and infill development – particularly housing development. For analysis purposes, the County assumed between 2,100 and 7,260 new dwelling units could be constructed within the Specific Plan Area, providing opportunity for between 3,600 and 19,600 new residents,

[1] This applies a labor force participation rate of 49 percent to the future population of the Specific Plan Area, which is the 2025 labor force participation rate within Sacramento County documented by the California Employment Development Department. Please see http://www.labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov for more detail.

which, along with assumed new employment, would substantially improve the jobs-to-employed-residents ratio.[2] While there are many factors that influence residential choices of employed residents of Sacramento County, the additional housing development near both local jobs and high-quality transit connections to additional jobs could provide environmental benefits to the extent that more local residents become local employees or use transit rather than private automobile for the work commute.

Conclusion

Development within the proposed Specific Plan Area was anticipated by the County's General Plan and the SACOG 2025 Blueprint. The proposed Specific Plan is an implementation of the County's General Plan and the 2025 Blueprint, both of which note the environmental benefits of land-efficient development. The proposed Specific Plan would not induce substantial unplanned population growth that would have any adverse environmental impact. Therefore, this impact would be **less than significant.**

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required.

Impact PH-2: Displace Substantial Numbers of Existing People or Housing, Necessitating the Construction of Replacement Housing Elsewhere

The North Watt Specific Plan area is currently developed primarily with a mix of commercial and industrial uses. There are few existing residential units within the Specific Plan Area, and the Specific Plan does not propose any displacement of any existing housing units. The Specific Plan proposes improvements to the transportation system in the Specific Plan Area, but improvements are for the existing transportation network, and the Specific Plan does not propose any transportation improvements that would require the removal of any housing. The same is true for water, sewer, and drainage improvements – the County proposes to improve existing infrastructure systems to serve development under the proposed Specific Plan, and the County does not propose infrastructure extensions or expansions that would require the removal of any housing. This impact would be **less than significant**.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required.

[2] The ratio of jobs to employed residents would improve from 5:1 to between 0.7:1 and 2.2:1.

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14 PUBLIC SERVICES

INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides the environmental setting information that is relevant to the North Watt Avenue Specific Plan Area related to public services and facilities, including fire protection, law enforcement, public schools, and libraries; a summary of relevant federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and policies related to public services; and includes an impact analysis related to the actions needed to provide the appropriate public services for the proposed Specific Plan that could potentially lead to adverse physical environmental effects.

ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

FIRE PROTECTION SERVICES

Fire protection services to the Specific Plan Area are provided by the Sacramento Metropolitan Fire District (SMFD). SMFD's service area covers 359 square miles with a population of over 720,000, and is the 7th largest fire agency in the state. SMFD operations include fire and rescue, emergency medical, training and safety, special operations, homeland security, fire investigation, and health and wellness divisions and services.

SMFD's service area is divided into five organizational command areas known as battalions. Each battalion is led by a shift battalion chief who oversees emergency response for 7 to 11 first-due response areas.[1] The Specific Plan Area is within Battalion 5. Battalion 5 provides service to the communities of Placer Vineyards, Elverta, Antelope, Rio Linda, North Highlands, Foothill Farms, and McClellan Park. Battalion 5 includes 11 fire stations and a total staff of 44 people. Battalion 5 serves a total population of 169,768 across a first-due area of 45.7 square miles. Battalion 5 is headquartered at Fire Station No. 114, which is immediately adjacent to the Specific Plan Area to the west, within McClellan Park (SMFD 2024).

There are two SMFD fire stations within (Nos. 41 and 42) and two SMFD fire stations immediately adjacent to (Nos. 112 and 114) the Specific Plan Area, which would likely provide first responder service. SMFD is in the process of relocating Station No. 42 from its existing location to northwest of the Watt Avenue/Myrtle Avenue intersection (within the Specific Plan Area) for improved operations; and relocating Station No. 41 to Station No. 112. Both relocations are also expansions to accommodate future growth. These fire

[1] "First due" refers to the fire department or specific engine/truck company responsible for responding first to an incident in a designated geographical area, and which is tasked with the immediate actions before other units arrive.

stations and their service area populations in 2023 are described in Table PS-1, and their locations are shown on Plate PS-1.

Table PS-1. Fire Station Data

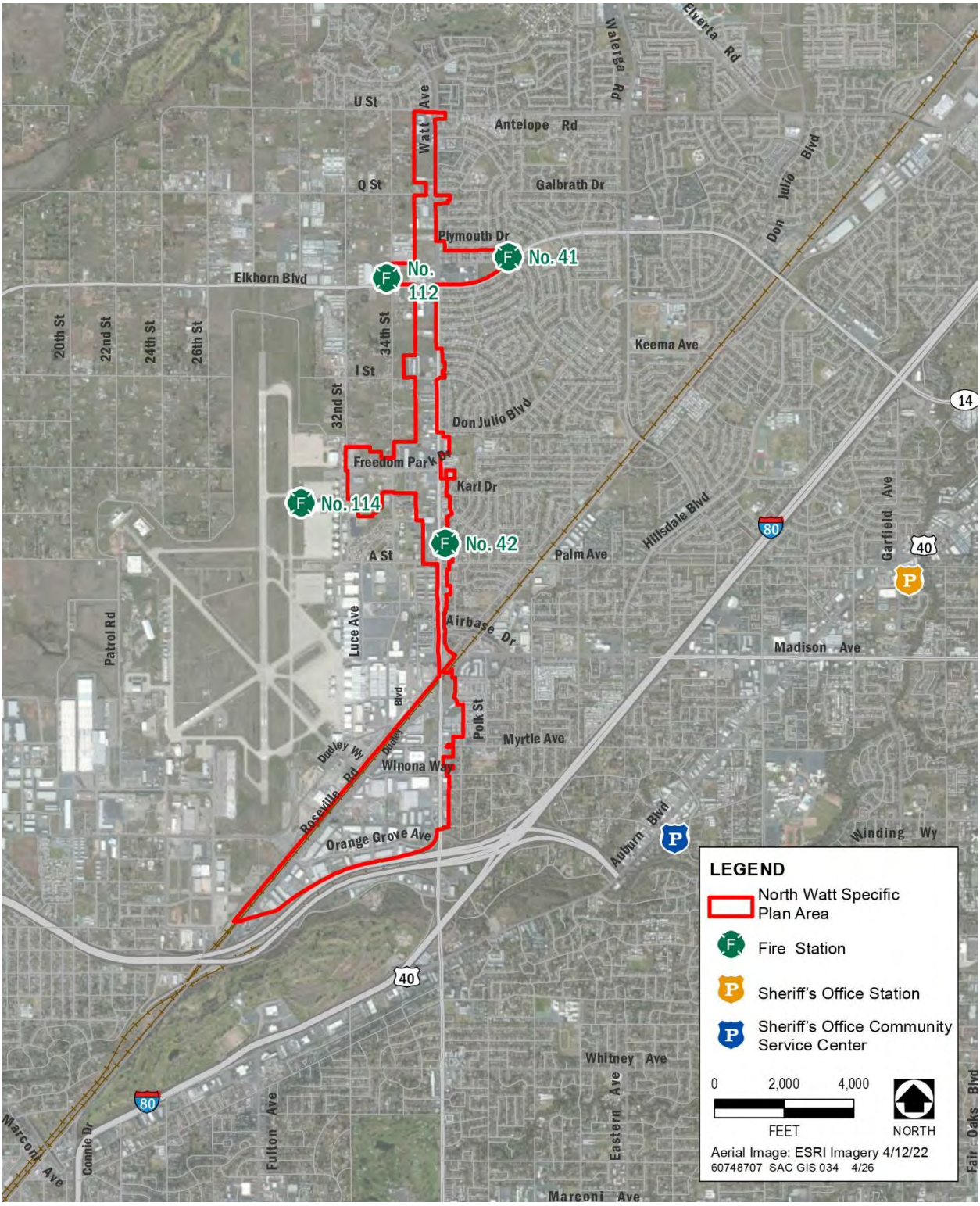
Station Number	Address	Equipment	Staff	Proximity to Specific Plan Area	2023 Population Served
41	6900 Thomas Drive North Highlands	Type I Engine Company Type V Engine (cross-staffed) Medic Unit	5	Within	28,887
42	5608 North Haven Drive North Highlands	Type I Engine Company	3	Within	15,211
112	6801 34th Street McClellan Park	Reserve Firefighter Program Type I Engine Company (reserve) Type V Engineer (reserve) Two Air Units (reserve)	Reserve	Adjacent (west)	8,805
114	5824 Kelly Way McClellan Park	Type I Engine Company Aircraft Rescue Firefighting Unit 1 Aircraft Rescue Firefighting Unit 2 (cross-staffed) Aircraft Rescue Firefighting Unit 3 (reserve) Water Tender (cross-staffed) Foam Unit (cross-staffed) Battalion 5 Headquarters	7	Adjacent (west)	993

Source: SMFD 2024

Calls for Service Data

Data collected by SMFD for 2023 indicate that fire incident responses throughout the District's service area decreased by 5 percent in 2023 as compared to 2022. Fire incidents accounted for 11 percent of the total responses provided. The highest concentration of incidents continues to be along the I-80/Capital City Freeway corridors, which have high transient populations. Emergency medical services (EMS) incidents associated with the transient population increased by 13 percent in 2023 (4,448 total calls) and comprise about 6 percent of total EMS call volume. While fire incidents related to the transient population decreased by 26 percent in 2023 (1,027 total calls), these calls still make up nearly 10 percent of SMFD's total fire call volume. EMS calls account for 83 percent of all SMFD responses (SMFD 2024).

Plate PS-1. Fire and Police Stations



The age and types of buildings in an area directly affect service level requirements. Older buildings that have no built-in fire protection systems present an inherently greater risk than modern buildings. Data collected by SMFD determined that the vast majority of structures throughout the District's jurisdiction are single-family residential buildings that do not have fixed fire protection systems or equipment installed. There are over 273,000 housing units in SMFD's service area, with 78 percent built more than 35 years ago, before modern building codes included robust provisions for fire protection (SMFD 2024).

Hazardous materials incidents account for 1 percent of SMFD's overall responses and are clustered in the northwest quadrant of the District's service area, including the North Highlands area (which includes the Specific Plan Area). Total HazMat responses increased by 10 percent in 2023 (SMFD 2024).

The District-wide service call statistics are similarly reflected within Battalion 5. The types and total number of service responses provided by Battalion 5 and the four fire stations within and adjacent to the Specific Plan Area in 2023 are listed in Table PS-2.

Table PS-2. Fire Station Incident Responses in 2023

Type of Call	Calls for Battalion 5	Calls for Station 41	Calls for Station 42	Calls for Station 112	Calls for Station 114
Fire	999	165	141	80	18
Overpressure	7	2	1	1	1
EMS	15,612	2,481	1,989	741	253
HazMat	309	45	36	17	11
Service Call	1,608	259	163	80	18
Good Intent[a]	2,348	373	337	149	40
False Call	734	99	81	36	71
Weather/Disaster	22	5	1	1	0
Other Situation	3	1	1	1	0
Total	**21,642**	**3,430**	**2,750**	**1,106**	**412**

Notes: EMS = Emergency Medical Services
[a] "Good Intent" calls occur when a citizen reports a potential hazard or situation out of genuine concern, but upon arrival, firefighters find no actual emergency, a lesser issue, or the situation resolved itself.
Source: SMFD 2024

POLICE PROTECTION SERVICES

The Sacramento County Sheriff's Department provides specialized law enforcement services to both the incorporated and unincorporated areas, and local police protection to the unincorporated areas and the City of Rancho Cordova. Specialized law enforcement includes providing court security services, operating a system of jails for pre-trial and sentenced inmates, and operating a training complex. Local police protection includes response to calls and trouble spots, investigations, surveillance, and routine patrolling. Services are generally provided through patrol units consisting of a patrol car and deputy sheriff.

The Sheriff's Department operates several facilities, including a headquarters building, main jail, the Rio Cosumnes Correctional Center (RCCC), five station houses, 10 community service centers, a training academy, firearms training facility, marine enforcement detail, and an air support bureau. The main jail is located in downtown Sacramento and is designed to primarily house pre-trial inmates. The RCCC is located south of the city of Elk Grove and its primary function is to house male and female inmates sentenced to County Jail from the Sacramento County courts.

There are nine Sheriff's Department districts in the County. Police services in the Specific Plan Area are provided by Northwest, District 1. The District 1 headquarters are in the Sheriff's Office station located at 5510 Garfield Avenue, approximately 2.5 miles east of the Specific Plan Area (see Plate PS-**1**). From this station, District 1 provides police protection services to the communities of Antelope, Elverta, Foothill Farms, McClellan Park, North Highlands, and Rio Linda (Sacramento County Sheriff's Office 2025). This Sheriff's Office station is staffed with 44 sworn police officers, with a total service area population of 421,467.

The Sheriff's Office Community Service Centers offer a variety of services to the public, including "non-dispatch" crime reports, fingerprinting, neighborhood watch, toy/food drives, safety fairs, vacation watches, crime prevention, and other services. Community Service Centers are staffed by a mix of Sheriff's Office personnel and volunteers (Sacramento County Sheriff's Office 2025). The nearest Community Service Building is located at 4500 Orange Grove Avenue, approximately 1.25 miles east of the southeast corner of the Specific Plan Area (see Plate PS-**1**).

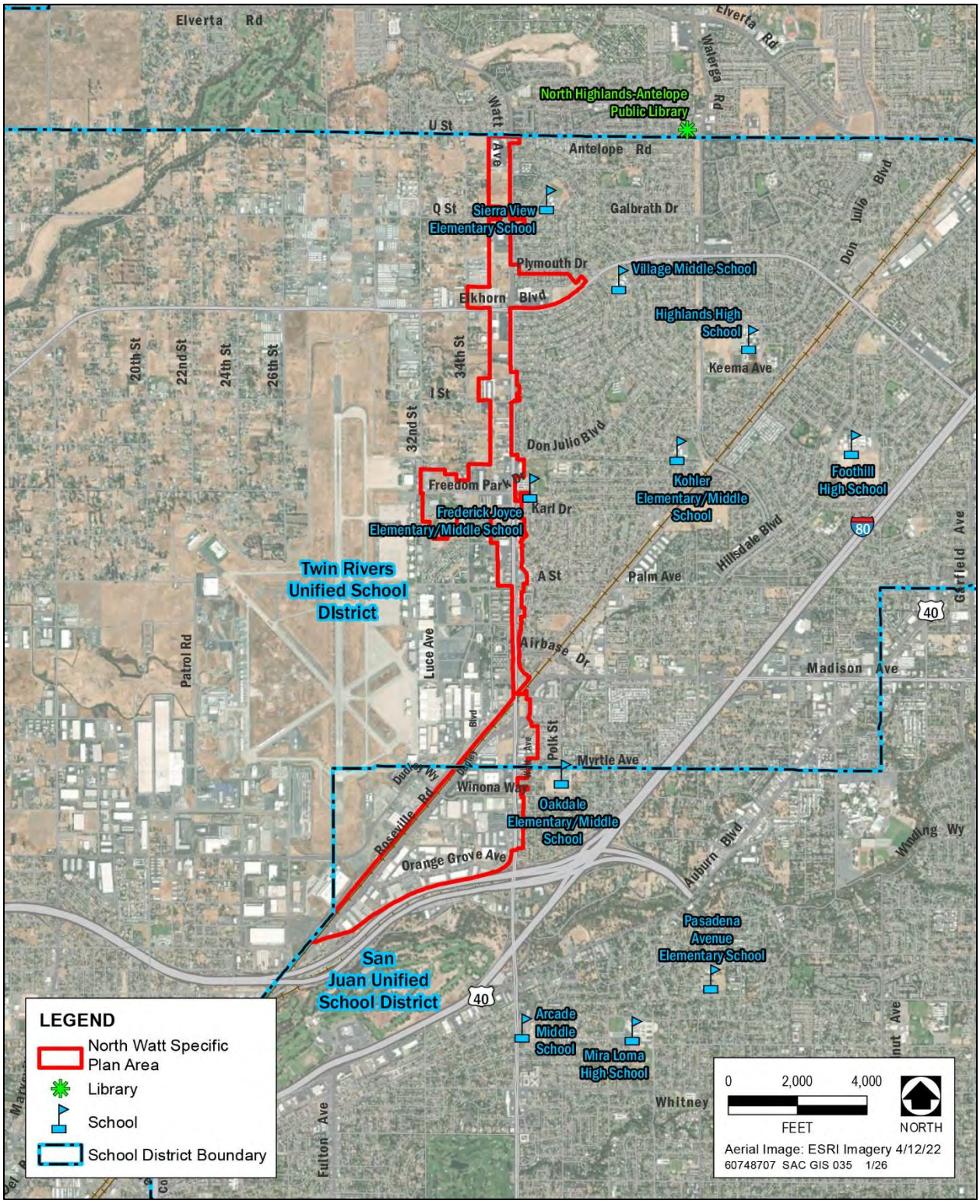
SCHOOLS

The Specific Plan Area is situated within two different school districts (Plate PS-2). North of Myrtle Avenue, the Specific Plan Area is within the Twin Rivers Unified School District (Twin Rivers USD); south of Myrtle Avenue, the Specific Plan Area is within the San Juan Unified School District (San Juan USD) (Sacramento County Office of Education 2025). Each of these school districts are discussed separately below.

TWIN RIVERS UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

The Twin Rivers USD encompasses an 82-square-mile area covering the communities of Arden Fair, Del Paso Heights, Dos Rios, Elverta, Foothill Farms, Gardenland, McClellan Park, Natomas, Northgate, North Highlands, North Sacramento, Robla, Rio Linda, and Woodlake. The Twin Rivers USD serves approximately 25,000 students at 49 school sites: 30 elementary, 5 middle, 4 high, 3 charters at 7 sites, and 7 alternative schools (Twin Rivers USD 2025a).

Plate PS-2. Schools and Libraries



Based on current Twin Rivers USD school attendance boundaries (Twin Rivers USD 2025b), the Specific Plan Area falls within the attendance areas of several schools, which are listed in Table PS-3 and shown on Plate PS-2. As described in Table PS-3, all of these schools are currently operating below design capacity.

Table PS-3. Twin Rivers Unified School District Enrollment, 2024-2025

School Name	Grade	Enrollment	Design Capacity	Estimated Remaining Capacity
Oakdale Elementary and Middle School 3708 Myrtle Ave, North Highlands	K–8	559	784[a]	225[a]
Frederick Joyce Elementary and Middle School, 6050 Watt Ave, North Highlands	K–8	537	789[a]	252[ab]
Kohler Elementary and Middle School 4004 Bruce Way, North Highlands	K–8	400	653[a]	253[a]
Sierra View Elementary School 3638 Bainbridge Drive, North Highlands	K–6	318	467	149
Village Middle School 6845 Larchmont Drive, North Highlands	7–8	138	653	~~190~~**515**
Foothill High School 5000 McCloud Drive, Sacramento	9–12	1,417	1,926	509
Highlands High School 6601 Guthrie Way, North Highlands	9–12	778	1,866	1,088

Notes:
[a] Capacity includes both elementary and middle school students.
[b] In its comment letter on the DEIR dated September 25, 2026, the Twin Rivers USD stated that the F.C. Joyce school is currently at full capacity.
Sources: California Department of Education 2025a, PBK Architects 2021

San Juan Unified School District

The San Juan USD encompasses a 75-square-mile area covering the communities of Arden-Arcade, Carmichael, Citrus Heights, Fair Oaks, Gold River, and Orangevale. The San Juan USD serves more than 40,000 students at 64 schools (San Juan USD 2025a).

Based on current San Juan USD school attendance boundaries (San Juan USD 2025b), the Specific Plan Area falls within the attendance areas of three schools, which are listed in Table PS-4 and shown on Plate PS-2. As described in Table PS-4, all three schools are operating below design capacity.

Table PS-4. San Juan Unified School District Enrollment, 2024-2025

School Name	Grade	Enrollment	Estimated Design Capacity	Estimated Remaining Capacity
Pasadena Avenue Elementary School 4330 Pasadena Avenue, Sacramento	K–5	343	562	219
Arcade Middle School 3500 Edison Avenue, Sacramento	6–8	595	650[a]	55
Mira Loma High School 4000 Edison Avenue, Sacramento	9–12	1,655	2,622	967

Note:

[a] The capacity of Arcade Middle School is based on the Initial Study for the recent modernization of the school.

Sources: California Department of Education 2025a, San Juan Unified School District 2026, data compiled by AECOM in 2026

LIBRARY SERVICES

The Sacramento Public Library system provides services to the residents of the County, and comprises interdependent branches that are grouped by services, geography, and usage patterns. There are 28 locations within the County where residents may receive library services. The Sacramento Public Library operates as a joint powers authority (JPA) between the County and cities of Sacramento, Citrus Heights, Elk Grove, Galt, Isleton, and Rancho Cordova. Each JPA member jurisdiction is responsible for providing and maintaining library buildings for its community. The Sacramento Public Library does not own or control any of the buildings it operates.

The North Highlands-Antelope public library, provided by the County as a JPA member of the Sacramento Public Library authority, is the nearest public library to the Specific Plan Area. This library branch is located at 4235 Antelope Road, approximately 0.9 mile east of the northern end of the Specific Plan Area (see Plate PS-2). This library primarily serves the communities of North Highlands, Antelope, and Foothill Farms. The North Highlands-Antelope library has a collection of over 70,000 items including books, audio books, videos, and CDs. The library offers WiFi, Internet and Microsoft Office workstations, Chromebook laptops, early learning workstations, and a document station with a scanner, color printer, fax, and copier. In addition, the library offers book drop, family storytime, technical help, adult education, English language classes, job coaching, health and wellness classes, and student tutoring services. The library also has a reservable meeting room and an outdoor patio (Sacramento Public Library 2025).

REGULATORY SETTING

FEDERAL

No federal policies or regulations pertaining to public services are applicable to the proposed Specific Plan.

STATE

CALIFORNIA OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH ADMINISTRATION

In accordance with California Code of Regulations, Title 8 Sections 1270 “Fire Prevention” and 6773 “Fire Protection and Fire Equipment,” the California Occupational Safety and Health Administration (CalOSHA) has established minimum standards for fire suppression and emergency medical services. The standards include but are not limited to guidelines on the handling of highly combustible materials; fire hose sizing requirements; restrictions on the use of compressed air; access roads; and the testing, maintenance, and use of all firefighting and emergency medical equipment.

CALIFORNIA FIRE CODE

The California Fire Code, which is contained in Title 24, Part 9 of the California Code of Regulations, contains regulations relating to construction, maintenance, and use of buildings. Topics addressed in the code include fire department access, fire hydrants, automatic sprinkler systems, fire alarm systems, fire and explosion hazards safety, hazardous materials storage and use, provisions intended to protect and assist fire responders, industrial processes, and many other general and specialized fire-safety requirements for new and existing buildings and the surrounding premises. The California Fire Code contains specialized technical regulations related to fire and life safety and those have been incorporated into the County Building Code.

CALIFORNIA HEALTH AND SAFETY CODE

State fire regulations are set forth in Sections 13000, et seq. of the California Health and Safety Code, which includes regulations for building standards (as set forth in the California Building Standards Code); fire protection and notification systems; fire protection devices such as extinguishers and smoke alarms; high-rise building and childcare facility standards; and fire suppression training.

Per the California Health and Safety Code, the Fire Code Official is both authorized to perform life safety inspections, and responsible for the enforcement of and life safety regulations adopted by the California State Fire Marshal in the California Buildings Standards. The Fire Prevention Bureau performs plan reviews and provides comments and field inspection on all construction projects within the jurisdiction. The Fire Inspectors also inspect occupancies and hazardous operations as required by the California Health and Safety Code.

State of California Emergency Medical Services regulations are set forth in Division 2.5 of the Health and Safety Code (Sections 1797–1799), which is known as the Emergency Medical Service System and the Prehospital Emergency Medical are Personnel Act. The regulations include system administration, certification, medical control, facilities, and other facets of emergency medical care.

State School Funding

California Education Code Section 17620 authorizes school districts to levy a fee, charge, dedication, or other requirement against any development project for the construction or reconstruction of school facilities, provided that the district can show justification for levying of fees. California Government Code Section 65995 limits the fee to be collected to the statutory fee unless a school district conducts a School Facility Needs Assessment (California Government Code Section 65995.6) and meets certain conditions.

Senate Bill 50 (Chapter 407, Statutes of 1998) (Leroy F. Greene School Facilities Act) instituted a school facility program by which school districts can apply for state construction and modernization funds. This legislation imposed limitations on the power of cities and counties to require mitigation of school facilities impacts as a condition of approving new development. It also provided the authority for school districts to levy fees at three different levels:

- **Level I** fees are the current statutory fees allowed under Education Code Section 17620. As mentioned above, this code section authorizes school districts to levy a fee against residential and commercial construction to fund school construction or reconstruction. These fees are adjusted every two years in accordance with the statewide cost index for Class B construction, as determined by the State Allocation Board.
- **Level II** developer fees are outlined in Government Code Section 65995.5. This code section allows a school district to impose a higher fee on residential construction if certain conditions are met. These conditions include having a substantial percentage of students on multitrack year-round scheduling, having an assumed debt equal to 15 to 30 percent of the district's bonding capacity (the percentage is based on revenue sources for repayment), having at least 20 percent of the district's teaching stations housed in relocatable classrooms, and having placed a local bond on the ballot in the past 4 years that received at least 50 percent plus one of the votes cast. A facility needs assessment must demonstrate that the need for new school facilities for unhoused pupils is attributable to projected enrollment growth from the construction of new residential units over the next five years.
- **Level III** developer fees are outlined in Government Code Section 65995.7. This code section authorizes a school district that has been approved to collect Level II fees to collect a higher fee on residential construction if State funding becomes unavailable. This fee is equal to twice the amount of Level II fees. However, if a district eventually receives State funding, this excess fee may be reimbursed to the developers or subtracted from the amount of State funding.

Local

Sacramento County General Plan

The *Sacramento County General Plan of 2005–2030* (Sacramento County 2019) includes the following policies related to public services that apply to the proposed Specific Plan.

Policy PF-42. Share capital costs of library construction and renovation for existing residents through bond financing or other appropriate measures and by new residents and workers through fees on new development.

Policy PF-43. Include community library needs among facilities to be financed by financing districts created in development areas.

Policy PF-44. Create financing districts or special taxes within existing library service areas to assist in financing library renovation and expansion needs and require new development to annex to the financing district.

Policy PF-45. New commercial development in financing districts shall contribute to library financing such that fees based on projected employment are approximately equivalent to the fees for an equivalent number of new residents.

Policy PF-53. Design neighborhoods and buildings in a manner that prevents crime and provides security and safety for people and property; when feasible.

Policy PF-46. Incorporate planned libraries into community and specific plans for new development.

Policy PF-47. Purchase library sites as early as possible in the development process.

Policy PF-48. Locate future library sites to be accessible by car, bicycle, foot, public transportation, and have sufficient off-street parking.

Policy PF-49. Locate future library sites so as to be visible to people passing by and be accessible to children unaccompanied by adults.

Policy PF-50. Plan and develop law enforcement programs with a perspective toward reducing as well as controlling crime.

Policy PF-51. Plan and develop law enforcement facilities in keeping with overall needs and the distribution of growth.

Policy PF-52. Use education and crime prevention as integral parts of the practice of law enforcement.

Policy PF-54. Require new development to install fire hydrants and associated water supply systems which meet the fire flow requirements of the appropriate fire district.

Policy PF-55. New development shall provide access arrangements pursuant to the requirements of the California Fire Code.

Policy PF-56. Infill development shall be provided adequate off-site improvements to meet on-site fire flow requirements.

Policy PF-57. New development, redevelopment or traffic signal replacement shall require the installation of emergency signal activation systems in all street improvements requiring signalization when requested by a fire district.

Policy PF-58. Traffic calming measures should be used wherever possible in a manner that does not delay emergency vehicle responses.

Policy PF-59. Alternative methods of fire protection and access must be instituted if access is reduced to emergency vehicles.

Policy PF-60. Require that structures of four stories or more in height provide on-site equipment and facilities to the satisfaction of the appropriate fire district, consistent with industry norms and standards.

Policy PF-61. Mitigation fees may be established by the Board of Supervisors or Fire Districts for the purpose of funding adequate fire protection and emergency medical response facilities provided they find that such fees are critical and necessary to meet the facility funding needs of the fire district and that existing methods of financing are inadequate.

Policy PF-62. The Board of Supervisors shall not require the collection of mitigation fees unless it has certified that the fire district has:

- o Adopted a facilities plan consistent with industry norms and standards and the time horizon of the County General Plan that will maintain Insurance Service Office (ISO) ratings of 3 for hydrant areas and 8 for non-hydrant areas, and a response time of 5 minutes for emergency medical calls, where staffing levels are adequate. In areas that do not have public water supply which are increasing in number due to urbanization, the fire district should be able to provide a sufficient flow shuttle.
- o Adopted a financing plan delineating the source and amount of funds required to fully implement the facilities plan. Such plan shall indicate personnel requirements necessary to meet the standards in the facilities plan.
- o Demonstrate a commitment to and reasonable progress towards achieving efficiency improvements, such as inter-district agreements for sharing resources or district consolidation.
- o All reasonable efforts have been made to secure additional funding from any other available sources.

Policy PF-63. Mitigation fees established by County ordinance or Fire District shall, together with other reasonably assured sources of funding identified in the fire district's financing plan, be sufficient to implement the adopted financing plan.

Policy PF-64. No building permit for new residential or commercial construction shall be issued when there is a Board of Supervisors certified fire district financing plan for any applicable fire district, which provides for mitigation fees, until the applicant has contributed all required mitigation fees.

The Specific Plan Area is within the North Highlands environmental justice (EJ) community, and thus the following policies from the County's Environmental Justice Element apply.

Policy EJ-4. The County will advance residential subdivision and commercial building design that supports crime prevention by utilizing Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles.

Policy EJ-26. Sacramento County will advocate for equitable distribution of public facilities and levels of service within EJ Communities amongst service districts.

IMPACTS AND ANALYSIS

SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA

The significance criteria used to evaluate a project's impact to public services under CEQA are based on Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines. Accordingly, a significant impact related to public services would occur if the proposed Specific Plan would:

- result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, or the need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives for:
    - fire protection;
    - police protection;
    - schools;
    - parks; or
    - other public facilities.

Impacts related to parks and recreational facilities are evaluated in Chapter 15, "Recreation."

IMPACT PS-1: RESULT IN SUBSTANTIAL ADVERSE PHYSICAL IMPACTS ASSOCIATED WITH THE PROVISION OF FIRE PROTECTION SERVICES

The SMFD, Battalion 5, would provide fire protection, fire prevention, and emergency medical services to the Specific Plan Area. New development within the Specific Plan Area would result in a population increase, which would increase the demand for SMFD's

services. This increase in demand would require additional staff and fire facilities to maintain service levels and to ensure that adequate fire protection is provided.

At full buildout of the Specific Plan, approximately 7,260 new dwelling units would be constructed and most or all of these would be multi-family dwelling units.

Battalion 5 serves a total existing population of 169,768 with a total staff of 44 people (SMFD 2024). This results in a current service ratio within the Battalion 5 service area of 0.26 firefighting staff per 1,000 people. At full buildout, the proposed new residential development within the Specific Plan Area could result in a population increase of up to 14,520 (based on the County's assumption for this EIR). The Specific Plan Area population would cause the SMFD Battalion 5 service ratio to change: resulting in a decrease to 0.23 firefighting staff per 1,000 people.

The industry standard for first-due travel times is found in National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 1710 (Standard for the Organization and Deployment of Fire Suppression Operations, Emergency Medical Operations, and Special Operations to the Public by Career Fire Departments), and has been established as 240 seconds (4 minutes) (NFPA 2020). As noted by SMFD, there are two key factors that affect travel times: distance and population density. Large response areas will inherently see longer travel times on their outer edges due to longer distances travelled. Densely populated areas tend to have higher service demands, which leads to stations being clustered more closely together; thus, their response areas are smaller and faster travel times are expected. A detailed breakdown of desired response times depending on the risk class and the population distribution and concentration are presented in SMFD's *Standards of Cover* (SMFD 2024). As discussed in the Environmental Setting subsection above, there are two fire stations within the Specific Plan Area (Station Nos. 41 and 42) and two fire stations immediately adjacent to the Specific Plan Area (Station Nos. 112 and 114), all of which are within Battalion 5 (see Plate PS-1). Although SMFD is in the process of relocating Station Nos. 41 and 42 for improved operations, both would remain within or in proximity to the Specific Plan Area. The adopted travel time standard for Stations Nos. 41, 42, 112, and 114 is 4 minutes for the first unit arriving for relatively lower hazard, single-unit fire incidents (Fire Low 1) for metropolitan, dense urban, and urban areas and the total response time standard for this type of incident is 7 minutes (SMFD 2025). The average response time for all emergency incidents during 2023 from these four fire stations ranged from 7:42 to 9:03 minutes (90 percent of the time) (SMFD 2024). Because development within the Specific Plan Area would represent infill development within an existing urban area, and due to the proximity of existing fire stations, firefighters would not have to travel longer distances as compared to existing conditions; however, the population density served by these four fire stations would increase, up to 14,520 new residents living in approximately 7,260 new dwelling units. In addition, new development in the Specific Plan Area would also include additional retail, office, service, light industrial, and other non-residential uses which would also require fire protection services.

SMFD receives funding from the County General Fund; the primary source of revenue for the General Fund is property taxes. Other SMFD revenue sources include charges for

ambulance transport services, deployments, and other miscellaneous revenue. The Capital Facilities Fund is used for capital lease proceeds and general operating transfers to fund SMFD capital purchases. Infrastructure and fire service apparatus needs have been funded through a combination of lease revenue bond issues and capital lease financing. The Development Impact Fee Fund is used for acquisition of land, construction of future fire stations, and acquisition of apparatus to serve new development. County General Plan Policy PF-61 allows the Board of Supervisors to establish mitigation fees for the purpose of funding adequate fire protection and emergency medical response facilities, provided they find that such fees are critical and necessary to meet the facility funding needs of the fire district. The fire districts that receive such funds must maintain ISO ratings of 3 for hydrant areas and 8 for non-hydrant areas and a response time of 5 minutes for emergency calls, where staffing levels are adequate. Furthermore, building permits for new developments will not be issued until an applicant has contributed all required mitigation fees when there is a Board of Supervisors-certified fire district financing plan for any applicable fire district. Additionally, all new buildings and neighborhoods must meet the requirements of the California Fire Code and ensure that emergency access and fire hydrants are adequate, as reviewed by SMFD during the plan check process. As of March 2025, the County collects development impact fees for SMFD as shown in Table PS-5.

Table PS-5. 2025 Sacramento Metropolitan Fire District Development Impact Fees

Development Category	Capital Fire Facilities Fee	Administration Fee	Total Fees
Single-Family Residential[1]	$1,628	$48.84	$1,676.84
Multi-Family Residential	$1,276	$38.28	$1,314.28
Commercial[2]	$1,350	$40.50	$1,390.50
Office[2]	$1,713	$51.39	$1,764.39
Industrial[2]	$916	$27.48	$943.48
Institutional/Other[2]	$1,632	$48.96	$1,680.96

Notes:
[1] Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU) 850 SF or less and 1,000 SF and less multi-bedroom ADUs are exempt. All other ADUs shall be charged a proportionate amount in relation to the square footage of the primary dwelling unit based upon the amount that the primary dwelling unit would pay.
[2] Rates are based on a per-1,000-square-foot basis.
Source: Sacramento County Community Development Department 2025a

SMFD stated that the relocation and expansion of Station Nos. 41 and 42 are to accommodate anticipated future growth based on projections by SACOG and the County's growth strategy for commercial corridors. The County provided details regarding the proposed Specific Plan as a part of drafting of this EIR for review. Based on this review, SMFD does not anticipate that any further changes would be needed to staffing or equipment based on the proposed Specific Plan (Frye, pers. comm. 2026).

Incorporation of California Fire Code, California Health and Safety Code, and CalOSHA requirements, as well as compliance with the SMFD standards and requirements for development projects would reduce the risk of fire and need for fire suppression services. Payment of the County's fire service development fees contributes to any increase in

demand for fire department personnel, equipment, and facilities. Therefore, this impact would be **less than significant**.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required.

Impact PS-2: Result in Substantial Adverse Physical Impacts Associated with the Provision of Law Enforcement Services

The County Sheriff's Office, Division 1 Northwest, would provide law enforcement services to the Specific Plan Area. New development within the Specific Plan Area would result in a population increase, which would increase the demand for the Sheriff's Office services.

The Specific Plan Area is located within "District 1" of the Sheriff's Office North Patrol Division jurisdiction, which services serves an estimated population of 421,467 residents and currently has 44 deputy positions assigned to serve in a patrol capacity (Hicks, pers. comm. 2026). Division 1 Northwest is headquartered at 5510 Garfield Avenue, approximately 2.5 miles east of the Specific Plan Area (see Plate PS-**1**). Because the development within the Specific Plan Area would represent infill development within an existing urban area, the police officers from the existing station at 5510 Garfield Avenue would not have to travel longer distances as compared to existing conditions.

Development within the Specific Plan Area would occur gradually over a period of 20 years. The Sheriff's Office service goal is 1 sworn officer per 1,000 people (Sacramento County Department of Environmental Review and Assessment 2010). Table PS-6 shows the new dwelling units and assumed population increases within the Specific Plan Area, along with the estimated number of new officers that would be necessary to serve the increased population, based on the County Sheriff's Office service goal.

Table PS-6. Estimated Demand for Police Officers in the Specific Plan Area

Sacramento Sheriff's District	New Dwelling Units	New Residential Population	Estimated New Officers
District 1, Northwest	2,100 to 7,260	3,600 to 19,600	4 to 20

Notes: EDU = Equivalent Dwelling Unit
Source: Data compiled by AECOM in 2025

The County provided details regarding the proposed Specific Plan as a part of drafting of this EIR for review. Based on this review, the County Sheriff's Office does not anticipate that any changes would be needed to staffing or patrolling models based on the proposed Specific Plan (Hicks, pers. comm. 2026).

New staff, equipment, and facilities that would be necessary to provide additional law enforcement services would be funded by the County General Fund, primarily from property and sales taxes, and potentially other mechanisms, to ensure that adequate police protection personnel and equipment are provided. With incorporation of applicable development and design standards, as well as compliance with any applicable County

Sheriff's Office standards and requirements in new development projects, along with funding through the County's General Fund from ongoing property taxes for development within the Specific Plan Area, this impact would be **less than significant**.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required.

Impact PS-3: Result in Substantial Adverse Physical Impacts Associated with the Provision of Schools

The Specific Plan Area is served by two school districts: Twin Rivers USD (for new development north of Myrtle Avenue) and San Juan USD (for new development south of Myrtle Avenue) (see Plate PS-2). New development within the Specific Plan Area would result in a population increase, which would increase the demand for schools. As noted previously, schools serving the Specific Plan Area are currently operating below capacity.

The total estimated number of new elementary, middle, and high school students within the Specific Plan Area at full buildout, based on each school district's student generation rates, are shown in Table PS-7.

Table PS-7. Estimated New Student Generation in the Specific Plan Area

School District	New Dwelling Units	Estimated New Elementary School Students	Estimated New Middle School Students	Estimated New High School Students
Twin Rivers USD[a]	1,912-6,610	545-1,884	138-476	226-780
San Juan USD[b]	188-650	27-95	8-28	17-58
Totals	**2,100-7,260**	**572-1,979**	**146-504**	**242-838**

Notes: EDU = Equivalent Dwelling Unit; SACOG = Sacramento Area Council of Governments
[a] Twin Rivers USD Student Generation Rates: grades K–6 = 0.285; grade 7–8 = 0.072; grades 9–12 = 0.118.
[b] San Juan USD Student Generation Rates: grades K–6 = 0.1460; grade 7–8 = 0.0434; grades 9–12 = 0.0891.
Sources: School Facility Consultants 2016; Schoolworks, Inc. 2024; SACOG 2025; data compiled by AECOM in 2025

Twin Rivers Unified School District

The current estimated remaining capacity in the existing Twin Rivers USD schools which new Specific Plan Area students would attend is ~~1,069~~1,394 elementary and middle school students, and 1,597 high school students (see Table PS-3).

Based on the maximum development assumption for the Specific Plan, the existing Twin Rivers USD schools listed in Table PS-3 could accommodate all of the projected new middle and high school students in the Specific Plan Area at full buildout, and could accommodate some of the elementary school students in the short term. New development in the Specific Plan Area would occur over a period of 20 years. However, in the long term, at full buildout, there would not be enough capacity in the existing Twin Rivers USD elementary schools with enrollment boundaries that serve the Specific Plan Area to accommodate all of the projected elementary school students generated in the Specific Plan Area if student generation rates remain constant (Table PS-7).

SAN JUAN UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

The current estimated remaining capacity in the existing San Juan USD schools where new Specific Plan Area students could attend is 219 elementary students, 55 middle school students, and 967 high school students (see Table PS-4).

Based on the maximum development assumption for the Specific Plan, the existing San Juan USD schools listed in Table PS-4 could accommodate all of the projected new students that would be generated through full buildout of the Specific Plan Area (Table PS-7), and still have excess capacity in the existing schools.

IMPACT CONCLUSION

Development within the Specific Plan Area would be implemented over a period of 20 years. The additional elementary students above existing capacity (which could be up to approximately 1,291 students in Twin Rivers USD) could potentially be accommodated in portable classrooms on the existing school campus, through construction of additional permanent classrooms, through changes in enrollment boundaries, or other strategy determined by the respective school district.

As of 2025, the developer impact fees for both the Twin Rivers USD and the San Juan USD are the same: $5.17/square foot for residential buildings and $0.84/square foot for commercial/industrial buildings (Twin Rivers USD 2025c, San Juan USD 2025c).[2] It should be noted that the amount of developer impact fees changes over time as costs increase.

Pursuant to SB 50, future project applicants would be required to pay all applicable State-mandated school impact fees to the Twin Rivers USD or San Juan USD as applicable. Each school district would determine the assessable square footage that would be subject to the fee at the time of development. The California Legislature has declared that payment of the applicable school impact fee is deemed to be full and adequate mitigation under CEQA for impacts on school facilities (California Government Code Section 65996). Therefore, this impact would be **less than significant**.

MITIGATION MEASURES

No mitigation measures are required.

IMPACT PS-4: RESULT IN SUBSTANTIAL ADVERSE PHYSICAL IMPACTS ASSOCIATED WITH THE PROVISION OF LIBRARIES

Library services for residents in the Specific Plan Area would be provided by the Sacramento Public Library authority. The existing 12,900 square-foot North Highlands Library, provided by the County as a JPA member of the Sacramento Public Library

[2] As of the time of writing this document, these school districts do not appear to have separate fees for single-family dwelling units and multi-family dwelling units.

authority, is located at 4235 Antelope Road, approximately 0.9 mile east of the northern end of the Specific Plan Area (see Plate PS-2) (Group 4 Architecture 2021).

The *Sacramento Public Library Facilities Vision Plan* (Group 4 Architecture 2023) provides recommendations for investments in library facilities in Sacramento communities over the next 10 to 20 years, including renovation and replacement of existing libraries. The Library Facility Master Plan also includes recommendations for desirable library components and services such as volumes and collection, meeting rooms, study areas, and computer terminals, among others. JPA members are responsible for the routine and capital maintenance of the library buildings and sites they provide as well as for renovation, expansion, relocation, or replacement as appropriate.

Sacramento Public Library Facilities Vision Plan is based on a more detailed assessment, the 2021 Sacramento County Public Library Facilities Master Plan. As noted in the Library Facilities Master Plan, despite the large and growing population, the North Highlands Library is sufficient in terms of building size and site size. The master plan recommends maintaining the building and renovating it when the opportunity arises. The Library Facilities Master Plan identifies recommended capital projects for the next 20 years based on an assessment of whether the existing network of branches satisfy current and future community needs based on library usage, population distribution and growth, transit options, local socioeconomics, demographics, and County and city development plans (Group 4 Architecture 2021).

The Sacramento Public Library authority is responsible for library furnishings, materials, equipment, staffing, and custodial services. Funding for Sacramento Public Library operations comes from County and city property taxes, and from City of Sacramento General Fund/Measure U and parcel tax (Measures B and X) revenues. As of March 2025, the County collects development impact fees for library facilities as shown in Table PS-8.

Table PS-8. 2025 Library Facilities Development Impact Fees

Development Category	Library Facilities Fee	Administration Fee	Total Fees
Single-Family Detached	$1,278	$51	$1,329
2- to 4-Unit Attached	$994	$40	$1,034
5+ Unit Attached	$829	$33	$862

Source: Sacramento County Community Development Department 2025b

Payment of County-required developer impact fees and property taxes would contribute fair-share funding from the Specific Plan Area towards any additional library staff or facility upgrades that may be required in the future. No significant library improvements have been identified for the vicinity of the Specific Plan Area based on analysis of demographics, library use rates, and anticipated development within County and city plans. Therefore, this impact would be **less than significant**.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required.

15 RECREATION

INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides environmental and regulatory setting that is relevant to parks and recreation in and near the Specific Plan Area; analyzes potential impacts from construction of recreational facilities that could potentially lead to adverse physical environmental effects; and recommends feasible mitigation measures where necessary to reduce significant and potentially significant impacts.

ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

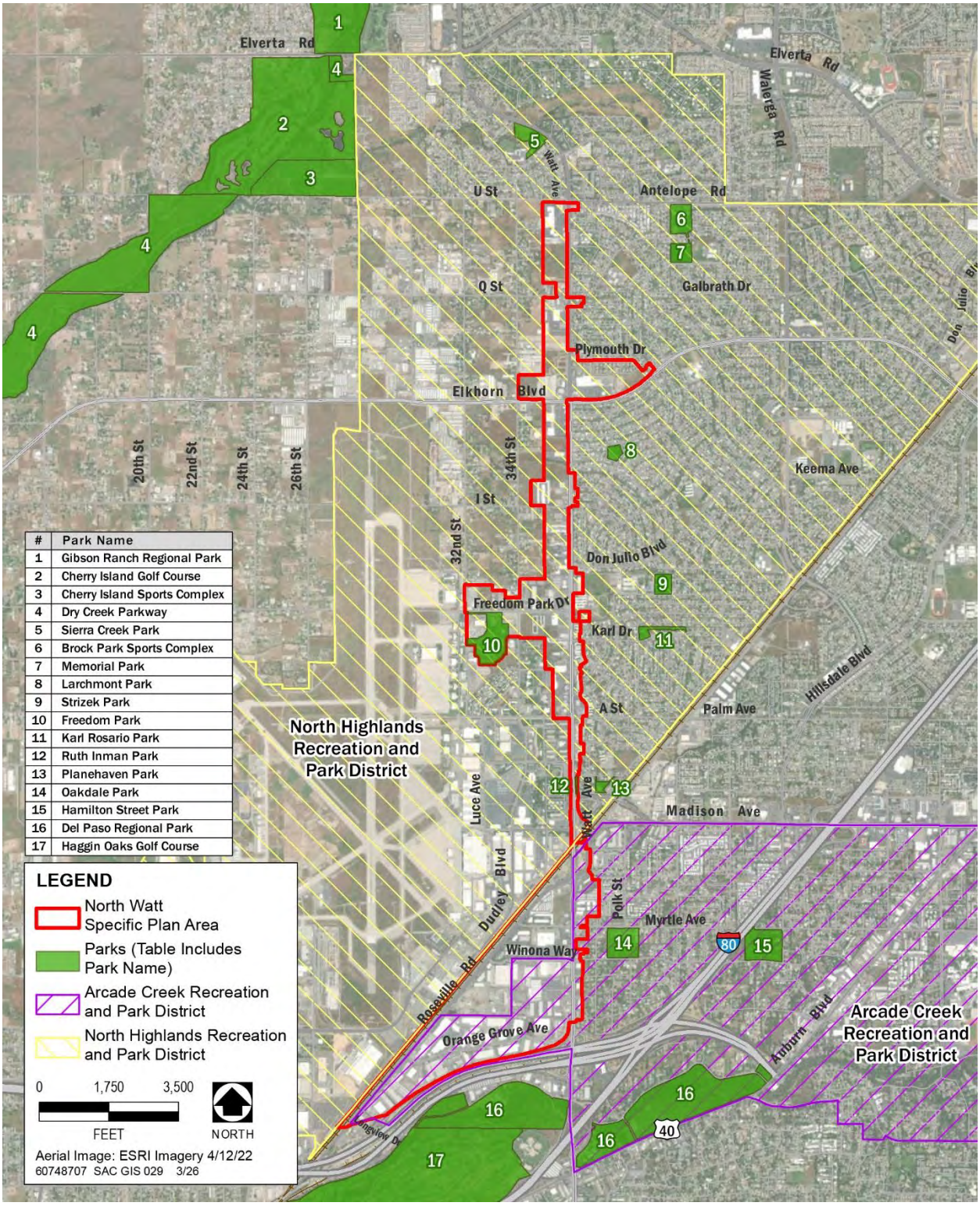
As explained in the County General Plan Public Facilities Element (Sacramento County 2019), planning for the provision of parks, recreation, and open space facilities is a multi-jurisdictional process. Master planning for local parks and open space is accomplished by the individual recreation and park districts at the neighborhood and community levels, while the master planning of regional parks and open space is a function of the County Department of Regional Parks.

At the broadest level of regional parks, the County Department of Regional Parks is the service provider. It operates with a goal to provide a total of 20 acres of regional parks and local parks per 1,000 residents from various sources. Of the 20 acres per 1,000 population target, County Regional Parks strives to provide 12 acres per 1,000 residents in its inventory of regional parks and open space, while the balance is to be provided by local park districts and other entities, including the State of California, federal agencies, and conservation/land trust organizations. The 12 acres of regional parks targeted by the County are divided into 5 acres for active uses and 7 acres for passive open space and conservation uses.

Local parks (pocket, neighborhood, and community) are primarily planned by the 14 local park districts serving the urbanized communities in the unincorporated County and by the three rural area park County Service Areas staffed by County Regional Parks. Most local park districts have master plan policies calling for 5 acres of local parks for every 1,000 residents.

Most of the Specific Plan Area is situated within the North Highlands Recreation and Park District (NHRPD). The Specific Plan Area south/southeast of Roseville Road is situated within the Arcade Creek Recreation and Park District (ACRPD). In addition to recreational facilities operated by these two Districts, facilities operated by the City and County of Sacramento are also located near the Specific Plan Area. Existing recreational amenities are discussed below and are shown on Plate REC-1 and Table REC-1.

Plate REC-1: Recreational Facilities



#	Park Name
1	Gibson Ranch Regional Park
2	Cherry Island Golf Course
3	Cherry Island Sports Complex
4	Dry Creek Parkway
5	Sierra Creek Park
6	Brock Park Sports Complex
7	Memorial Park
8	Larchmont Park
9	Strizek Park
10	Freedom Park
11	Karl Rosario Park
12	Ruth Inman Park
13	Planehaven Park
14	Oakdale Park
15	Hamilton Street Park
16	Del Paso Regional Park
17	Haggin Oaks Golf Course

Sources: O'Dell Engineering 2023, Arcade Creek Recreation and Park District 2017, Sacramento Regional Parks 2025

Table REC-1. Parks in the Specific Plan Area and Vicinity

Park Number	Park Name	Operating Agency	Location	Acres	Facilities
1	Gibson Ranch Regional Park	Sacramento County Regional Parks	8556 Gibson Ranch Park Road, Elverta, CA 95626	355	Large equestrian center, fishing lake, lake with walking opportunities, picnic areas, barbeque grills, event venues, playgrounds, dog park, multi-use trails, open lawns and shaded picnic groves, wildlife viewing, community garden, restrooms
2	Cherry Island Golf Course	Sacramento County Regional Parks	2360 Elverta Road, Elverta, CA 95626	208	18-hole golf course, clubhouse, practice facilities and driving range, lakes, wetlands, landscaping, and open space
3	Cherry Island Sports Complex	Sacramento County Regional Parks	2429 U Street, Elverta (Rio Linda), CA 95628	54	Sports fields, landscaped park grounds, protected wetlands, covered picnic pavilions, barbecue grills, concession and storage building, restroom facilities, accessible pathways and spectator areas
4	Dry Creek Parkway	Sacramento County Regional Parks	Dry Creek from the Sacramento–Placer County line southwest through the Rio Linda/Elverta area	N/A	Hiking and walking trails, multi-use bicycle trails, equestrian trails, fishing access, natural open space and riparian habitat, wildlife and birdwatching opportunities, picnic facilities
5	Sierra Creek Park	NHRPD	Antelope, Sacramento County, California, along Watt Avenue near Davidson Drive	7.5	Open turf area, natural open space along Sierra Creek, informal walking paths, wildlife viewing and nature observation
6	Brock Park Sports Complex	NHRPD	3730 Antelope Road, Antelope, CA 95843	7	Baseball/softball fields, soccer field, playground, picnic table areas, paved walkways, restroom buildings, drinking fountains, open lawn and spectator areas
7	Memorial Park	NHRPD	Larchmont Village neighborhood near Watt Avenue and Elkhorn Boulevard	6	Playground, open grass play area, park bench, picnic table, mature shade trees and open green space, informal walking paths
8	Larchmont Park	NHRPD	6528 Thomas Drive, North Highlands, CA 95660	2.5	Playgrounds, picnic pavilions, barbecue pit, basketball court, soccer goals with open grass play area, landscaped lawn and shade trees, sidewalks and open space for informal recreation
9	Strizek Park	NHRPD	3811 Stephen Drive, North Highlands, CA 95660	5	Playground, open grass play areas, picnic tables, barbecue area, park benches, clubhouse/community building, walking paths and shaded open space for informal recreation

Park Number	Park Name	Operating Agency	Location	Acres	Facilities
10	Freedom Park	NHRPD	5931 Recreation Way, McClellan Park, CA 95652	20	Playgrounds, seasonal splash pad, covered picnic pavilions , barbecue facilities at picnic areas, softball field complex, basketball court, bocce ball court, horseshoe pit, restroom building, drinking fountains, open lawns and shaded gathering areas
11	Karl Rosario Park	NHRPD	3929 Karl Drive, North Highlands, CA 95660	2.5	Playground, picnic tables, picnic pavilion, barbecue pit, basketball court, open lawn and landscaped green space
12	Ruth Inman Park	NHRPD	5216 Watt Avenue, North Highlands, CA 95660	1	Open lawn and landscaped green space, park benches, community murals and public art, shade trees and landscaped planting areas
13	Planehaven Park	NHRPD	Corner of North Airway Drive and Poplar Boulevard, North Highlands, CA 95660	3.5	Playground, spring/bouncy play toy, picnic tables, barbecue pit, park benches, open grass play area and neighborhood green space
14	Oakdale Park	ACRPD joint-use with Twin Rivers Unified School District	3708 Myrtle Avenue, North Highlands, CA 95660	10	Soccer fields, baseball diamond, playground, open turf areas for informal recreation, picnic tables, barbecue grill, outdoor stage/performance area, restrooms
15	Hamilton Street Park	ACRPD	4855 Hamilton Street, Sacramento, CA 95841	18	Soccer fields, tennis courts, basketball courts, horseshoe pits, playground, group picnic area and picnic tables, barbecue facilities, shaded lawns with mature oak trees, walking paths and open green space, and restroom facilities
16	Del Paso Regional Park	City of Sacramento	3565 Auburn Boulevard, Sacramento, CA 95821	630	Golf courses, softball complex, baseball field, equestrian and bridle trails, multi-use trails, wildlife viewing and birdwatching, picnic areas, playgrounds, sand volleyball court, restrooms, Powerhouse Science Center, Arcade Creek natural habitat and interpretive trail areas
17	Haggin Oaks Golf Course	City of Sacramento	3645 Fulton Avenue, Sacramento, CA 95821	350	Two 18-hole golf courses, driving range, practice putting greens, practice bunkers, golf academy, golf retail store, concessions

Sources: O'Dell Engineering 2023, ACRPD 2017

NORTH HIGHLANDS RECREATION AND PARK DISTRICT

NHRPD encompasses approximately 8.8 square miles, and includes portions of the North Highlands and Antelope communities in the unincorporated County. NHRPD operates 13 parks and three recreation facilities (O'Dell Engineering 2023).

There are two NHPRD parks within the Specific Plan Area: Freedom Park and Ruth Inman Park. Freedom Park is situated within the central portion of the Specific Plan Area, south of Freedom Park Drive and adjacent to the Aerospace Museum of California. This 20-acre park includes a lighted four-field softball/baseball field complex (leased to All Star Tournaments), basketball court, picnic pavilions, multiple children's play areas, splash pad with water fountains, horseshoe pits, restrooms, and parking. Ruth Inman Park is also situated within the central portion of the Specific Plan Area, on Watt Avenue. This 1-acre park consists of a rectangular strip of turf grass with shade trees and two benches.

There are 7 NHRPD parks located within a 0.5-mile of the Specific Plan Area. Sierra Creek Park is approximately 0.3 miles north of the Specific Plan Area, on Watt Avenue. This 7.5-acre park provides 1 acre of turf grass open space; the remaining 6.5 acres are planned for development with a nature trail along Sierra Creek, children's play area, community garden, picnic pavilion, performance stage with lawn seating, restrooms, and parking. The Brock Park Sports Complex is approximately 0.5 mile east of the northern portion of the Specific Plan Area, on the south side of Antelope Road. This 7-acre park has four baseball fields, soccer field, children's playground, picnic area, paved pedestrian trail, restrooms, and parking.

Memorial Park is also approximately 0.5 miles east of the northern portion of the Specific Plan Area's, north of Blackfield Drive. This 6-acre park currently provides turf grass open space, children's playground, and picnic tables. Larchmont Park is approximately 875 feet east of the Specific Plan Area, on Thomas Drive. This 2.75-acre park provides turf grass open space, basketball court, soccer field, several children's play areas, picnic pavilions, and restrooms.

Strizek Park is approximately 0.3 miles east of the central portion of the Specific Plan Area, on Stephen Drive. This 5-acre park provides turf grass open space, paved walking trail, children's playground, picnic tables, restrooms, and parking. Karl Rosario Park is approximately 0.25 miles east of the central portion of the Specific Plan Area, on Karl Drive. This 2.5-acre park provides turf grass open space, basketball court, picnic pavilion, and children's play areas. Planehaven Park is approximately 450 feet east of the central portion of the Specific Plan Area, on North Airway Drive. This 3.5-acre park provides turf grass open space, children's playground, and picnic tables.

ARCADE CREEK RECREATION AND PARK DISTRICT

ACRPD encompasses approximately 4.6 square miles. The majority of ACRPD is within unincorporated County, including portions of the Arden-Arcade, Carmichael, Foothill Farms, and North Highlands communities. ACRPD offers 36.1 acres of improved parks and 12.4 acres of open space and natural areas. A small portion of the Specific Plan Area

that is northwest of Winona Way and Orange Grove Avenue to Roseville Road is being considered by ACRPD for annexation into the park district's service area (ACRPD 2017).

There are two ACRPD parks that are near the Specific Plan Area. Oakdale Park is approximately 500 feet east of the southern portion of the Specific Plan Area, between Myrtle Avenue and Winona Way. The park is adjacent to, and part of the Oakdale Elementary School campus, and is available for public use through a Joint Use Agreement with the Twin Rivers Unified School District. This 10-acre park includes soccer fields and turf grass open space, children's play area, picnic areas, restroom, outdoor stage, and parking.

Hamilton Street Park, an 18-acre ACRPD community park, is 0.75 mile east of the southern portion of the Specific Plan Area, but is not directly accessible due to the presence of I-80, which does not have off or on ramps in the park vicinity. The approximate walking, bicycling, or driving distance to this park from the Specific Plan Area is 2.5 miles. Hamilton Street Park includes soccer fields, open turf grass areas, tennis courts, basketball courts, group picnic area, children's play areas, paved walking path, restrooms, parking, and the Margi Herzog Community Center.

Regional Parks and Recreational Facilities

There are several regional parks and recreational facilities near the Specific Plan Area in addition to the neighborhood parks. Regional parks are larger than neighborhood and community parks, and are intended to serve broader areas – entire cities or entire counties.

The City of Sacramento Parks Department operates Del Paso Regional Park, which is approximately 0.5 miles southeast of the southern end of the Specific Plan Area (on the south side of I-80). The east side of Del Paso Park (east of Watt Avenue) encompasses approximately 75 acres. This area includes a baseball field, a basketball court and four pickleball courts, turf grass open space, picnic areas, parking, and natural habitat along both sides of Arcade Creek. The west side of Del Paso Park encompasses approximately 549 acres between I-80 and Business 80. Most of this portion of the park consists of the privately owned Haggin Oaks Golf Complex, which offers both 18-hole and 9-hole golf courses, practice areas, golf shop, and restaurant. The west side of Del Paso Park also includes the Sacramento Softball Complex, Discovery Museum, equestrian trails, jogging trails, interpretative trails, sand volleyball court, natural habitat areas along Arcade Creek, picnic areas, and restrooms (City of Sacramento 2025).

Sacramento County Department of Regional Parks

The Sacramento County Department of Regional Parks operates several regional parks and a golf course near the northern end of the Specific Plan Area (Sacramento Regional Parks 2025). The Cherry Island Sports Complex, which offers 10 soccer fields, picnic areas, parking, and a concession/storage building with restrooms, is approximately 1 mile west of the Specific Plan Area. The Cherry Island Golf Course includes an 18-hole golf course, practice areas, and restaurant approximately 1.5 miles west of the Specific Plan Area. Gibson Ranch Regional Park encompasses 355 acres and has a large equestrian

facility, a lake (fishing is available), dog park, children's play areas, and open space/natural areas, approximately 1.2 miles northwest of the Specific Plan Area. Dry Creek Parkway, which is approximately 1.5 miles west of the Specific Plan Area, encompasses a 6-mile-long corridor along Dry Creek with pedestrian and bicycle trails.

REGULATORY SETTING

FEDERAL

No federal policies or regulations pertaining to recreation are applicable to the proposed Specific Plan.

STATE

The Quimby Act (California Government Code Section 66477) was established by the California legislature in 1965 to preserve open space and parkland in the rapidly urbanizing areas of the state. The Quimby Act authorizes local governments to establish ordinances requiring developers of new subdivisions to dedicate land for parks, pay an in-lieu fee, or perform a combination of the two. The Quimby Act requires a city or county to adopt standards for recreational facilities in its general plan recreation element if it adopts a parkland dedication/fee ordinance. The law prescribes a standard that is consistent with the existing level of service circumstances of each park district based on a minimum of 3 acres and a maximum of 5 acres of parks per 1,000 residents. If the current service level is 3 acres per 1,000 residents or less, land dedication/in-lieu fees can be set to require up to 3 acres per 1,000 residents. If existing service levels are more than 3 acres per 1,000 residents, the dedication/in-lieu fee requirement can be up to 5 acres per 1,000 residents. The County and local park district standards for parkland dedication under the Quimby Act are provided in the discussion of local regulations below.

LOCAL

SACRAMENTO COUNTY GENERAL PLAN

The *Sacramento County General Plan of 2005–2030* (Sacramento County 2017, 2019) includes the following policies related to recreation that apply to the proposed Specific Plan.

Policy PF-120. The County will work cooperatively with the local recreation and park districts to help [ensure] that the provision of additional parks and recreation facilities keeps pace with urban growth within the County.

Policy PF-122. To help assure that local recreation and park district Master Plan standards for levels of service may be achieved and maintained, the County may require new development to dedicate land, pay in-lieu fees, development impact fees, or otherwise contribute a fair share to the acquisition and development of parks and recreation facilities. For development in infill areas where land dedication may not be practical,

the County in cooperation with the affected park district may explore creative alternatives for providing park and recreation facilities.

Policy PF-123. At a minimum, new residential developments approved by the County shall provide sites for local parks for their prospective residents consistent with the Quimby Act and the land dedication standards for each local recreation and park district adopted by Sacramento County in Chapter 22.40 of the Sacramento County Code. These requirements may be satisfied by land dedication, payment of fees in lieu of dedication, or on-site improvements per the provisions of Chapter 22.40, which will be regularly updated to reflect changing demography. These include the baseline standard of three acres of land for parks per 1,000 residents or in cases where existing parklands within a park district exceed three acres per 1,000 population, that higher ratio shall be the standard for new developments up to a maximum of five acres of land for parks per 1,000 residents based on calculations specified in SCC [Sacramento County Code] Chapter 22.40.

Policy PF-124. Consistent with its infill development standards and mixed use Commercial Corridor plans, the County in consultation with the local recreation and park districts shall encourage new infill and Corridor development projects to provide small plazas, pocket parks, civic spaces, and other gathering places that are available to the public to help encourage pedestrian activity, meet recreational needs and service standards consistent with Smart Growth principles.

Policy PF-127. Require new residential developments to participate in park O&M financing mechanisms where established by local park districts or the County.

Policy OS-1. Actively plan to protect, as open space, areas of natural resource value, which may include but are not limited to wetlands preserves, riparian corridors, woodlands, and floodplains associated with riparian drainages.

Policy OS-2. Maintain open space and natural areas that are interconnected and of sufficient size to protect biodiversity, accommodate wildlife movement and sustain ecosystems.

Policy OS-11. Establish trail connections and linkages within the County and across jurisdictional boundaries that are compatible with existing land uses. These trail connections shall have the capability of being Class I trails (off-street, separated facilities) with grade separations wherever feasible.

Policy OS-12. The County shall seek to establish greenbelts to serve as habitat corridors and community separators. These shall be located: between

agricultural-residential communities within the unincorporated County; and where feasible, between the unincorporated County and adjacent cities.

Policy OS-13. Permit development clustering in urban areas where grouping of units at a higher density would facilitate on-site protection of woodlands, wetlands, steep slopes, urban stream corridors, scenic areas, or other appropriate natural features as open space, provided that: urban infrastructure capacity is available for urban use; on-site resource protection is appropriate and consistent with other General Plan Policies; General Plan policies pertaining to floodplain fill or natural preserves would not preclude development of the proposed use in the area to be protected as open space; the architecture and scale of development is appropriate for the area; and development rights for open space areas are permanently dedicated via conservation easements and appropriate long-term management is provided for by either a public agency or other appropriate entity.

Sacramento County Municipal Code, Park and Recreation Dedication and Fees

Sacramento County Municipal Code Title 22 Chapter 22.40 provides standards for park and recreation dedication and fees. Section 22.40.010 requires that as a condition of approval of a tentative subdivision map or tentative parcel map, the project applicant must either dedicate land, pay a fee in lieu thereof, or both, at the option of the County for neighborhood and community park or recreational purposes.

The Specific Plan area is located within the NHPRD and ACPRD. Title 22 sets a baseline standard of 3 acres per 1,000 persons for land dedication or in lieu fees unless the Board of Supervisors determines that existing park acreage exceeds three acres of parks for 1,000 members of the population, in which case, a new standard may be adopted. Neither NHPRD nor ACPRD is identified in County Code Section 22.40.045 as having a higher park acreage standard. The dedication and/or in-lieu requirements for park acreage are based on land use types, as shown for in-lieu fees in Table REC-2.

Table REC-2. Parks Development Fee Schedule

Recreation and Park District	Land Use Category	Unit	Fee
Arcade Creek Recreation and Park District	Single-Family Detached Residential	Per dwelling unit	$8,044
Arcade Creek Recreation and Park District	2 to 4 Unit Attached Residential	Per dwelling unit	$7,715
Arcade Creek Recreation and Park District	5+ Attached Residential	Per dwelling unit	$6,380
Arcade Creek Recreation and Park District	Mobile Home	Per dwelling unit	$5,889
Arcade Creek Recreation and Park District	Retail / Other	Per square foot of building space	$0.46
Arcade Creek Recreation and Park District	Office	Per square foot of building space	$0.73
Arcade Creek Recreation and Park District	Industrial	Per square foot of building space	$0.30
North Highlands Recreation and Park District	Single-Family Detached Residential	Per dwelling unit	$11,188
North Highlands Recreation and Park District	2 to 4 Unit Attached Residential	Per dwelling unit	$7,139
North Highlands Recreation and Park District	5+ Attached Residential	Per dwelling unit	$7,439
North Highlands Recreation and Park District	Mobile Home	Per dwelling unit	$6,479
North Highlands Recreation and Park District	Retail / Other	Per square foot of building space	$0.49
North Highlands Recreation and Park District	Office	Per square foot of building space	$0.77
North Highlands Recreation and Park District	Industrial	Per square foot of building space	$0.32

Source: Sacramento County 2026

North Highlands Recreation and Park District Master Plan

The NHPRD Parks and Recreation Master Plan was prepared in 2023 (O'Dell Engineering 2023). The Master Plan provides recommendations and goals for improving the NHPRD park system, open space, recreation facilities, and recreation programs to meet the community's current and future needs for the next 10 years. Recommendations from the 2023 Master Plan are broken into primary priorities and secondary priorities. Primary priorities include a focus on maintenance of existing parks and facilities; identify a permanent pool facility for summer swim programs; and establish joint-use relationships with private organizations or school districts to access facilities, such as sport facilities. Secondary priorities include retrofit an existing park for a fenced dog park; ensure accessibility and inclusion in programs and park features; incorporate more passive programs at parks such as walking trails or fitness equipment; expand recreation programs; and continue to foster community pride through social/community events (O'Dell Engineering 2023).

The Master Plan also identifies a portion of the service area that is not served by a park currently. Figure 6.1 from the Master Plan identifies a recommended location to focus park planning efforts – a location that includes a portion of the Specific Plan Area. The focus area is east of 26th Street, south of Antelope Road, west of Cantel Way, and north of I Street (See Plate REC-2) (O'Dell Engineering 2023).

Most of the Specific Plan Area (i.e., everything north of Peacekeeper Way) is within the NHPRD service area. The 2023 NHRPD Master Plan notes that the previous Parks and Recreation Master Plan had a standard of 5 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents. The North Highlands Recreation and Park District currently provides approximately 1.72 acres per 1,000 residents.

The NHRPD Master Plan identifies that "a recurring barrier preventing people from accessing parks is the lack of safe and accessible routes to walk, bike, or use alternative forms of transportation" (O'Dell Engineering 2023:85).

Arcade Creek Recreation and Park District Master Plan

The ACRPD Parks and Recreation Master Plan was prepared in 2017 (ACRPD 2017). The Master Plan provides policy direction for new park and facility standards, implementing capital improvements, non-capital projects, and initiatives. The Master Plan evaluates the current level of park and recreation resources (as of 2017), and identifies recommended repairs, rehabilitation, and new facility projects. The ACRPD Master Plan notes that 2.25 acres of parks per 1,000 residents are currently provided. However, the 5 acres of parks per 1,000 residents standard can be achieved if the recreational facilities at the American River College (operated by the Los Rio Community College District) and Del Paso Regional Park (operated by the City of Sacramento) are included in the parkland calculation.

The ACRPD Master Plan identifies options for expanding parkland that include new joint-use arrangements with schools, acquisition of park land from the City of Sacramento, or acquisition of new properties for park use within the ACRPD as funding becomes available (ACRPD 2017:4-7).

Impacts and Analysis

Significance Criteria

For purposes of this EIR and consistent with the criteria presented in Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, impacts related to recreation would be considered significant if implementation of the proposed Specific Plan would:

- increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated; or

- include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment.

IMPACT REC-1: RESULT IN THE SUBSTANTIAL PHYSICAL DETERIORATION OF EXISTING PARKS OR RESULT IN SUBSTANTIAL ADVERSE PHYSICAL IMPACTS ASSOCIATED WITH THE PROVISION OF PARKS AND RECREATION SERVICES

The Specific Plan Area is primarily served by the NHRPD, though the southern portion of the Specific Plan Area south of Roseville Road is within the ACRPD. Both park districts have a goal of 5 acres of parkland for every 1,000 people and neither district achieves that goal under current conditions. As reported in their respective parks master plans (O'Dell Engineering 2023) (ACRPD 2017), NHRPD provides approximately 1.72 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents and ACRPD provides approximately 2.25 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents.

Within the existing Specific Plan Area, including Freedom Park and Ruth Inman Park, both operated by the NHRPD, a total of 19.32 acres of parkland is provided. This is an existing park acreage ratio of approximately 7 acres of parkland for every 1,000 residents.[1] The Specific Plan Area has approximately 124 acres of local-serving parks within 3 miles, including neighborhood parks, some linear parkland, one shared use facility with a school, sports fields, and one or more parks that may be considered community parks based on their size (see Plate REC-1). Within a half-mile of the Specific Plan Area, there is a total of approximately 69 acres of land area devoted to parks of different sizes and types.

Existing and future residential development within the Specific Plan Area also benefits from access to regional parks, including Gibson Ranch Regional Park, Cherry Island Golf Course, Cherry Island Sports Complex, and Dry Creek Parkway, which provide a variety of County recreational amenities within a total of approximately 720 acres north of the Specific Plan Area.

Recreational amenities for future new residents would encompass a variety of opportunities as described in the Specific Plan and listed below (see also Plate REC-2).

[1] According to the County Assessor data, updated for accuracy as a part of the Specific Plan and EIR process, there are currently 754 dwelling units within the Specific Plan Area. According to Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG) regional land use data used for the latest update to the Metropolitan Transportation Plan and Sustainable Communities Strategy, known as 2025 Blueprint, the total existing residential population in the Specific Plan Area is 2,868. Based on the County Assessor data and average household sizes from to the United States Census Bureau, the existing residential population is 2,684, which is similar to, but just slightly lower than the SACOG estimate. The estimate of 2,684 existing residents is used for this park acreage calculation and other analytical purposes in this EIR.

Plate REC-2. Potential Parks and Recreational Facilities (Northern Section)

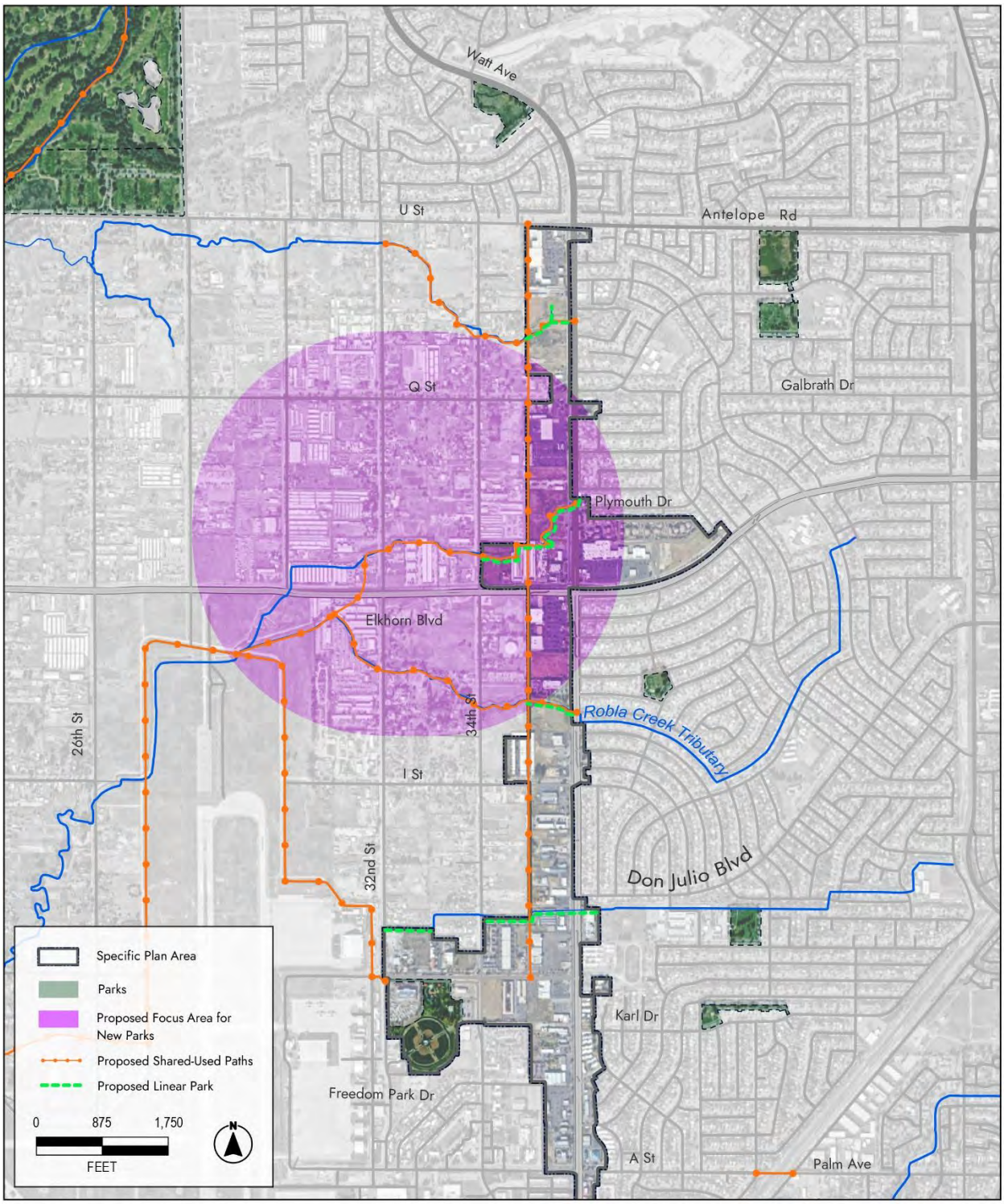
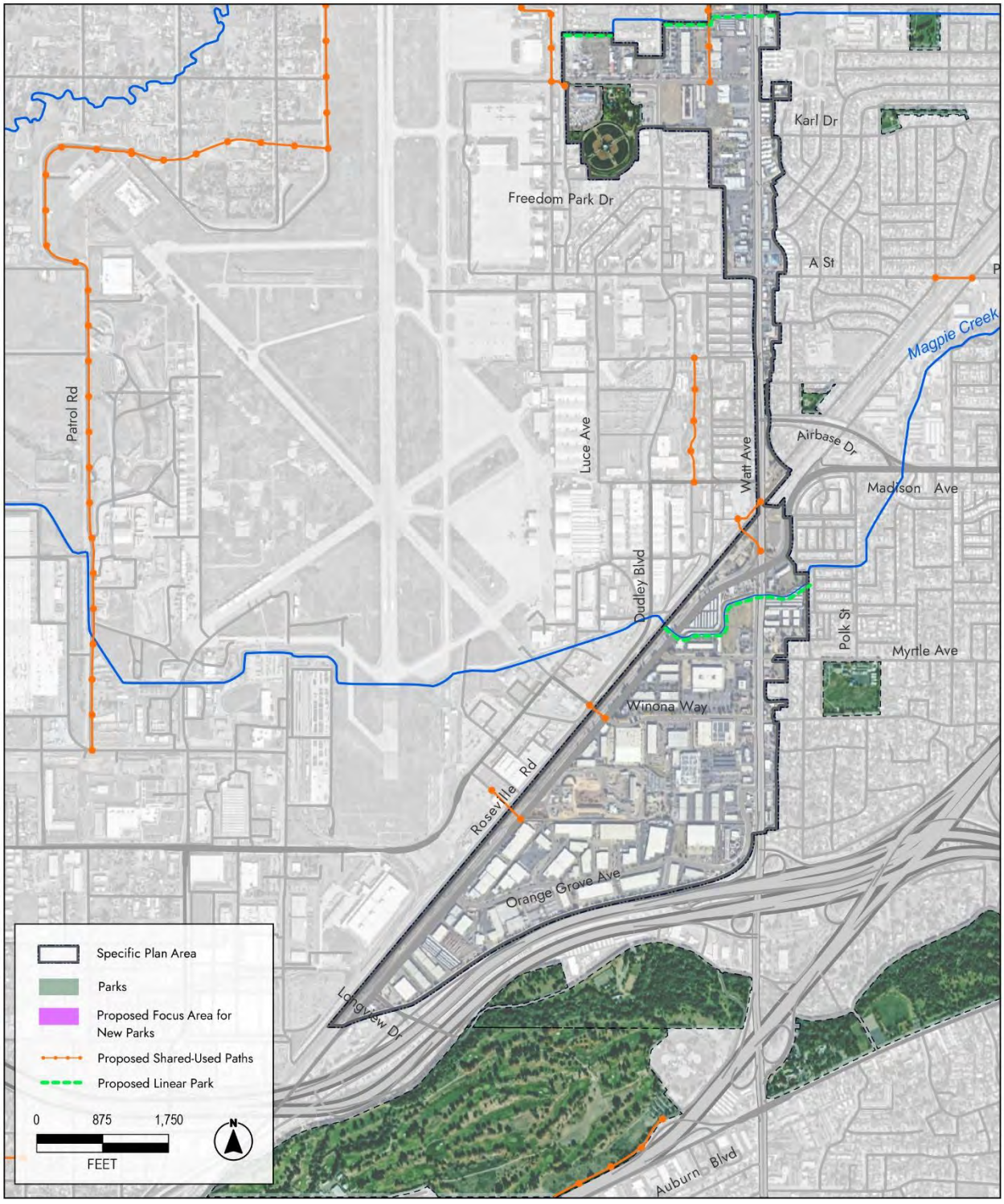


Plate REC-3. Potential Parks and Recreational Facilities (Southern Section)



- Improve creek corridors for trails, passive recreational space and, where appropriate, naturalized drainage and/or restoration.

- Enhance safe and convenient pedestrian and bicycle access to destinations, including parks by implementing the recommendations in the Sacramento County Active Transportation Plan.

- Coordinate with the park and school districts or other public agencies on new joint-use opportunities.

- Proactively coordinate with the park districts to add parks in focus areas that are identified in the park district master plans.

- Implement Specific Plan open space design standards (proposed Specific Plan, Chapter 2) to maximize feasibility and promote functional and high-quality open space areas regardless of typology. For publicly accessible private open space areas, the Specific Plan offers flexible standards, allowing developers to meet open space obligations in creative and site-responsive ways while maintaining usability and accessibility.

- Reduce park land dedication/in-lieu fee requirement for infill development.[2] As reflected in General Plan Policy PF-122, projects in new development areas will be required to dedicate land/pay in-lieu fees to develop parks at standard acres/population ratios, but infill development requires a different approach. The Specific Plan would pursue an approach that plans for access to a variety of recreational opportunities, reduces up-front costs for development, reflects the presence of existing local and regional park space, and credits open space provided as a part of developments. The County is considering several approaches that would: (1) reduce up-front costs for proposed infill development, and (2) provide adequate recreational opportunities for future Specific Plan Area residents.

As noted previously, the NHRPD Master Plan identifies a portion of its service area that does not currently have a park within standard walking distance (one-half mile) of existing residents – this is identified as a "focus area" for expanding access to parks. The proposed Specific Plan incorporates recommendations from the NHRPD Master Plan, including this recommendation to prioritize new recreational facilities in this area. The proposed Specific Plan identifies several proposed segments of trails and linear parkland within this focus area. Under the proposed Specific Plan, the County will coordinate with property owners, park districts, and project developers to advance the design, construction, ownership, and maintenance of multi-purpose creek corridors, prioritizing this focus area. The proposed Specific Plan also notes that the County will pursue new park facilities within the focus area in coordination with the NHRPD, including seeking

[2] It is possible that certain County polices and standards aimed at making infill development feasible would sunset once the County can demonstrate that construction costs per unit/per square foot have decreased in real terms and/or have come in alignment with achievable rents in the Specific Plan Area, or may sunset once the County has issued a certain number of certificates of occupancy within the Specific Plan Area for new housing units.

grant funding and evaluating surplus or acquired land consistent with adopted park district master plans.

As detailed above, project applicants must either dedicate land, pay a fee in lieu thereof, or both, at the option of the County for neighborhood and community park or recreational purposes. The County collects impact fees based on the type and amount of development on behalf of the recreation and park districts and this fee is used for parks and recreational facility improvements. The NHPRD Parks and Recreation Master Plan was prepared in 2023 (O'Dell Engineering 2023). The Master Plan recommendations for parks and recreational facilities to meet the community's current and future needs for the next 10 years. The ACRPD Parks and Recreation Master Plan also identifies recommended repairs, rehabilitation, and new facility projects.

Because the Specific Plan Area is served by existing parkland, because the County collects impact fees on behalf of the recreation and park districts, and because the County will proactively seek to add parkland in coordination with the Recreation and Park Districts, the County anticipates that additional parkland would be available to future residents as the Specific Plan Area is developed. The anticipated development within the Specific Plan Area would not cause existing parks to physically deteriorate, requiring additional unplanned off-site parks to be constructed.

In addition, the physical environmental impacts associated with construction of the proposed new parks within the Specific Plan Area are evaluated throughout all of the topic areas in this EIR, and mitigation measures to reduce physical environmental impacts are recommended, where appropriate and feasible. There are no physical environmental impacts specific to recreational facilities in the Specific Plan Area that are not already evaluated throughout this EIR. Chapter 2 of this EIR identifies development assumptions, which include anticipated private development, along with linear parks, trail improvements, and new park space that is proposed to be constructed in coordination with the recreation and park districts through buildout of the proposed Specific Plan.

For the reasons articulated previously, this impact would be **less than significant**.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required.

16 TRANSPORTATION

INTRODUCTION

This chapter evaluates the potential transportation and circulation impacts associated with implementation of the proposed Specific Plan. Consistent with SB 743 and CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3, transportation impacts under CEQA are evaluated primarily in terms of the level of increase in vehicles miles traveled (VMT) attributable to the subject project (State of California 2023, 2013). Roadway congestion and intersection delay (typically measured according to level of service or "LOS") are not environmental impacts. Accordingly, a LOS analysis is not included in this EIR. However, operational performance information from previously completed corridor planning efforts are summarized to provide context regarding existing and planned transportation conditions within the corridor.

OPERATIONAL CONDITIONS AND MULTIMODAL PERFORMANCE CONTEXT

Operational conditions along Watt Avenue have been evaluated previously as part of the Re-Imagine North Watt Corridor Plan (Corridor Plan). According to the transportation analysis prepared to support the Corridor Plan, existing vehicular LOS along most segments of North Watt Avenue is LOS A, except between Elkhorn Boulevard and Antelope Road in the northern portion of the Specific Plan Area, where the LOS is B. Under future conditions evaluated in the Corridor Plan, including development within the Specific Plan Area and regional growth, the six-lane Urban Hybrid Alternative advanced by the County as a part of the Corridor Plan would provide LOS D and LOS E along portions of the corridor.[1]

The Corridor Plan also evaluated multimodal comfort using bicycle and pedestrian level-of-stress metrics. Existing bicycle level of traffic stress along North Watt Avenue is generally rated as Level 4 (highest stress), except between Peacekeeper Way and Don Julio Boulevard where existing conditions are Level 3. Under the Urban Hybrid Alternative of the Corridor Plan, bicycle facilities would improve substantially, resulting in a corridor-wide rating of Level 1 (lowest stress level). Existing pedestrian level of traffic stress conditions are generally Level 4 (highest stress level) along the corridor, except between Elkhorn Boulevard and Antelope Road where pedestrian stress is Level 3. Implementation of the Urban Hybrid Alternative of the Corridor Plan would improve pedestrian conditions to Level 2 along the corridor.

Traffic safety is also an important consideration along the corridor. Collision data compiled for the Sacramento County Local Road Safety Plan identify several intersections along Watt Avenue with collision histories typical of high-volume, higher-speed urban corridors.

[1] The February 2025 Re-Imagine North Watt Corridor Plan, Table 31, shows future LOS E between Peacekeeper Way and Elkhorn Boulevard and LOS D between Elkhorn Boulevard and Antelope Road at the northern end of the corridor.

The proposed Specific Plan therefore includes safety-oriented improvements intended to address these conditions. These improvements include intersection safety enhancements at key locations, including Elkhorn Boulevard and North Watt Avenue, Don Julio Boulevard and North Watt Avenue, Airbase Drive and North Watt Avenue, Roseville Road and North Watt Avenue, and Myrtle Avenue and Watt Avenue, as well as safety enhancements at locations where proposed Class I multi-use pathways cross public streets. Improvements may include protected pedestrian and bicycle facilities, enhanced pedestrian crossings, median refuges, leading pedestrian intervals where signalized intersections are modified, and other context-appropriate multimodal safety improvements consistent with Sacramento County Improvement Standards.

VEHICULAR TRAVEL DEMAND MODELING

Transportation analysis in this section is based in part on outputs from the Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG) regional travel demand model (SACSIM23), using consistent modeling assumptions for the following scenarios (SACOG 2023):[2][3]

- Existing No Project
- Existing Plus Project
- Cumulative (2050) No Project
- Cumulative (2050) Plus Project

The existing scenario represents the validated base year of the SACOG SACSIM23 regional travel demand model, which is 2020. SACOG provided the regional travel demand model and forecasting framework used for this analysis. The model inputs were updated to reflect the proposed Specific Plan land use assumptions, and the models were reran for each analysis scenario while maintaining the SACOG regional network and forecasting methodology. Accordingly, the existing roadway volumes and VMT presented in this chapter are derived from the calibrated SACSIM23 model and provide a consistent basis for comparison with the 2050 cumulative scenarios.[4]

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[2] Model runs were completed to full convergence, and DayNet post-processing outputs were used to derive roadway-level traffic volumes and vehicle miles traveled. Directional daily traffic volumes (DYV) and daily vehicle miles traveled (DAYVMT) were extracted from the SACSIM DayNet highway assignment outputs and spatially associated with the study roadway segments using a GIS-based overlay procedure. For non-freeway roadway segments, segment-level ADT was calculated as a two-way, length-weighted average of directional DYV values. Freeway roadway segments were evaluated directionally. Segment-level VMT was calculated by summing DAYVMT across all links within each study segment. This methodology was applied consistently across all scenarios to ensure comparability of results.

[3] A Final EIR for the original North Watt Avenue Corridor Plan SPA was certified in 2012, and a Subsequent EIR was certified in 2024 to address rezoning actions associated with Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) compliance (Sacramento County 2024). The current EIR would supersede the 2012 EIR and provides an evaluation of the proposed Specific Plan under current CEQA requirements, including SB 743, and reflects updated land use assumptions, regional growth forecasts, and transportation modeling methodologies.

[4] For the street and roadway segments with traffic volumes from the SACSIM model and where the County also has more recent traffic counts, the total volume from the travel demand model for the validated base year (2020) is within 6% of the traffic counts.

For the 2050 Cumulative No Project scenario, regional land use assumptions are consistent with the SACOG 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (MTP/SCS), while land use within the Specific Plan Area is held at existing conditions. The 2050 Cumulative Plus Project scenario incorporates the proposed Specific Plan land use within that same regional framework.

This chapter compares the above listed scenarios to detail the potential transportation-related impacts attributable to the proposed Specific Plan. While VMT in itself is not an environmental impact, increases in VMT could result in associated adverse physical environmental impacts, such as those related to air quality, greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, and transportation noise. Accordingly, this chapter evaluates VMT as the CEQA transportation metric and considers its relationship to these physical environmental effects.

ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

SPECIFIC PLAN AREA AND REGIONAL CONTEXT

The North Watt Avenue Specific Plan Area encompasses approximately 700 acres along a 4-mile segment of Watt Avenue between Interstate 80 (I-80) and Antelope Road in unincorporated Sacramento County.

Watt Avenue functions as a thoroughfare, providing regional connectivity between I-80 and northern Sacramento County communities. The corridor also provides access to McClellan Business Park to the west, established residential neighborhoods to the east, and regional transit facilities, including light rail service at the Watt/I-80 Sacramento Regional Transit District (SacRT) light rail station.

EXISTING ROADWAY NETWORK AND STREET HIERARCHY

The roadway network within and surrounding the Specific Plan Area consists of a hierarchical system of freeway, thoroughfare, arterial, collector, and local facilities that serve the different roles in mobility and access described in the Sacramento County General Plan Circulation Element (Sacramento County 2022). These facilities collectively provide regional mobility, subregional connectivity, and neighborhood access.[5]

REGIONAL FACILITIES

I-80 forms the primary east–west regional freeway serving the Specific Plan Area. Direct ramp connections at Watt Avenue provide access between the corridor and the broader

[5] Functional classifications referenced in this chapter are based on Sacramento County General Plan and supporting circulation planning documents rather than SACSIM model classifications, which are used solely for travel demand modeling purposes.

Sacramento metropolitan area.[6] The freeway strongly influences traffic patterns along Watt Avenue, Roseville Road, Madison Avenue, and other connecting thoroughfares, arterials, and collectors.

Thoroughfares

Thoroughfares provide high-capacity regional mobility and emphasize through travel over direct property access. Within and adjacent to the Specific Plan Area, roadway facilities classified as thoroughfares include Watt Avenue, Elkhorn Boulevard, Elverta Road and Madison Avenue.[7] Watt Avenue functions as the principal north–south thoroughfare through the Specific Plan Area. Based on the SACSIM23 Existing No Project model, roadway volumes along Watt Avenue reach approximately 66,000 average daily trips, reflecting its regional circulation function. Elkhorn Boulevard functions as a major east–west thoroughfare within the study area.[8] Madison Avenue also carries substantial daily volumes in the vicinity of the Specific Plan Area, reflecting regional connectivity and direct access to I-80.

Arterials

Arterials provide the primary regional and subregional circulation framework within and adjacent to the Specific Plan Area. These facilities accommodate higher traffic volumes, longer-distance travel, transit operations, and freight movement.

Key arterials within and adjacent to the Specific Plan Area evaluated in this analysis include Antelope Road, Don Julio Boulevard, Peacekeeper Way, Roseville Road, Airbase Drive, Walerga Road, Winters Street, and portions of U Street. These arterial facilities generally include four travel lanes, signalized intersections, bicycle facilities, and sidewalks.

Major Collectors and Collectors

Collectors distribute traffic between local streets and the arterial network and provide access to residential neighborhoods, commercial areas, and employment centers. Roadways in this category within and adjacent to the Specific Plan Area include Longview Drive, Q Street, I Street, Myrtle Avenue, and Winona Way. Major collectors include 34th Street, Freedom Park Drive, Orange Grove Avenue, and Palm Street. U Street is

[6] In the area adjacent to the Specific Plan Area, under the Existing No Project scenario, modeled SACSIM directional freeway link volumes along Interstate 80 range from approximately 72,000 to 121,000 vehicles per day, depending on segment location. Modeled Interstate 80 volumes presented in this analysis are SACSIM23 directional link volumes and are not directly comparable to Caltrans two-way Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT) counts. For reference, Caltrans reports two-way AADT volumes near Watt Avenue ranging from approximately 129,000 to 140,000 vehicles per day. Differences are expected because SACSIM assigns directional traffic to individual network links, whereas Caltrans reports combined two-way traffic volumes.

[7] As noted elsewhere in this chapter, Watt Avenue is a six-lane thoroughfare Smart Growth Street.

[8] Modeled Existing No Project traffic volumes for Elkhorn Boulevard reach approximately 69,000 vehicles per day at the I-80 interchange. Madison Avenue also carries substantial daily volumes in the vicinity of the Specific Plan Area (modeled volumes of approximately 32,000 vehicles per day), reflecting regional connectivity and direct access to I-80.

identified as a major collector west of 28th Street, and A Street/James Way is identified as a Smart Growth Street.

Traffic volumes on collectors vary depending on network connectivity and proximity to major corridors. These facilities generally carry lower volumes than thoroughfares and arterials, but provide important connections between neighborhood streets, employment areas, transit facilities, and the regional roadway network. Collectors typically consist of two through travel lanes, with additional turn lanes provided at intersections as needed, as well as bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

Local Streets

Local streets provide direct access to adjacent properties and are not intended to serve through traffic. Within the Specific Plan Area, local streets generally include residential and neighborhood-serving roadways such as Larry Way, Clara Way, Grattan Way, Plymouth Drive, and similar neighborhood streets that primarily support property access and local circulation.[9]

Traffic volumes on local streets vary based on their connectivity and function within the network. Local streets carry relatively lower volumes on two-lane facilities designed to prioritize property access, lower travel speeds, and multimodal compatibility.

Transit

The Specific Plan Area is served by existing fixed-route bus service operating along Watt Avenue and intersecting arterial roadways. The Specific Plan Area is served by SacRT Routes 26, 93, 84, and 19 (Sacramento Regional Transit 2025). In addition, SacRT light rail service is located immediately south of the Specific Plan Area at the Watt/I-80 station, providing regional transit access to downtown Sacramento, Rancho Cordova, and other destinations within the SacRT network.

Pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21064.3, a major transit stop includes an existing rail transit station. The Watt/I-80 SacRT light rail station, located immediately south of the Specific Plan Area, meets this definition. SACOG has mapped nearly the entire Specific Plan Area as being within a Transit Priority Area, with only small portions of parcels along the northern and western edges of the Specific Plan Area located outside the mapped Transit Priority Area (Plate TR-1a and Plate TR-1b). The mapped Transit Priority Area reflects SACOG's regional transit accessibility analysis and is used as a part of the transportation analysis presented in this EIR.

Bicycle Facilities

Existing bicycle facilities in and around the Specific Plan Area include Class II bicycle lanes on selected arterial and collector roadways and Class I multi-use paths within open

[9] Streets such as 34th Street, Palm Street, Peacekeeper Way, Karen Lane, Karl Drive, A Street/James Way, U Street, and Orange Grove Avenue essentially function as local streets, but are not characterized as local streets in this analysis because the Circulation Diagram identifies them as higher-order facilities.

space corridors. These facilities provide connections between residential neighborhoods, employment areas, transit facilities, and regional bicycle routes. As documented in the Re-Imagine North Watt Corridor Plan, bicycle facilities along North Watt Avenue are not continuous, and gaps in the existing bicycle network contribute to elevated bicycle level of traffic stress conditions along portions of the corridor.

Pedestrian Facilities

Sidewalks are generally provided along arterial and collector roadways within the Specific Plan Area and support pedestrian access to nearby residential areas, commercial uses, transit stops, and employment centers. However, sidewalk coverage is not continuous throughout the corridor, and gaps in the pedestrian network exist along portions of North Watt Avenue and adjacent streets. The Re-Imagine North Watt Corridor Plan identified these discontinuities as contributing to elevated pedestrian level of traffic stress conditions and recommended improvements to enhance pedestrian connectivity and accessibility.

Regulatory Setting

The following provides a summary of pertinent transportation plans, programs, policies and ordinances.

Federal

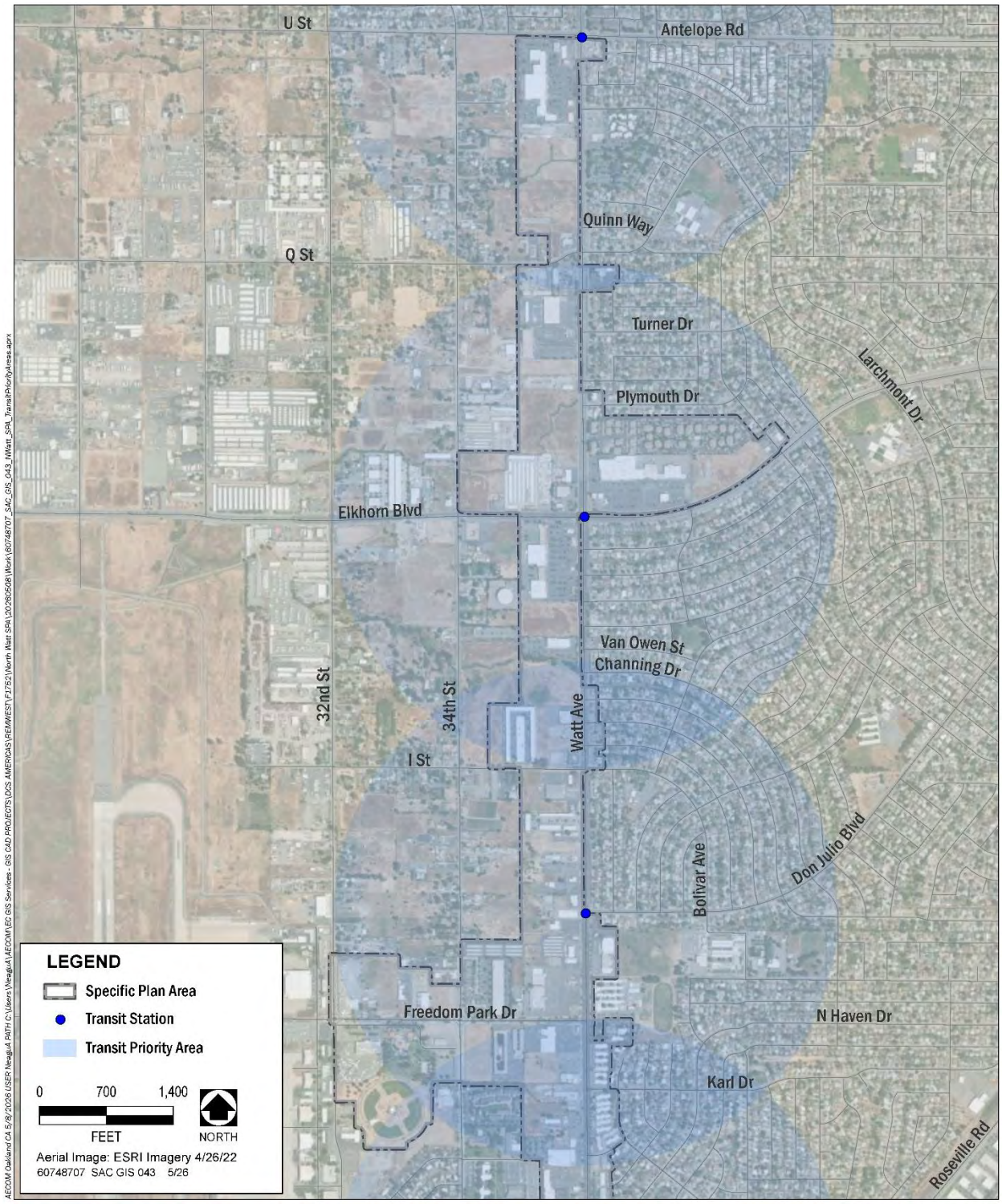
No federal transportation regulations or policies establish CEQA transportation significance criteria applicable to the proposed Specific Plan. Accordingly, this analysis is based on applicable State of California requirements and Sacramento County transportation plans, policies, and guidelines.

State

California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)

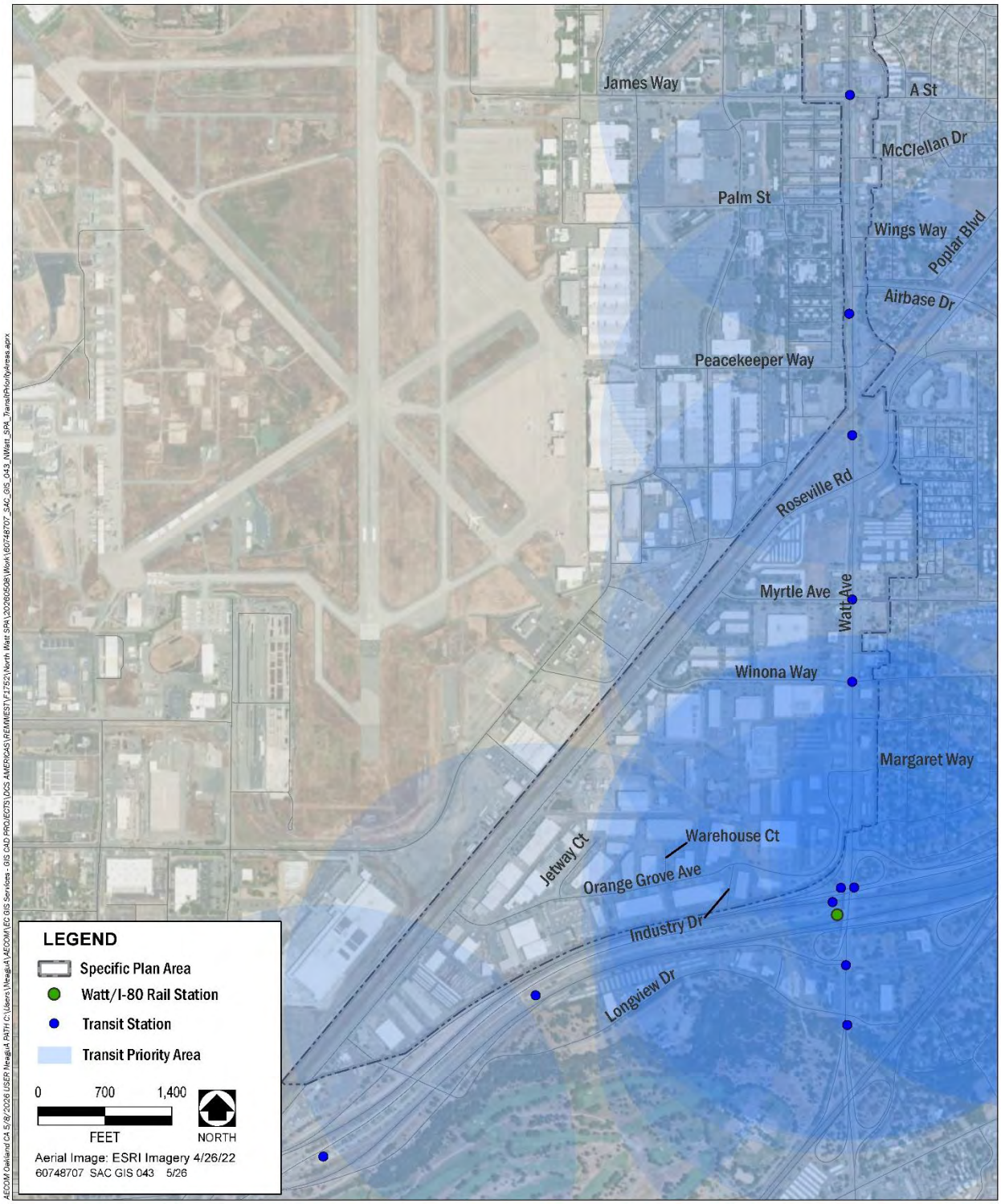
CEQA requires public agencies to identify and disclose the significant environmental effects of their actions and to avoid or mitigate those impacts where feasible. For transportation, CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3 establishes VMT as the primary metric for determining significance. Delay-based measures such as roadway capacity, congestion, and LOS are not environmental impacts under CEQA, although agencies may continue to use them for local planning and operational purposes.

Plate TR-1a: Transit Priority Areas North



Source: SACOG 2025

Plate TR-1b: Transit Priority Areas South



Source: SACOG 2025

Senate Bill 743

SB 743 directed the change from LOS-based thresholds to VMT-based thresholds for transportation impacts in CEQA analysis. The statute encourages infill development, multimodal transportation, and projects that reduce GHG emissions by lowering VMT.

Regional

Sacramento Area Council of Governments

SACOG prepares the MTP/SCS, which provides the regional transportation and land use framework. The current version of the MTP/SCS is known as the 2025 Blueprint.

Integrated land use and transportation planning can decrease mobile source GHG emissions by increasing the share of bicycle, walking, and transit use and by shortening vehicle trips. The 2025 Blueprint notes that this is accomplished through compact development with greater density of homes and a mix of jobs and housing. One implementation activity and critical component of the 2025 Blueprint is the Green Means Go program. To accelerate infill development and implement the Green Means Go Program within the North Watt corridor area (which is inclusive of the Specific Plan Area), the North Watt Corridor Green Zone was established. The Specific Plan Area and immediately surrounding areas have been identified by SACOG as an area where local jurisdictions will promote infill development, reduce regulatory and economic barriers to infill, and support new transportation options as part of the Green Means Go program in order to reduce VMT and associated greenhouse gas emissions to achieve the region's climate goals.

SACOG's regional traffic and VMT data, including outputs from the Sacramento Activity-Based Travel Simulation Model (SACSIM), are used to estimate and compare Specific Plan-related VMT for this EIR. SACOG's VMT Screening Maps indicate that much of the Specific Plan Area is located within areas of relatively low vehicle miles traveled compared to the regional average. Based on SACOG's residential VMT per capita screening map, most of the existing Specific Plan Area falls within the 0 to 50 percent of regional average residential VMT per capita category, with the exception of the southern portion of the Specific Plan Area located between Roseville Road, I-80, and Jetway Road. Similarly, SACOG's employment-based screening map shows that most of the Specific Plan Area is within approximately 85 percent of the regional average work VMT per employee, with an area between Elkhorn Boulevard and I Street falling within approximately 50 percent of the regional average (SACOG 2025).

Local

Sacramento County General Plan

The main theme of the Sacramento County General Plan Circulation Element is to provide a range of transportation choices (Sacramento County 2022). Its intent is to invest in all travel modes so that the residents and workers have access to more than one realistic and efficient transportation alternative. The General Plan directs integrated and balanced

investment in the transportation system: roadway, public transit system, bicycling and pedestrian infrastructure. The General Plan's Circulation Element consists of the Transportation Plan and Transportation Policy Plan.

The following General Plan policy related to transportation and circulation pertain to the proposed Specific Plan.

Policy LU-11. It is the intent of the County to comprehensively plan for the revitalization of the targeted commercial corridors and invest the resources necessary to achieve the following: stimulate private investment; encourage development of vacant and underutilized parcels; support reuse and/or rehabilitation of abandoned or blighted buildings; encourage rezoning of excess industrial and commercial lands to allow for medium and high density residential or mixed use projects, and; avoid non transit supportive uses, such as industrial uses, low density residential, and uses that would necessitate large parking lots fronting on the street.

Policy LU-24. Support private development requests that propose pedestrian- and transit-friendly mixed use projects in commercial corridors, town centers, and near existing or proposed transit stops.

Policy LU-37. Provide and support development of pedestrian and bicycle connections between transit stations and nearby residential, commercial, employment or civic uses by eliminating physical barriers and providing linking facilities, such as pedestrian overcrossings, trails, wide sidewalks and safe street crossings.

Policy LU-38. Community Plans, Specific Plans, and development projects shall be designed to promote pedestrian movement through direct, safe, and pleasant routes that connect destinations inside and outside the plan or project area.

Policy LU-40. Employ appropriate traffic calming measures in areas where pedestrian travel is desirable but made unsafe by a high volume or excessive speed of automobile traffic. Preference shall be given to measures that slow traffic and improve pedestrian safety while creating the least amount of conflict with emergency responders.

Policy LU-43. Parking areas shall be designed to: minimize land consumption; provide pleasant and safe pedestrian and bicycle movement; facilitate shared parking; allow for the possible reuse of surface parking lots through redevelopment; and, minimize parking lot street frontage.

Policy LU-46. Assure that regionally-oriented commercial and office uses and employment concentrations have adequate road access, high

frequency transit service and an adequate but efficient supply of parking.

Policy LU-47. Commercial areas within one-half mile of a transit-oriented development [TOD] commercial core area should maximize pedestrian and transit-friendly uses.

Policy LU-68. Give the highest priority for public funding to projects that facilitate and encourage infill, reuse, redevelopment and rehabilitation, mixed-use development, particularly in Environmental Justice Communities, and that will result in per-person vehicle miles traveled lower than the County average, and the lowest priority for projects that do not comply with public facilities Master Plan phasing sequences.

Policy LU-89. Support planning for and development of mixed use centers and urban villages along commercial corridors to improve quality of life by creating diverse neighborhood gathering places, supporting enhanced transit service and non-automotive travel, stimulating local economic development, eliminating blight and balancing land uses.

Policy LU-90. Focus investment of County resources in commercial corridors to facilitate improvements to streetscapes, sidewalks, landscaping, undergrounding of utilities, and other infrastructure and public amenities to encourage and stimulate private investment.

Policy LU-92. Support development of a bus rapid transit system and light rail expansion by encouraging appropriate land uses and densities along planned routes.

Policy AQ-8. Promote mixed-use development and provide for increased development intensity along existing and proposed transit corridors to reduce the length and frequency of vehicle trips.

Policy CI-6. Provide support for community based corridor planning processes on existing roadways with excess vehicle capacity within built communities to optimize the public right-of-way by utilizing the excess width for other modes of travel or public amenities such as bike lanes, landscaping, walkways, parking, or medians.

Policy CI-9. Plan and design the roadway system in a manner that meets Level of Service (LOS) D on rural roadways and LOS E on urban roadways, unless it is infeasible to implement project alternatives or improvements that would achieve LOS D on rural roadways or LOS E on urban roadways. The urban areas are those areas within the Urban Service Boundary as shown in the Land Use Element of the Sacramento County General Plan. The areas outside the Urban Service Boundary are considered rural.

Policy CI-10. Land development projects shall be responsible to mitigate the project's adverse impacts to local and regional roadways.

Policy CI-19. Collaborate with transit service providers to provide transit services within the County that are responsive to existing and future transit demand.

Policy CI-24. Collaborate with transit service providers for the development of facilities that provide for efficient links and interconnectivity with different transportation modes, including bicyclists and pedestrians.

Policy CI-33. Adopt, implement and periodically update the Sacramento County Active Transportation Plan for unincorporated Sacramento County that sets forth the goals, policies, guidelines, programs and improvements necessary to accomplish the goals of this section.

Policy CI-34. Construct and maintain bikeways and multi-use trails to minimize conflicts between bicyclists, pedestrians, and motorists.

Policy CI-37. Pursue all available sources of funding for the development, improvement, and maintenance of bikeways, pedestrian facilities and multi-use trails, and to support bicycle and pedestrian safety, education, encouragement and enforcement programs.

Policy CI-70. Smart Growth Streets shall incorporate features such as shade trees and plantings, well designed benches and other street furniture, trash receptacles, news racks, outdoor dining experiences, entertainment, public art, pedestrian scaled lighting fixtures, wayfinding signage, bicycle racks and other amenities as appropriate.

Policy CI-72. On a Smart Growth Street, the County shall strive to maintain operations and capacity on urban roadways and intersections at LOS E or better, unless maintaining this LOS would, in the County's judgment, be infeasible and conflict with the achievement of other Smart Growth Street objectives. Congestion in excess of LOS E may be acceptable provided that provisions are made to improve overall mobility, reduce overall VMT and/or promote non-automobile transportation.

Policy CI-76. Smart Growth Street planning efforts shall develop a comprehensive strategy to reduce both the total amount of parking and total surface area dedicated to parking facilities. In general, reduced parking requirements and innovative parking solutions such as, shared parking, structured parking, parking maximums rather than minimums, on street parking, performance parking pricing, parking benefit districts and other innovative parking solutions will be strongly encouraged wherever feasible, while large surface parking lots will be strongly discouraged.

Policy CI-77. Planning processes for Smart Growth Street corridors shall consider road diets, pedestrian and bicycle enhancements, traffic calming measures and other feasible measures to create a corridor that equitably accommodates all users and modes of travel.

Sacramento County Transportation Analysis Guidelines

Sacramento County's Transportation Analysis Guidelines (Sacramento County 2025a) implements SB 743 at the local level. It establishes:

- Screening criteria to identify projects presumed to have a less than significant VMT impact;
- Methods for calculating and comparing VMT using SACOG regional model data and other approved tools; and
- VMT thresholds of significance for residential, employment, mixed-use, and roadway capacity projects.

The Sacramento County Transportation Analysis Guidelines also maintains requirements for Local Transportation Analysis to address operational performance (LOS, queuing, safety, and multimodal conditions) for consistency with the County General Plan, even though these metrics are not CEQA significance criteria.

For certain projects, County Department of Transportation (SacDOT) requires Local Transportation Analyses, which are traffic studies. Projects subject to a Local Transportation Analysis would (1) generate 100 or more new a.m. or p.m. peak hour vehicle trip-ends, (2) generate 1,000 or more daily vehicle trip-ends, or (3) are likely to cause or substantially contribute to traffic congestion or safety issues. The purpose of the Local Transportation Analysis is to evaluate consistency with the Sacramento County General Plan transportation policies. Although LOS[10] is no longer a CEQA transportation significance metric under SB 743, the County continues to use LOS, along with safety, transit, bicycle, pedestrian, and other multimodal performance measures, for General Plan consistency and transportation system planning. The Local Transportation Analysis would typically identify conditions to provide any recommended improvements necessary to comply with General Plan policies. Depending on the project, SacDOT may require additional analysis of other roadway elements such as turn pocket queuing, drive-thru queuing, traffic signal warrants, traffic safety, neighborhood cut-through traffic, truck impacts, access control, and phasing analysis. The County's Transportation Analysis Guidelines provide the requirements and guidance for preparing a Local Transportation Analysis.

The Sacramento County Transportation Analysis Guidelines were updated to implement SB 743 and CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3. The Guidelines establish methodologies,

[10] Level of service (LOS) is a qualitative measure used to relate the quality of motor vehicle traffic service. LOS is used to analyze roadways and intersections by categorizing traffic flow and assigning quality levels of traffic based on performance measure like vehicle speed, density, congestion, etc.

screening criteria, and thresholds of significance for evaluating VMT associated with development and transportation projects:

- Projects in VMT-efficient areas
- Projects near transit stations
- Projects generating less than 230 average daily traffic (ADT)
- Local-serving public facilities/services, including utility facilities[11]

The County's guidelines present a variety of screening and threshold approaches for development projects, transportation improvements, and plans, along with suggested mitigation. For residential projects, the Sacramento County Transportation Analysis Guidelines establish a residential VMT per-capita threshold equal to 85 percent of the regional average. Office projects are evaluated using VMT per employee, with a threshold of 85 percent of the regional average for work-related trips.[12]

Transportation Improvement and Program Guide (TIPG)

The Sacramento County Transportation Improvement Program Guide (TIPG) identifies planned transportation capital improvements and maintenance and operations programs for the County's roadway, bicycle, and pedestrian systems over a five-year planning horizon (Sacramento County 2019). The TIPG states that it is intended to support the "County General Plan transportation goal of achieving a balanced transportation system that moves people and goods in a safe and efficient way that minimizes environmental impacts, that is supported by urban land uses and services rural needs" (Sacramento County 2019, page 1). The TIPG identified widening Elverta Road from two to four lanes between Dutch Haven Blvd and Watt Avenue and the Watt Avenue Complete Street Improvement Project – Phase 1. The Elverta Road project also includes the removal of the existing two-lane Elverta Road bridge at Dry Creek and the construction of a new six-lane reinforced concrete bridge, which will accommodate bicycles and pedestrians throughout its entire length (Sacramento County 2019, page A2-39).

Sacramento County Active Transportation Plan

The 2022 Active Transportation Plan identifies transportation improvements that would serve development within the Specific Plan Area, including Class I multi-use trails, Class II bike lanes, and Class III bike routes. The Active Transportation Plan establishes that active transportation projects would be funded through the County's Capital Improvement Plan, grant funding, development impact fees or improvement districts, and by requiring new development to construct and dedicate new bicycle and pedestrian improvements, either within or adjacent to properties. North Watt Avenue is identified as a "Class IV Study Corridor" for Class IV separated bikeways – the County has implemented the more

[11] Appendix A to the County's Transportation Analysis Guidelines classifies both Major Utility and Solar Energy Facility land uses as local-serving public facilities/service (LPFS), and thus meet the screening criteria to not require preparation of a VMT analysis.

[12] The County's guidelines on VMT are also consistent with recommendations from the Governor's Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation (formerly the Office of Planning and Research)(OPR 2018).

detailed analysis recommended in the Active Transportation Plan by creating the Re-imagine North Watt Corridor Plan.

Re-Imagine North Watt Avenue Corridor Plan

The Re-Imagine North Watt Corridor Plan is a County corridor planning initiative that identified multimodal improvements and access management strategies for Watt Avenue, extending from Antelope Road down to Peacekeeper Way, within the Specific Plan Area. The County Board of Supervisors endorsed the Hybrid Urban Boulevard Alternative design that envisions six lanes for Watt Avenue, with five- to eight-foot sidewalks and street crossing locations, bus stops, Class IV protected bike facilities, landscaped buffers, and, where feasible, minor upgrades to bus stops. Improvements to Watt Avenue identified in the Re-Imagine North Watt Corridor Plan will be implemented as the County identifies funding.

Impacts and Analysis

Methodology

Travel Demand Model

Transportation analysis for the proposed Specific Plan is based on the SACOG regional travel demand model, SACSIM23 (version 23.00.01 beta). SACSIM simulates regional travel behavior by assigning daily vehicle trips to the regional roadway network based on land use, employment, household characteristics, and transportation system attributes.

The SACSIM model incorporates regional growth forecasts consistent with the adopted SACOG MTP/SCS, including committed transportation improvements and background development projects. Accordingly, the 2050 Cumulative scenarios account for past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future development within the region.[13]

Four model scenarios were evaluated:

- Existing No Project - The Existing scenarios represent the calibrated base year of the SACSIM23 regional travel demand model and provide the baseline conditions for evaluating transportation impacts.
- Existing Plus Project
- Cumulative (2050) No Project – Regional growth consistent with the SACOG MTP/SCS with the Specific Plan Area maintained at existing land use conditions

[13] Roadway segment ADT and VMT were derived from SACSIM DayNet outputs using a GIS-based overlay of directional model links with the study roadway segments. This approach avoids duplication and supports segment-level aggregation using a two-way, length-weighted ADT calculation and summed link-level daily vehicle miles traveled (DAYVMT).

- Cumulative (2050) Plus Project – Regional growth consistent with the SACOG MTP/SCS with the proposed Specific Plan land use changes applied within the Specific Plan Area

For the cumulative horizon year evaluated in this analysis, the regional land use inputs reflect the 2050 SACOG MTP/SCS regional growth forecast. However, for purposes of evaluating the incremental effect of the proposed Specific Plan, the Specific Plan Area was held at existing land use conditions in the 2050 No Project scenario.[14] Accordingly, the 2050 Cumulative No Project scenario represents regional growth consistent with the SACOG MTP/SCS while maintaining existing land use conditions in the Specific Plan Area. The 2050 Cumulative Plus Project scenario incorporates the Specific Plan Area land use changes associated with the proposed Specific Plan.[15,16]

The SACSIM23 regional travel demand model was run for each analysis scenario to simulate regional travel patterns based on land use, population, employment, and transportation network. Model outputs, including daily traffic volumes and travel distances, were extracted and linked to the roadway network for use in the traffic and VMT analyses.

Multimodal transportation impacts, including bicycle, pedestrian, transit, transportation hazards, and emergency access, were evaluated qualitatively based on the proposed Specific Plan, applicable Sacramento County General Plan policies, the Sacramento

[14] To implement this scenario, the SACSIM parcel-level land use inputs were modified such that parcels within the Specific Plan Area boundary were replaced with the corresponding existing conditions parcel dataset, while parcels outside the Specific Plan Area retained the 2050 regional land use forecast. Associated household and person files were filtered to maintain parcel–household–person consistency.

[15] SACSIM assigns daily vehicle volumes to individual highway network links during the assignment process. The primary output used in this analysis is the DayNet highway assignment output generated using the SACSIM "daynet" post-processing script, which contains: daily directional traffic volumes (DYV); daily vehicle miles traveled (DAYVMT); and link geometry and network attributes. The following post-processing steps were applied consistently to all scenarios: highway link and node tables were exported from Cube Voyager; node coordinates were converted to spatial points in ArcGIS Pro; link geometries were reconstructed using A-node and B-node coordinates; SACSIM links were spatially associated with study roadway segments using a spatial overlay approach; assigned volumes (DYV) were used to represent directional traffic volumes and were converted to segment-level ADT using a length-weighted averaging approach. For non-freeway roadway segments, the ADT values represent two-way traffic volumes. For freeway segments, ADT values are reported directionally. Segment-level VMT was calculated by summing link-level DAYVMT values across matched SACSIM links within each study segment.. A length-weighted aggregation approach was applied to ensure that longer links appropriately influence segment-level volumes and to avoid overestimation that would result from simple summation of link volumes. This methodology was applied identically across all four scenarios to ensure comparability of results.

[16] Total VMT was estimated to support air quality and greenhouse gas emissions analysis. Household-generated VMT was also calculated separately for residential VMT per capita analysis and includes work-related and non-work household travel, such as shopping, school, personal business, social/recreation, and other non-commute travel. Household-generated VMT per capita was calculated using SACSIM trip-level outputs by identifying Specific Plan Area households and filtering household-generated auto-driver travel using the MODE and driver/passenger fields within the SACSIM trip table. Household-generated VMT excludes passenger-only trip records, commercial vehicle travel, external travel, and through-travel.

County Transportation Analysis Guidelines, and the Re-Imagine North Watt Corridor Plan.

Evaluation of Specific Plan Development Vehicular Travel Demand

Specific Plan-related changes in traffic demand were evaluated by comparing Plus Project scenarios to corresponding No Project scenarios for both existing and 2050 conditions.[17]

Study Area Roadway Network

The roadway study network was defined using a GIS-based selection process consistent with Sacramento County practice and the Sacramento County Transportation Analysis Guidelines. The final study network includes:

- All roadway segments within the Specific Plan Area;
- Arterial and collector roadways connecting to the Specific Plan Area;
- Extended segments along major access routes until Specific Plan influence becomes negligible;
- I-80 mainline segments and associated ramps serving the Specific Plan Area.

Local streets outside the Specific Plan Area were excluded unless they function as direct connections to destinations or major roads outside of the Specific Plan Area.

Roadway Segment Traffic Volumes

Roadway segment traffic volumes from the Existing No Project, Existing Plus Project, Cumulative (2050) No Project, and Cumulative (2050) Plus Project SACSIM23 scenarios were extracted and compared to evaluate changes in traffic volumes associated with implementation of the proposed Specific Plan. The modeled traffic volumes are summarized in Table TR-1 and provide the basis for the circulation system impact analysis presented later in this chapter. Modeled traffic volumes are representative of typical conditions, and will vary from traffic counts, which are collected at a specific time.

Table TR-1 summarizes roadway traffic volumes derived from the SACSIM23 Existing and Cumulative (2050) travel demand model scenarios. These modeled volumes are presented to illustrate changes in travel demand associated with implementation of the proposed Specific Plan and are not intended to represent observed traffic counts.[18]

[17] It is recognized that travel demand models simulate route choice and network redistribution effects. As a result: some roadway segments may experience decreases in traffic under Plus Project conditions; redistribution occurs when added development changes congestion patterns and route selection; and minor decreases on individual segments do not indicate modeling error and are consistent with standard network assignment behavior.

[18] Roadway segment ADT values were derived using a length-weighted averaging methodology applied to matched SACSIM highway assignment links.

As shown in Table TR-1, traffic volumes under Existing No Project conditions reflect baseline roadway performance within and surrounding the Specific Plan Area. Local roadways exhibit relatively low to moderate traffic volumes, while arterial facilities such as Watt Avenue, Elkhorn Boulevard, and Antelope Road carry substantially higher volumes consistent with their regional circulation function. I-80 carries the highest traffic volumes in the Specific Plan Area. Compared to baseline, under Existing Plus Project conditions, traffic volumes increase across most roadway segments within and adjacent to the Specific Plan Area. The largest increases occur on local and arterial roadways that provide direct access to the Specific Plan Area, indicating that Specific Plan-generated trips are primarily accommodated within the local and arterial roadway network. Changes in freeway volumes are comparatively smaller than on local and arterial corridors serving the Specific Plan Area.

Under 2050 Cumulative No Project conditions, traffic volumes increase compared to existing conditions across the Specific Plan Area due to regional growth in population and employment. These increases are most evident on arterial roadways and freeway facilities, reflecting regional travel demand patterns.

Under 2050 Cumulative Plus Project conditions, additional increases in traffic volumes occur on roadway segments serving the Specific Plan Area. Similar to existing conditions, these increases are primarily concentrated on local and arterial roadways that provide access to the Specific Plan Area. Traffic increases under 2050 Cumulative Plus Project conditions remain concentrated primarily on local and arterial roadway segments serving the Specific Plan Area, while freeway segments generally exhibit comparatively smaller net changes.

Table TR-1 summarizes modeled average daily traffic volumes for the roadway segments evaluated in this analysis. Consistent with the proposed land use pattern, the largest increases occur on roadway segments serving the Specific Plan Area. Changes on Interstate 80 are comparatively smaller and generally reflect regional traffic redistribution within the SACSIM network rather than direct project-generated traffic.

Table TR-1. Modeled Average Daily Traffic Existing and 2050 with and without the Proposed Specific Plan

No.	Full Street	From	To	Class[1]	Existing No Project[2]	Existing Plus Project[2]	Cumulative 2050 No Project[2]	Cumulative 2050 Plus Project[2]
1	I-80 Eastbound	Fulton Avenue	Watt Avenue	Freeway	80,508	81,356	83,732	84,935
2	I-80 Westbound	Watt Avenue	Fulton Avenue	Freeway	82,284	83,316	86,457	87,585
3	I-80 Eastbound	Raley Boulevard	Winters Street	Freeway	40,078	40,693	40,619	41,255
4	I-80 Eastbound	Winters Street	Longview Drive	Freeway	39,234	39,459	39,247	39,392
5	I-80 Eastbound	Longview Drive	Watt Avenue	Freeway	28,876	28,818	28,950	28,786
6	I-80 Eastbound	Watt Avenue	Madison Avenue	Freeway	47,828	47,695	42,710	47,669
7	I-80 Eastbound	Madison Avenue	Elkhorn Boulevard	Freeway	54,438	54,623	54,647	54,839
8	I-80 Eastbound	Elkhorn Boulevard	Antelope Road	Freeway	55,907	56,323	57,274	57,619
9	I-80 Eastbound	Antelope Road	Riverside Avenue	Freeway	69,082	69,199	72,853	73,405
10	I-80 Westbound	Riverside Avenue	Antelope Road	Freeway	51,139	51,367	53,983	54,430
11	I-80 Westbound	Antelope Road	Elkhorn Boulevard	Freeway	52,739	52,980	54,723	55,183
12	I-80 Westbound	Elkhorn Boulevard	Madison Avenue	Freeway	57,040	57,195	58,648	58,858
13	I-80 Westbound	Madison Avenue	Watt Avenue	Freeway	29,406	29,489	29,821	29,485
14	I-80 Westbound	Watt Avenue	Longview Drive	Freeway	42,856	40,391	43,880	43,875
15	I-80 Westbound	Longview Drive	Winters Street	Freeway	32,903	33,127	32,623	33,024
16	I-80 Westbound	Winters Street	Raley Boulevard	Freeway	42,837	43,434	44,039	44,483
17	Antelope Road	Don Julio Boulevard	Roseville Road	Thoroughfare	38,708	39,912	44,911	46,244
18	Antelope Road	Roseville Road	I-80 Westbound Ramps	Thoroughfare	38,992	39,563	41,756	42,595
19	Elkhorn Boulevard	16th Street	32nd Street	Thoroughfare	26,389	28,283	31,023	33,070
20	Elkhorn Boulevard	32nd Street	34th Street	Thoroughfare	22,494	22,029	24,426	25,356
21	Elkhorn Boulevard	34th Street	Watt Avenue	Thoroughfare	17,618	18,135	22,815	30,460
22	Elkhorn Boulevard	Watt Avenue	Thomas Drive	Thoroughfare	19,308	22,501	24,563	29,071
23	Elkhorn Boulevard	Thomas Drive	Larchmont Drive	Thoroughfare	22,522	25,401	28,631	32,055

No.	Full Street	From	To	Class[1]	Existing No Project[2]	Existing Plus Project[2]	Cumulative 2050 No Project[2]	Cumulative 2050 Plus Project[2]
24	Elkhorn Boulevard	Larchmont Drive	Walerga Road	Thoroughfare	28,516	31,042	35,849	38,244
25	Elkhorn Boulevard	Walerga Road	Spring Drive	Thoroughfare	37,970	39,955	39,033	41,007
26	Elkhorn Boulevard	Spring Drive	Don Julio Boulevard	Thoroughfare	43,762	45,334	44,233	46,035
27	Elkhorn Boulevard	Don Julio Boulevard	Hillsdale Boulevard	Thoroughfare	63,608	66,088	68,119	70,499
28	Elkhorn Boulevard	Hillsdale Boulevard	I-80 Westbound Ramps	Thoroughfare	69,350	71,540	72,456	74,468
29	Elverta Road	16th Street	Watt Avenue	Thoroughfare	7,225	7,283	9,469	9,457
30	Madison Avenue	Roseville Road	Airbase Drive	Thoroughfare	9,514	11,033	11,456	12,599
31	Madison Avenue	Airbase Drive	I-80 Westbound Ramps	Thoroughfare	31,442	36,965	36,021	39,491
32	Watt Avenue	I-80 Westbound	I-80 Eastbound Ramps	Thoroughfare	66,763	71,875	72,270	77,280
33	Watt Avenue	I-80 Westbound Ramps	Winona Way	Thoroughfare	26,261	29,828	29,537	33,149
34	Watt Avenue	Winona Way	Myrtle Avenue	Thoroughfare	46,408	52,314	53,796	60,290
35	Watt Avenue	Myrtle Avenue	Roseville Road	Thoroughfare	44,306	50,162	52,770	59,484
36	Watt Avenue	Roseville Road	Airbase Drive	Thoroughfare	28,683	33,323	29,367	21,566
37	Watt Avenue	Antelope Road	Elverta Road	Thoroughfare	24,679	25,520	36,863	37,026
38	Watt Avenue	Elverta Road	PFE Road	Thoroughfare	15,007	15,383	32,949	33,456
39	Watt Avenue	Airbase Drive	A Street	Thoroughfare (SGS)	23,784	28,731	30,553	15,467
40	Watt Avenue	A Street	Don Julio Boulevard	Thoroughfare (SGS)	32,885	39,482	40,095	49,768
41	Watt Avenue	Don Julio Boulevard	I Street	Thoroughfare (SGS)	32,387	36,217	39,017	39,655
42	Watt Avenue	I Street	Elkhorn Boulevard	Thoroughfare (SGS)	27,710	31,198	38,978	39,499

No.	Full Street	From	To	Class[1]	Existing No Project[2]	Existing Plus Project[2]	Cumulative 2050 No Project[2]	Cumulative 2050 Plus Project[2]
43	Watt Avenue	Elkhorn Boulevard	Q Street	Thoroughfare (SGS)	21,753	20,954	31,096	25,762
44	Watt Avenue	Q Street	Antelope Road	Thoroughfare (SGS)	28,508	29,847	41,544	31,753
45	Airbase Drive	Watt Avenue	Madison Avenue	Arterial	15,656	18,816	18,819	20,599
46	Antelope Road	Watt Avenue	Walerga Road	Arterial	15,135	17,459	17,324	21,438
47	Antelope Road	Walerga Road	Elverta Road	Arterial	18,805	20,217	20,455	21,230
48	Don Julio Boulevard	Watt Avenue	Walerga Road	Arterial	8,776	10,372	9,771	12,434
49	Don Julio Boulevard	Walerga Road	Elkhorn Boulevard	Arterial	5,016	6,599	6,030	7,295
50	Don Julio Boulevard	Elkhorn Boulevard	Antelope Road	Arterial	25,238	25,521	31,160	31,960
51	Dudley Boulevard	Freedom Park Drive	James Way	Arterial	8,842	12,186	12,514	19,039
52	Dudley Boulevard	James Way	Palm Street	Arterial	8,778	11,994	12,057	4,900
53	Dudley Boulevard	Palm Street	Peacekeeper Way	Arterial	4,421	5,621	3,737	4,431
54	Dudley Boulevard	Peacekeeper Way	Dudley Way	Arterial	9,142	10,767	13,013	14,992
55	Dudley Boulevard	Dudley Way	Winters Street	Arterial	9,815	11,769	17,336	18,683
56	Peacekeeper Way	Dudley Boulevard	Watt Avenue	Arterial	3,097	2,946	2,259	2,375
57	Roseville Road	Tri Station Road	Longview Drive	Arterial	22,473	24,155	25,172	26,574
58	Roseville Road	Longview Drive	Orange Grove Avenue	Arterial	17,463	19,155	16,914	20,758
59	Roseville Road	Orange Grove Avenue	Winona Way	Arterial	37,205	41,219	38,541	42,853
60	Roseville Road	Winona Way	Watt Avenue	Arterial	19,545	21,780	21,082	24,093
61	Roseville Road	Watt Avenue	Madison Avenue	Arterial	27,749	28,064	31,510	30,575
62	Roseville Road	Madison Avenue	Oakhollow Drive	Arterial	22,841	22,942	25,434	23,866
63	Roseville Road	Oakhollow Drive	Andrea Boulevard	Arterial	12,467	12,371	13,551	13,439

No.	Full Street	From	To	Class[1]	Existing No Project[2]	Existing Plus Project[2]	Cumulative 2050 No Project[2]	Cumulative 2050 Plus Project[2]
64	Roseville Road	Andrea Boulevard	Diablo Drive	Arterial	8,799	8,832	10,492	10,743
65	Roseville Road	Diablo Drive	Antelope Road	Arterial	23,441	23,434	26,422	26,679
66	U Street	28th Street	32nd Street	Arterial	883	858	1,001	1,095
67	U Street	32nd Street	34th Street	Arterial	2,152	2,392	3,379	3,315
68	Walerga Road	Oakhollow Drive	Don Julio Boulevard	Arterial	17,230	18,082	20,116	18,886
69	Walerga Road	Don Julio Boulevard	Elkhorn Boulevard	Arterial	21,002	21,442	23,998	23,381
70	Walerga Road	Elkhorn Boulevard	Antelope Road	Arterial	33,704	33,817	33,020	34,087
71	Winters Street	Dudley Boulevard	I-80 Westbound Ramps	Arterial	990	1,627	1,522	3,881
72	U Street	34th Street	Watt Avenue	Arterial (SGS)	3,381	3,451	4,511	14,481
73	Orange Grove Avenue	Roseville Road	Watt Avenue	Major Collector	9,371	12,099	9,756	11,919
74	Palm Street	Dudley Boulevard	Watt Avenue	Major Collector	5,394	7,431	8,315	8,434
75	34th Street	Freedom Park Drive	I Street	Major Collector (SGS)	9,023	12,144	14,221	18,357
76	34th Street	I Street	Elkhorn Boulevard	Major Collector (SGS)	10,529	13,207	11,783	13,853
77	34th Street	Elkhorn Boulevard	Q Street	Major Collector (SGS)	7,491	8,530	9,400	12,157
78	34th Street	Q Street	U Street	Major Collector (SGS)	3,857	3,855	5,479	13,677
79	Freedom Park Drive	32nd Street	34th Street	Major Collector (SGS) (Special)	990	1,627	1,522	3,881
80	Freedom Park Drive	34th Street	Watt Avenue	Major Collector (SGS) (Special)	1,788	2,222	3,296	9,392

No.	Full Street	From	To	Class[1]	Existing No Project[2]	Existing Plus Project[2]	Cumulative 2050 No Project[2]	Cumulative 2050 Plus Project[2]
81	I Street	32nd Street	34th Street	Collector	1,164	1,543	2,260	1,564
82	I Street	34th Street	Watt Avenue	Collector	4,455	5,131	155	1,198
83	Longview Drive	Roseville Road	I-80 Westbound Ramps	Collector	14,098	16,465	12,472	14,744
84	Longview Drive	I-80 Eastbound Ramps	Watt Avenue	Collector	5,090	5,610	5,639	6,175
85	Myrtle Avenue	Roseville Road	Watt Avenue	Collector	372	378	18	28
86	Q Street	32nd Street	34th Street	Collector	3,171	2,960	1,587	4,580
87	Q Street	34th Street	Watt Avenue	Collector	6,805	7,634	7,119	4,847
88	Winona Way	Roseville Road	Watt Avenue	Collector	13,895	14,764	13,798	14,503
89	A Street	Skvarla Avenue	Watt Avenue	Collector (SGS)	66	194	457	5,786
90	James Way	Dudley Boulevard	Skvarla Avenue	Collector (SGS)	66	194	457	5,786
91	32nd Street	Freedom Park Drive	I Street	Local Street	990	1,627	1,522	3,881
92	32nd Street	I Street	Elkhorn Boulevard	Local Street	2,156	3,170	3,783	5,448
93	32nd Street	Elkhorn Boulevard	Q Street	Local Street	2,638	4,717	4,409	7,954
94	32nd Street	Q Street	U Street	Local Street	363	692	806	948

Notes: ADT = average daily traffic; SGS =; Freeway roadway segments are reported directionally. Non-freeway roadway segments represent two-way traffic volumes. ADT values were calculated using a length-weighted averaging methodology applied to SACSIM highway assignment links. Modeled ADT values were derived from SACSIM23 (Version 23.00.01) DayNet highway assignment outputs using directional daily traffic volumes (DYV) aggregated to the study roadway segments.

[1] The roadway segment "Class" field was updated to reflect Sacramento County General Plan and supporting circulation planning classifications rather than SACSIM model classifications. Revisions were made to roadway classifications based on Sacramento County's roadway functional classification, including Watt Avenue and Elkhorn Boulevard (Thoroughfare), 34th Street and Palm Street (Major Collector), U Street (Major Collector), A Street/James Way and Freedom Park Drive (Smart Growth Street), Peacekeeper Way (Arterial), and several collector roadways such as I Street, Q Street, Myrtle Avenue, Orange Grove Avenue, and Winona Way.

[2] Volumes represent total daily traffic (all lanes, both directions) for non-freeway roadway segments. Freeway roadway segments are reported directionally. Existing scenarios represent the calibrated SACSIM23 base-year regional travel demand model developed by SACOG. For this EIR, AECOM updated the Specific Plan Area land use, modified the roadway network to reflect the proposed Specific Plan, and reran the SACSIM23 model to develop the Existing and Cumulative (2050) No Project and Plus Project scenarios. The Cumulative (2050) No Project scenario incorporates regional growth consistent with the SACOG Metropolitan Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (MTP/SCS) while maintaining existing land use conditions within the Specific Plan Area. The Cumulative (2050) Plus Project scenario incorporates development associated with the proposed Specific Plan within the Specific Plan Area.

In a limited number of cases, variations in segment-level volumes reflect localized redistribution of traffic within the roadway network rather than direct increases attributable solely to the proposed Specific Plan. Under Cumulative (2050) conditions, traffic volumes generally increase, consistent with regional growth assumptions incorporated in the SACOG regional travel demand model. Comparisons between the No Project and Plus Project scenarios indicate that certain segments experience additional increases associated with infill development within the Specific Plan Area, while other roadway segments exhibit localized decreases reflecting route reassignment and changes in regional travel patterns associated with network connectivity, circulation patterns, and congestion conditions.

Overall, the analysis indicates that the proposed Specific Plan would increase traffic on roadway segments providing direct access to the Specific Plan Area, while regional facilities such as I-80 experience relatively minor changes. This pattern is consistent with expected travel behavior and demonstrates that Specific Plan-generated traffic is primarily distributed within the local and arterial roadway network. Variations observed under cumulative conditions reflect the combined effects of regional growth, roadway network assignment, and localized circulation changes within the Specific Plan Area.

VMT Impact Evaluation

Consistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3 and Senate Bill 743, transportation impacts are evaluated using VMT rather than LOS or roadway congestion metrics. Sacramento County implements CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3 evaluations through the Transportation Analysis Guidelines, which establish VMT screening criteria and thresholds of significance.

Specific Plan Area residential VMT per capita associated with household-generated vehicle trips was evaluated for the Existing and Cumulative (2050) No Project and Plus Project scenarios to assess consistency with Sacramento County Transportation Analysis Guidelines and CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3.[19] The VMT analysis focuses on residential VMT per capita because residential development is the primary land use evaluated under the proposed Specific Plan and residential VMT per capita is the applicable metric for evaluating residential land use under the Sacramento County Transportation Analysis Guidelines and CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3.

Trip-level SACSIM outputs were analyzed to identify trips associated with the Specific Plan Area. Auto-driver trips, including drive-alone and shared-ride travel modes, were extracted from the SACSIM trip output files and used to calculate VMT associated with trips generated by or attracted to the Specific Plan Area. Residential VMT per capita was calculated for purposes of evaluating consistency with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3 and Sacramento County SB 743 screening criteria.

[19] Household automobile-driver VMT was extracted from SACSIM trip-based model outputs for each scenario and used to calculate residential VMT per capita for the region and the Specific Plan Area. Modeled population and household data were obtained from SACSIM household and person output files.

The analysis distinguishes residential travel associated with the Specific Plan Area from regional residential travel and allows direct comparison of Specific Plan Area residential VMT per capita with the corresponding modeled regional residential VMT per capita for each analysis scenario.

Table TR-2 summarizes the residential VMT per capita analysis prepared for the proposed Specific Plan in accordance with the Sacramento County Transportation Analysis Guidelines. The table presents residential household-generated auto-driver VMT and associated population used to evaluate the residential component of the proposed Specific Plan under SB 743. It is not intended to represent total VMT generated by all land uses within the Specific Plan Area.

Table TR-2. Summary of Modeled Regional and Specific Plan Area VMT

Metric	Existing No Project	Existing Plus Project	2050 Cumulative No Project	2050 Cumulative Plus Project
Regional Residential Auto-Driver VMT	40,601,162	40,749,026	46,451,809	46,720,994
Regional Population	2,540,353	2,557,149	3,116,423	3,133,914
Regional Residential VMT per Capita	15.98	15.94	14.91	14.91
Specific Plan Area Residential Auto-Driver VMT	35,762	264,410	30,263	248,259
Specific Plan Area Population	2,868	19,664	2,868	20,359
Specific Plan Area Residential VMT per Capita	12.47	13.45	10.55	12.19
Percent Below Baseline Regional Average	-22.0%	-15.6%	-36.4%	-25.2%
Meets 15 Percent Below Threshold?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Notes: VMT = vehicle miles traveled. Residential VMT per capita values represent household-generated auto-driver VMT per resident. Percent below regional average compares Specific Plan Area residential VMT per capita to modeled regional residential VMT per capita for each scenario. Consistent with Sacramento County Transportation Analysis Guidelines and CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3, residential projects located in areas achieving VMT per capita levels at least 15 percent below the modeled regional average are generally considered to result in a less-than-significant transportation impact related to VMT. Residential VMT per capita values are based on household-generated auto-driver travel and exclude passenger-only trip records, commercial vehicle travel, external-through travel, and non-household travel consistent with Sacramento County Transportation Analysis Guidelines and CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3 methodology. Specific Plan Area residential VMT per capita values were calculated using parcel-defined Specific Plan Area households, residents, and household-generated auto-driver trips extracted directly from SACSIM trip, household, and person output files. Regional residential VMT per capita values were calculated using the same SACSIM trip-based methodology applied at the regional model level for each scenario. The regional values shown in the above table are similar to, but slightly different than the regional values reported in Appendix E to the 2025 Blueprint, which show a household-generated VMT per capita of 17.1 in 2020 and 15.9 for 2050. The reduction in residential VMT per capita under 2050 Cumulative No Project conditions reflects broader regional land use and transportation network changes incorporated into the SACOG MTP/SCS cumulative modeling framework, including improved regional accessibility, multimodal transportation investments, and changes in regional travel patterns.

For each analysis scenario, the Specific Plan Area residential VMT per capita was compared to the baseline regional residential VMT per capita. Accordingly, both the Existing analysis and the Cumulative (2050) analysis compare the Specific Plan Area to the regional Existing average.

The results indicate that residential VMT per capita within the Specific Plan Area remains below the corresponding modeled regional average under all analyzed scenarios and remains at least 15 percent below the regional average under both Existing and Cumulative (2050) conditions. Under the Sacramento County Transportation Analysis Guidelines, residential projects with residential VMT per capita at least 15 percent below the regional average are generally considered to result in a less-than-significant transportation impact under CEQA.

RE-IMAGINE NORTH WATT CORRIDOR PLAN – MULTIMODAL PERFORMANCE SUMMARY

The Re-Imagine North Watt Corridor Plan provides planning-level information regarding existing and future multimodal performance along the North Watt Avenue corridor. The following summary provides context for the transportation impact analysis presented in this EIR.[20]

According to the Re-Imagine North Watt Corridor Plan, existing vehicular LOS along most segments of North Watt Avenue is LOS A. The segment between Elkhorn Boulevard and Antelope Road in the northern portion of the Specific Plan Area operates at LOS B. Under future conditions that include regional growth and development within the Specific Plan Area, the Corridor Plan evaluated a six-lane Urban Hybrid Alternative, which would result in vehicular LOS D to E along portions of the corridor.

The Corridor Plan also evaluated bicycle and pedestrian conditions using a level of traffic stress framework. Existing bicycle conditions along North Watt Avenue were identified as level of traffic stress 4 along most segments of the corridor, except between Peacekeeper Way and Don Julio Boulevard in the southern portion of the Specific Plan Area, where existing bicycle conditions were rated level of traffic stress 3. The level of traffic stress scoring system ranges from 1 to 4, with level 4 representing the highest stress conditions. The Urban Hybrid Alternative evaluated in the Corridor Plan would improve bicycle conditions to level of traffic stress 1 throughout the corridor.

Existing pedestrian conditions along North Watt Avenue were similarly evaluated using a level of traffic stress framework. Existing pedestrian conditions are generally rated level of traffic stress 4 along most segments of the corridor, except between Elkhorn Boulevard and Antelope Road where conditions are rated level of traffic stress 3. Implementation of the Urban Hybrid Alternative would improve pedestrian conditions to approximately level of traffic stress 2 along the corridor.

[20] The Re-imagine North Watt Corridor Plan transportation analysis assumes development of 7,200 new dwelling units and 1.2 million square feet of non-residential development (page 28).

SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA

This analysis uses the significance criteria in Appendix G of the State CEQA Guidelines, CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3, the Sacramento County General Plan, and the Sacramento County Transportation Analysis Guidelines, as applicable.

Impacts would be significant if implementation of the proposed Specific Plan would:

- Conflict with a program, plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities.
- eliminate or substantially impair an existing bicycle or pedestrian facility in a manner that would discourage its use;
- conflict with or interfere with implementation of planned bicycle or pedestrian facilities identified in the Sacramento County Active Transportation Plan or other adopted plans; or
- create unsafe conditions for bicyclists or pedestrians.
- adversely affect public transit operations; or
- fail to adequately provide access to transit.
- result in residential VMT per capita that exceeds the applicable Sacramento County Transportation Analysis Guidelines significance threshold; or
- otherwise conflict with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3.
- Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment).
- Result in inadequate emergency access.

VEHICLE MILES TRAVELED (CEQA GUIDELINES §15064.3)

Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3(b), transportation impacts are evaluated using VMT rather than level of service or other measures of vehicle delay. Sacramento County implements CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3 through its Sacramento County Transportation Analysis Guidelines, which establish VMT screening criteria and significance thresholds for project-level transportation analyses.

As described in the VMT Impact Evaluation methodology and summarized in Table TR-2, residential VMT per capita within the Specific Plan Area remains at least 15 percent below the applicable modeled regional residential VMT per capita under both Existing and Cumulative (2050) conditions. Accordingly, the proposed Specific Plan satisfies the Sacramento County Transportation Impact Analysis Guidelines VMT threshold of

significance and would result in a less-than-significant transportation impact pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3.

IMPACT TR-1: ADVERSELY AFFECT AN EXISTING BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN FACILITY OR PUBLIC TRANSIT OPERATIONS, INTERFERE WITH THE IMPLEMENTATION OF A PLANNED BIKEWAY, RESULT IN UNSAFE CONDITIONS FOR BICYCLISTS OR PEDESTRIANS, OR FAIL TO PROVIDE ACCESS TO TRANSIT

This impact analysis addresses both construction-period and operational conditions.

CONSTRUCTION

Buildout of development consistent with the proposed Specific Plan would occur incrementally and would include site grading, utility installation, building construction, frontage improvements, and modifications to roadway, bicycle, pedestrian, and transit facilities within and adjacent to the Specific Plan Area. Construction activities could temporarily affect sidewalk and bicycle facilities, require temporary traffic control, and, if necessary, require temporary relocation of transit stops. Temporary disruptions could include detours, narrowed travel paths, or relocation of transit stops.

These conditions would be temporary and phased. Construction-related disruptions do not constitute a conflict with adopted circulation policies where facilities are restored or improved upon completion and where multi-modal access and emergency access are maintained to the extent feasible. All work within Sacramento County rights-of-way requires encroachment permits and compliance with applicable Sacramento County Improvement Standards. Temporary traffic control plans must maintain safe and accessible routes for pedestrians and bicyclists and provide appropriate detours when facilities are temporarily closed. Coordination with Sacramento Regional Transit is required when transit stops or routes are affected.

Construction activities would be subject to temporary traffic control and access management requirements to maintain vehicular, transit, bicycle, pedestrian, and emergency access during construction. Per Section 12-4.02 of the County Standard Construction Specifications, the preparation and implementation of a traffic control plan would be required for all construction work performed within the road right-of-way that modifies vehicular, bicycle, and/or pedestrian traffic patterns. Each traffic control plan is required to be developed in accordance with the latest version of the California Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices, which ensures the provision of reasonably safe and effective movement of all roadway users in a traffic control area.

Because construction activities are temporary, regulated through enforceable County standards, and required to implement construction management plans, construction would not result in a conflict with any applicable circulation plan, ordinance, or policy in a manner that would cause a physical environmental effect.

Because construction-related effects would be short-term, subject to established County standards, and required to maintain multimodal access during construction, implementation of the proposed Specific Plan would not result in a permanent degradation of transit, bicycle, or pedestrian facilities. Construction impacts would be **less than significant**.

OPERATION

Operational consistency is evaluated relative to the Sacramento County General Plan Circulation Element, the Sacramento County Transportation Analysis Guidelines, the SACOG MTP/SCS, and other applicable adopted transportation plans and policies identified in the Regulatory Setting.

As shown in Table TR-1, implementation of the proposed Specific Plan increases traffic volumes on several roadway segments serving the Specific Plan Area, including portions of Watt Avenue, Elkhorn Boulevard, Antelope Road, and Roseville Road, reflecting the planned residential and mixed-use development evaluated in the SACSIM23 model. Changes on Interstate 80 are comparatively smaller and vary by direction, reflecting regional traffic redistribution within the broader transportation network rather than substantial project-induced increases on freeway facilities. These modeled traffic changes were considered in evaluating consistency with the County's adopted circulation plans and policies.

The proposed Specific Plan does not establish a new growth area outside the County's adopted planning framework. Rather, it refines land use designations and development standards within an area planned for development, and where the County is encouraging infill development. The proposed Specific Plan generally maintains the existing functional classifications, and retains access to I-80 and other regional facilities.[21]

With respect to bicycle facilities, the Sacramento County Active Transportation Plan identifies transportation improvements serving the Specific Plan Area, including Class I multi-use trails, Class II bicycle lanes, and Class III bicycle routes. The proposed Specific Plan incorporates the multimodal improvements identified in the Active Transportation Plan with one exception. The Watt Avenue Paseo Trail, which was included in the Active Transportation Plan, is not included as a part of the proposed Specific Plan due to feasibility concerns. Although the Watt Avenue Paseo Trail is not included as a part of the proposed Specific Plan, the plan continues to provide enhanced bicycle and pedestrian connectivity through planned on-street bicycle facilities, sidewalks, shared-use paths, and

[21] The previous General Plan Circulation Diagram has been amended through the proposed Specific Plan, including changes to Functional Classifications: (1) Watt Avenue between ~~Antelope Road/~~U Street and **James Way** ~~Palm Avenue~~ has been changed from a one-way couplet Smart Growth Street to a six-lane thoroughfare Smart Growth Street; (2) 34th Street between ~~Antelope Road/~~U Street and **James Way** ~~Palm Avenue~~ has been changed from a one-way couplet Smart Growth Street to a Major Collector; (3) U Street between Watt Avenue and 34th Street has been changed from a one-way couplet Smart Growth Street to **an** ~~Four Lane~~ Arterial; and (4) **James Way** ~~Palm Avenue~~ between Watt Avenue and 34th Street has been changed from a one-way couplet Smart Growth Street to a Major Collector.

complete streets improvements. Future development within the Specific Plan Area would remain subject to applicable County Improvement Standards.

Similarly, the proposed Specific Plan maintains and reinforces pedestrian infrastructure requirements, including continuous sidewalks, enhanced crossings, and pedestrian-oriented design. The proposed Specific Plan incorporates improvements identified in the Re-Imagine North Watt Corridor Plan, including widened sidewalks, enhanced pedestrian crossing locations, and Class IV protected bicycle facilities. All future development remains subject to Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance and applicable County Improvement Standards.

The SACSIM analysis prepared for this EIR and the County's Re-imagine North Watt Corridor Plan demonstrates that traffic redistribution associated with development under the proposed Specific Plan would occur within the context of the regional transportation network and would not undermine the adopted circulation structure or planned multimodal improvements within the corridor.

The proposed Specific Plan further strengthens integration between land use and transportation by concentrating residential and mixed-use infill development along a transit corridor, consistent with General Plan policies promoting infill development and multimodal accessibility.

Implementation of the proposed Specific Plan would be consistent with the transportation and land use policies of the Sacramento County General Plan. The proposed Specific Plan promotes infill and mixed-use development along the Watt Avenue corridor, supports multimodal transportation through bicycle, pedestrian, transit, and complete streets improvements, and reinforces transit-supportive development patterns consistent with General Plan land use, circulation, and air quality policies (including Policies LU-11, LU-24, LU-37, LU-38, LU-89, LU-90, LU-92, AQ-8, CI-33, CI-34, CI-70, CI-72, CI-76, and CI-77).

The proposed Specific Plan maintains and reinforces the adopted roadway hierarchy, multimodal network, and the areawide transportation planning framework. The proposed Specific Plan would advance land use, transportation, and community design policies intended to promote multimodal access, corridor revitalization, transit-supportive development, and reduced per-capita vehicle travel demand. Based on consistency with the Sacramento County General Plan, Sacramento County Transportation Analysis Guidelines, SACOG MTP/SCS, SACSIM modeling results, and the multimodal improvements incorporated into the proposed Specific Plan, the proposed Specific Plan would not conflict with any applicable transportation program, plan, ordinance, or policy in a manner that would result in a physical environmental impact. Operational impacts related to policy consistency would therefore be **less than significant**.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required.

IMPACT TR-2: GENERATE VMT THAT EXCEEDS COUNTY STANDARDS

This impact addresses construction-related and operational VMT associated with both development and the transportation improvements identified in the proposed Specific Plan.

CONSTRUCTION

Construction of future development and public facilities and infrastructure improvements anticipated under the proposed Specific Plan would generate temporary vehicle trips associated with construction workers, equipment delivery, and material hauling. These trips would occur intermittently over limited durations corresponding to individual construction phases of future development projects and public facility and infrastructure improvements.

Construction-related travel would not alter long-term land use patterns, permanently modify the regional transportation network, or induce sustained travel demand. CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3(b) focuses on operational VMT associated with land use and transportation projects rather than temporary construction-related travel. Sacramento County's *Transportation Analysis Guidelines* likewise do not establish construction-phase VMT thresholds of significance.

Because construction-related VMT would be temporary and would not affect long-term travel behavior or land use configuration, and would occur in an infill setting that would not require inordinately long construction work or equipment trips, construction would not conflict with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3(b). Construction-related VMT impacts would be **less than significant**.

OPERATION

The proposed Specific Plan is designed to promote and facilitate reinvestment in an existing developed area with transit service, with a focus on compact, transit-supportive residential development and complementary local-serving commercial development. The proposed Specific Plan incorporates active transportation improvements designed to make walking and bicycling to destinations in the vicinity of the Specific Plan Area, including transit stations, safer and more attractive.

As discussed in the Existing Conditions section, nearly the entire Specific Plan Area is located within a SACOG-designated Transit Priority Area and is served by existing transit service (see Plates TR-1a and TR-1b). These characteristics support compact, transit-oriented development and are consistent with the Sacramento County Transportation

Analysis Guidelines and CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3 (SACOG 2020a, SACOG 2020b, Caltrans 2026).[22,23]

SACOG residential VMT screening maps identify most of the Specific Plan Area as a low-VMT area for residential development (Plate TR-2). SACOG work VMT screening maps similarly identify portions of the Specific Plan Area as low-VMT areas for employment uses (Plate TR-3). Consistent with these screening maps, the residential VMT analysis prepared for this EIR (Table TR-2) indicates that the Specific Plan Area would remain below the County's 15-percent-below-regional-average threshold under both Existing and Cumulative (2050) conditions.

Operational VMT associated with implementation of the proposed Specific Plan was evaluated using SACSIM under Existing and Cumulative (2050) No Project and Plus Project conditions.[24]

As summarized in Table TR-2, residential VMT per capita within the Specific Plan Area remains more than 15 percent below the baseline regional residential VMT per capita under both Existing and Cumulative (2050) conditions. Under Existing Plus Project conditions, residential VMT per capita is 13.45, approximately 15.6 percent below the modeled regional average. Under Cumulative (2050) Plus Project conditions, residential VMT per capita is 12.19, approximately 25.2 percent below the baseline regional average.

Because the Specific Plan Area is within a Transit Priority Area, where land use development projects may be presumed to have less-than-significant impacts, and because the proposed Specific Plan remains below the Sacramento County Transportation Analysis Guidelines threshold of significance for residential VMT under both analysis years, implementation of the proposed Specific Plan would result in a **less-than-significant** operational VMT impact.

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[22] The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) also maps High Quality Transit Areas, as described in Public Resources Code 21155, 21064.3, and 21060.2. As noted by Caltrans on the site where the GIS data is published, "High Quality Transit Corridors are buffered a half-mile from the linear General Transit Feed Specification (GTFS) shape, while Major Transit Stops are buffered a half-mile from the point locations of stops in General Transit Feed Specification (GTFS) data or, for planned major transit stops, MPO-provided Regional Transportation Plan data."

[23] The County does not assume substantial development under the proposed Specific Plan for the limited portions of parcels located outside of the mapped Transit Priority Area with the exception approximately one acre of one parcel.

[24] Regional VMT, population, and residential VMT per capita metrics were derived from SACSIM trip-based, household, and person output files for the Existing and Cumulative (2050) No Project and Plus Project scenarios. Residential VMT per capita values were calculated using parcel-defined Specific Plan Area households, residents, and household-generated auto-driver trips extracted directly from SACSIM trip, household, and person output files.

Plate TR-2: Low Residential VMT Areas



Plate TR-3: Low Work VMT Areas



Operation – Transportation Improvements Component

In addition to development, the proposed Specific Plan identifies transportation improvements, including intersection refinements, access management strategies, pedestrian and bicycle facility upgrades, transit-supportive design elements, and operational improvements consistent with the Re-imagine North Watt Avenue Corridor Plan.

Under CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3(b)(2), transportation projects are evaluated based on whether they would induce substantial additional vehicle travel. Capacity-increasing roadway projects may increase VMT if they add substantial new general-purpose vehicle capacity without offsetting multimodal improvements.

The transportation improvements identified in the proposed Specific Plan primarily consist of multimodal corridor improvements, access management, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, transit-supportive streetscape improvements, and intersection refinements. They do not include substantial additions of new general-purpose roadway capacity beyond the assumptions incorporated into the SACSIM cumulative network. The proposed transportation improvements emphasize complete streets principles, transit-supportive design, bicycle and pedestrian connectivity, and access consolidation rather than substantial additions of new general-purpose roadway capacity. Because the corridor improvements emphasize multimodal accessibility, transit-supportive design, bicycle and pedestrian connectivity, and access management rather than substantial additions of new general-purpose roadway capacity, the transportation improvements component would not conflict with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3(b)(2). The proposed transportation improvements do not introduce substantial new general-purpose vehicular capacity beyond the network assumptions already reflected in the cumulative modeling framework and therefore do not constitute capacity expansion that would be expected to induce substantial additional vehicle travel. In addition, as detailed in the Re-imagine North Watt Corridor Plan Summary Report, the six-lane Urban Hybrid Alternative included within the proposed Specific Plan would reduce regional daily VMT by approximately 35,000 compared to the one-way couplets for 34th Street and Watt Avenue that had been proposed as a part of the 2012 Corridor Plan (Sacramento County 2025b, page 101). As a part of the proposed Specific Plan, the General Plan Circulation Diagram would be amended to change Watt Avenue between Antelope Road/U Street and Palm Avenue from a one-way couplet Smart Growth Street to a six-lane thoroughfare Smart Growth Street.

Accordingly, the transportation improvement components of the proposed Specific Plan would not conflict with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3, would not result in a substantial increase in VMT, and would result in a **less-than-significant** transportation impact.

Summary

The proposed Specific Plan promotes compact infill development within an existing urbanized corridor served by transit and multimodal transportation facilities. Residential VMT per capita remains more than 15 percent below the applicable modeled regional average under both Existing and Cumulative (2050) conditions, and the transportation

improvements do not introduce substantial new general-purpose roadway capacity that would induce additional vehicle travel. Accordingly, implementation of the proposed Specific Plan would not result in a significant VMT impact under CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required.

Impact TR-3: Substantially Increase Hazards Due to a Geometric Design Feature or Incompatible Uses

CEQA Appendix G identifies incompatible land uses, such as farm equipment operating on urban roadways, as examples of transportation safety hazards. This impact also evaluates whether the proposed Specific Plan would introduce geometric design features (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible land uses (e.g., farm equipment) that could create transportation safety hazards.

Construction

Construction activities associated with future development and corridor improvements would occur within public rights-of-way and on adjacent parcels. Activities could include temporary traffic control, lane shifts, intersection modifications, sidewalk closures, driveway reconstruction, and staging of equipment and materials. If not properly managed, such temporary conditions could increase the potential for vehicle, bicycle, or pedestrian safety hazards.

However, all construction work within County rights-of-way is subject to encroachment permits and must comply with applicable County Improvement Standards. Temporary traffic control plans are required to maintain safe travel paths for vehicles, pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit operations. As discussed under Impact TR-1, construction activities would be required to comply with County encroachment permit requirements, including preparation of traffic control plans, as applicable.

Temporary work-zone configurations must meet standardized taper lengths, sight distance requirements, channelization standards, and pedestrian detour criteria. These requirements are implemented through applicable permit conditions and County Standard Construction Specifications.

Because construction-related geometric changes would be temporary, phased, and subject to established safety standards and inspection, including construction work zone County Standard Construction Specifications, construction would not result in a substantial increase in transportation hazards. Construction impacts related to transportation safety hazards would be **less than significant**.

OPERATION

GEOMETRIC DESIGN FEATURES

The proposed Specific Plan incorporates transportation improvements consistent with the Hybrid Urban Boulevard Alternative evaluated in the Re-Imagine North Watt Corridor Plan, together with additional improvements identified in Chapter 2 of this EIR and Chapter 3 of the proposed Specific Plan. The proposed Specific Plan includes transportation improvements originally identified in the Sacramento County Active Transportation Plan, as well as additional bicycle and pedestrian improvements referenced in Chapter 2 of this EIR and detailed in Chapter 3 of the proposed Specific Plan. Improvements implemented through buildout of the Specific Plan Area may include intersection reconfigurations, enhanced pedestrian and bicycle crossings, access modifications, and complete streets cross-sections. All improvements implemented under the proposed Specific Plan would be required to comply with applicable Sacramento County Improvement Standards.

The proposed Specific Plan does not authorize increases in posted design speeds or implementation of substandard geometric configurations. Rather, the proposed Specific Plan includes improvements intended to improve connectivity, multi-modal access, and transportation safety.

The Specific Plan proposes to proactively implement safety enhancements identified by the Active Transportation Plan at the intersections of Elkhorn Boulevard and Watt Avenue, Don Julio Boulevard and Watt Avenue, Airbase Drive and Watt Avenue, Roseville Road and Watt Avenue, and Myrtle Avenue and Watt Avenue, as well as safety-enhancing features at each location where a Class I multi-use pathway crosses a public street.

In addition, the proposed Specific Plan incorporates a variety of traffic calming and complete streets design measures as part of the planned transportation improvements, where consistent with Sacramento County standards and applicable roadway classifications, including lane narrowing, curb extensions, raised crossings, median refuges, roundabouts, and other context-sensitive roadway treatments intended to reduce vehicle speeds, improve pedestrian visibility, shorten crossing distances, and enhance multimodal safety. These improvements are intended to improve roadway safety while supporting pedestrian, bicycle, and transit accessibility throughout the corridor.

Accordingly, because the proposed Specific Plan incorporates transportation improvements intended to improve roadway safety, multimodal accessibility, and access management, implementation of the proposed Specific Plan would not substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature. In addition, for larger projects, the County requires Local Transportation Analysis to address operational performance, including safety. The impact would be **less than significant**.

INCOMPATIBLE USES

CEQA Appendix G references incompatible uses, such as farm equipment operating on urban streets, as examples of potential safety hazards. The proposed Specific Plan does

not introduce agricultural, heavy industrial uses, or other uses that would be incompatible with the urban circulation system.

Truck traffic associated with McClellan Business Park and existing industrial areas would continue to utilize designated arterial facilities, including Watt Avenue, 34th Street, and Don Julio Boulevard, which function as primary corridors for goods movement based on their roadway classification and connectivity within the regional network. These facilities are designed to accommodate higher traffic volumes, including commercial and truck traffic, and provide direct connections to I-80 and other regional routes. The proposed Specific Plan does not alter truck route designations in a manner that would introduce heavy freight traffic onto local residential streets.

Future development proposals within the Specific Plan Area would remain subject to applicable standards for access, sight distance, driveway placement, and separation of loading areas from pedestrian facilities.

Because the proposed Specific Plan does not introduce incompatible land uses or modify truck routes in a manner that would create transportation safety conflicts, implementation of the proposed Specific Plan would not substantially increase hazards due to incompatible uses. The impact would be **less than significant**.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required.

Impact TR-4: Result in Inadequate Emergency Access

Construction

Construction of development and infrastructure improvements under the proposed Specific Plan would occur in phases within public rights-of-way and on private parcels. Activities may include temporary lane closures, lane shifts, intersection modifications, staging areas, and driveway reconstructions. If not properly managed, such activities could temporarily affect emergency response times, restrict fire apparatus maneuverability, or limit access to certain parcels.

However, construction activities are temporary and regulated. All work within County rights-of-way requires encroachment permits and compliance with applicable Sacramento County Improvement Standards. Construction traffic control plans must maintain safe vehicular circulation and provide emergency vehicle access throughout construction, consistent with Sacramento County encroachment permit requirements. Construction activities would be subject to temporary traffic control and access management requirements to maintain vehicular, transit, bicycle, pedestrian, and emergency access during construction. Per Section 12-4.02 of the County Standard Construction Specifications, the preparation and implementation of a traffic control plan would be required for all construction work performed within the road right-of-way that modifies vehicular, bicycle, and/or pedestrian traffic patterns.

In addition, Sacramento County requires coordination with emergency service providers when roadway closures or lane reductions may affect primary response routes. Construction staging plans must maintain emergency access at all times or provide approved alternate routing. These requirements are implemented through the County permitting process and coordination with Sacramento Metropolitan Fire District, as applicable.

Because construction-related access constraints would be temporary, phased, and subject to established County and Sacramento Metropolitan Fire District requirements, implementation of the proposed Specific Plan would not substantially impair emergency access during construction. Construction impacts would be less than significant.

Operational

At buildout, the proposed Specific Plan would be served by an interconnected circulation network that provides multiple access opportunities throughout the corridor and does not rely on isolated dead-end streets for primary access. All future transportation improvements and development projects within the Specific Plan Area would be required to comply with applicable Sacramento County Improvement Standards, the California Fire Code, and Sacramento Metropolitan Fire District apparatus access standards. These regulations establish minimum unobstructed roadway widths, maximum dead-end lengths, required turnaround geometry, secondary access requirements for larger developments, fire lane standards, and required turning radii for emergency vehicles. No roadway or development project may be approved without demonstrating compliance with these standards and obtaining fire district review and clearance.

Potential features such as medians, traffic calming devices, narrowed cross-sections, gated facilities, or access control devices must be designed in a manner that preserves required emergency vehicle access. Where necessary, median breaks, mountable curbs, or emergency override mechanisms must be incorporated consistent with fire district requirements.

The proposed Specific Plan does not modify or relax applicable fire code or emergency access standards. Rather, the proposed circulation network is intended to maintain or improve emergency access through an interconnected street system, multiple access opportunities, and transportation improvements designed in accordance with Sacramento County Improvement Standards and Sacramento Metropolitan Fire District requirements. Accordingly, because all future development and transportation improvements would be subject to applicable Sacramento County Improvement Standards, the California Fire Code, and Sacramento Metropolitan Fire District access requirements, implementation of the proposed Specific Plan would not result in inadequate emergency access. Therefore, operational impacts related to emergency access would be **less than significant**.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required.

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17 TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes environmental and regulatory setting for Tribal Cultural Resources (TCRs) in the North Watt Avenue Specific Plan Area, identifies and analyzes potential impacts related to TCRs from implementation of the Specific Plan, and recommends mitigation measures to reduce or eliminate significant impacts.[1]

Cultural resources are separate and distinct from TCRs, and are discussed separately in Chapter 7 of this EIR, "Cultural and Paleontological Resources." TCRs, as defined by AB 52, Statutes of 2014, in Public Resources Code Section 21074, are sites, features, places, cultural landscapes, sacred places and objects, with cultural value to a California Native American tribe.

TCRs include sites, features, places, cultural landscapes, sacred places, and objects with cultural value to California Native American tribe. A Tribal Cultural Landscape is defined as a geographic area (including both cultural and natural resources, and the wildlife therein), associated with a historic event, activity, or person, or exhibiting other cultural or aesthetic values. Unanticipated Native American human remains would also be considered a Tribal Cultural Resource.

TCRs provide the backdrop to:

- religious understanding;
- traditional stories;
- knowledge of resources, such as varying landscapes, bodies of water, animals and plants; and
- self-identity.

TCRs may contain physical cultural remains or may be places within a landscape such as gathering places, sacred sites, landscape features, plants, or other locations that help maintain religious and cultural practices, traditions, beliefs, lifeways, arts, crafts, or social institution of a living tribal community. This category of resources under CEQA is to recognize that tribes have unique knowledge and information about sensitive resources important to the self-identity of tribal communities and can only be identified by members of the Native American community, thus requiring consultation under CEQA. Historical resources, unique archaeological resources, or non-unique archaeological resources may also be TCRs if they meet these criteria.

[1] Note, when the Final Environmental Impact Report North Watt Avenue Corridor Plan April 2012 (Sacramento County 2012) was prepared, Tribal Cultural Resources were not considered as a separate topic, nor addressed in the "Cultural Resources" chapter of the EIR.

ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

The Specific Plan Area is positioned along an approximate four (4)-mile segment of Watt Avenue north of Interstate-80 to Antelope Road/U Street within the North Highlands community of unincorporated Sacramento County. The Specific Plan Area is generally situated between the McClellan Business Park (former McClellan Air Force Base) and an area informally called "West of Watt" to the west, and single-family residential neighborhoods to the east. It is highly developed with residential, commercial, and recreational uses that have been paved, graded, filled, and landscaped, and/or contain buildings and structures.

The Specific Plan Area is in the indigenous tribal territory of the Nisenan.

NISENAN ETHNOHISTORY

The following text has been extracted and edited from the Cultural Resources chapter of the *Final Environmental Impact Report North Watt Avenue Corridor Plan*, April 2012 (Sacramento County 2012).

Ethnography is the written record of a culture. Archaeology can be combined with ethnography to identify groups more specifically. Ethnographic records (from missions and other documents) show that the groups that inhabited Sacramento County are the Nisenan, or Southern Maidu, and the Plains Miwok, a subgroup of the Eastern Miwok. The Plains Miwok traditional territory included the lower reaches of the Cosumnes and Mokelumne Rivers and extended west to the Sacramento River from Rio Vista north to Freeport. Ethnographers generally agree that Nisenan territory included the drainages of the Bear, American, Yuba, and southern Feather Rivers and extended from the Sacramento River east to the crest of the Sierra Nevada. Thus, the Specific Plan Area is located within the territory commonly attributed to the ethnographic Nisenan.

The Nisenan built their villages on low, natural rises along streams and rivers or on gentle slopes with southern exposure, usually in places protected from flooding. Village populations ranged from 15 to 500 people, with one village usually playing a dominant role in the sociopolitical organization of a particular area. The ethnographic village of Pusune or Pushuni (CA-SAC-26), located at the confluence of the American and Sacramento Rivers, served as the head village for the area. No precontact[2] cultural resources have been identified in the Specific Plan Area.

[2] Precontact archaeological resources are those that predate Native American contact with Europeans. In California, the precontact period continued well into the eighteenth century as late as AD 1769 with the Spanish exploration of what is now San Francisco Bay by Gaspar de Portolá (California High Speed Rail Authority 2026).

CONTEMPORARY NATIVE AMERICAN SETTING

Today, tribes are actively involved in defining their role as stewards of their ancestral sites and homelands including subject matter expertise on the identification of TCRs. TCRs represent areas of cultural significance that are rooted in or contribute to cultural practices, traditional stories, traditional knowledge, and cultural identity. TCRs provide the backdrop to religious understanding, traditional stories, knowledge of resources such as varying landscapes, bodies of water, animals and plants, and self-identity. Knowledge of place is central to the continuation and persistence of culture, even if former Tribal occupants now live removed from their traditional homeland. Tribal groups view these interconnected sites and places as living entities; their associations and feelings persist and connect with descendant communities.

Historically, archaeologists focused on traditional Native American culture and ignored the active and vibrant culture. This approach ignored the set of values maintained by the current Native American community related to their history and the landscape. Tribes view themselves as contemporary stewards of their culture and the landscape, representing a continuum from time immemorial to the present. They are resilient, vibrant, and active in the community. Tribes maintain their connection to their history and ongoing culture by practicing traditional ceremonies, engaging in traditional practices (e.g., basketry), and contributing to public education and interpretation. California has acknowledged the importance and contributions of Native American history, traditional knowledge, and cultural practices, as well as the persistence of tribes and the tribal community via Executive Orders B-10-11 and N-15-19.

NATIVE AMERICAN CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION

On January 9, 2026, Sacramento County (County) as the lead agency published the Notice of Preparation (NOP) for the preparation of an Environmental Impact Report for North Watt Avenue Specific Plan. The County received a letter during the public review period from the Native American Heritage Commission on January 15, 2026. The letter outlines applicable regulations related to TCRs including specific provisions in AB 52 and SB 18.

On January 12, 2026, pursuant to AB 52 and SB 18, Sacramento County staff sent formal notification letters to tribes who previously requested to be notified of Sacramento County projects. The AB 52 notification package invited consultation on resources that could be relevant to the proposed Specific Plan, and included a letter with a project description and mapping. The SB 18 notification packages included a letter with a project description, mapping, and the results of the records search of the project area, as well as a search radius buffer.

Letters were sent to the following tribes:

- Ione Band of Miwok Indians
- Shingle Springs Band of Miwok Indians

- United Auburn Indian Community of the Auburn Rancheria
- Wilton Rancheria
- Buena Vista Rancheria of Me-Wuk Indians
- California Valley Miwok Tribe
- Calaveras Band of Mi-Wuk Indians
- Chicken Ranch Rancheria of Me-Wuk Indians
- Colfax-Todds Valley Consolidated Tribe
- Jackson Rancheria Band of Miwuk Indians
- Nashville Enterprise Miwok-Maidu-Nishinam Tribe
- Pakan'yani Maidu of Strawberry Valley Rancheria
- Tsi Akim Maidu of the Taylorsville Rancheria

No responses were received during the 30-day consultation period.

RECORDS SEARCH RESULTS

The County requested a Sacred Lands File (SLF) search from the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) on January 12, 2026. A search of the NAHC's SLF database did not reveal any known tribal resources in the Specific Plan Area.

REGULATORY SETTING

FEDERAL

SECTION 106 OF THE NATIONAL HISTORIC PRESERVATION ACT, 1966

Federal regulations for cultural resources are governed primarily by Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) of 1966 (as amended). The Specific Plan is not subject to federal approval, nor does the Specific Plan rely on federal funding. The information below is presented only for context.[3]

TRADITIONAL CULTURAL PROPERTIES

Traditional Cultural Properties (TCPs) are resources eligible for the NRHP based on cultural significance derived from the "beliefs, customs, and practices of a living

[3] Section 106 of the NHPA requires Federal agencies to take into account the effects of their undertakings on historic properties and affords the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation a reasonable opportunity to comment on such undertakings. The Advisory Council on Historic Preservation's implementing regulations are the "Protection of Historic Properties" 36 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 800. The Federal agency first must determine whether it has an undertaking that is a type of activity that could affect historic properties. Historic properties are those that meet the criteria for or are listed in the NRHP.

community of people that have been passed down through the generations" ([NPS] 1998:1). TCPs embrace a wide range of historic properties, such as the location associated with a Native American group's origin or the origin of the world (cosmogony), or an urban neighborhood that is the traditional home of a particular cultural group and that still reflects and is associated with their beliefs and practices. Other examples include places where traditional people historically have gone and continue to visit for ceremonial practices. These examples are not intended to be exhaustive, but instead to illustrate the range of possible TCPs. The NPS National Register Bulletin 38 defines a historical property as a place that is eligible for NRHP inclusion "because of its association with cultural practices or beliefs of a living community that (a) are rooted in the community's history and (b) are important in maintaining the continuing cultural identity of the community" (NPS 1998:1). The identification and evaluation of TCPs can be conducted only by consultation with members of the relevant group of people that ascribe value to the resource, or through other forms of ethnographic research.

EVALUATION OF TCPS

Federal agencies must evaluate TCPs for eligibility for listing in the NRHP to determine if they are historic properties subject to management as required under Section 106 of the NHPA. Evaluation of TCPs requires two major steps: first the Federal agency evaluates the integrity of the resource as a TCP, then evaluates the resource for eligibility listing on the NRHP under the process for assessing significance and integrity of historic properties. As with any resource that is evaluated for listing in the NRHP, the TCP must be a tangible district, site, building, structure, or object (NPS 1998:11).

These terms are not meant to limit or exclude places from evaluation as a TCP; for instance, a bare grassy expanse at Mt. Tonaachaw on Weno, an island that is part of the Federated States of Micronesia, has been evaluated as a component of a TCP (NPS 1998:20) because it is associated with at least two different spirits who reside on or are represented by the mountain. This consideration requires merely that the TCP be a physical place or tangible object, in the broadest sense, rather than the intangible beliefs or values alone.

INTEGRITY OF TCPS

The TCP must have integrity, like any property eligible for listing in the NRHP. For traditional cultural resources, this means that they must have "integrity of relationship" and "integrity of condition" (NPS 1998:11–12). Integrity of relationship means simply that the specific place is integral and necessary to a traditional cultural group's beliefs or specific practices (NPS 1998:11). National Register Bulletin 38 gives the example of two different cultures, one that believes that baptism at a specific river is necessary to accept individuals as members, and another that simply requires baptism in any body of water. For the first example, the river is integrated into beliefs and practices of a traditional culture and thus has integrity of relationship.

Integrity of condition requires simply that the TCP has not been altered in such a way that it no longer can serve its function for the traditional cultural group. For example, a pilgrimage route to a sacred site would no longer have integrity of condition if modern construction had physically interrupted the route and thus made it unusable. This

requirement does not mean that the TCP must be completely intact without any changes to the setting or features of the resource; rather, the test is whether the resource can still function for traditional cultural purposes or whether the presence of new elements disrupts the function. National Register Bulletin 38 offers an example of a resource that has integrity despite changes to the setting. One reach of the Klamath River in northern California is within the ancestral and present territory of the Karuk people and is the place where they carry out world renewal ceremonies and other rituals despite the presence of a modern highway, a U.S. Forest Service ranger station, and modern residences (NPS 1998:12).

If the TCP has integrity of relationship and integrity of condition, evaluation progresses to the second step of evaluating the resource for eligibility for listing in the NRHP, as described above.

STATE

CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT (CEQA)

CEQA requires public agencies to consider the effects of their actions on historical resources, unique archaeological resources, and TCRs. Under Public Resources Code Section 21084.1, a "project that may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an historical resource is a project that may have a significant effect on the environment." Under Public Resources Code Section 21084.2, a "project with an effect that may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a TCR is a project that may have a significant effect on the environment." Public Resources Code Section 21083.2 requires agencies to determine whether projects would have effects on unique archaeological resources.

TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

CEQA requires lead agencies to consider whether projects will affect TCRs. TCRs may or may not manifest as archaeological sites. In some cases, TCRs are viewsheds, plant gathering areas, or other sacred spaces that are not readily identifiable to non-tribal members. In many cases, TCRs also include an archaeological component, such as artifacts, features, and sites (with or without human remains). Public Resources Code Section 21074 states the following:

(a) "TCRs" are either of the following:

(1) Sites, features, places, cultural landscapes, sacred places, and objects with cultural value to a California Native American tribe that are either of the following:

(A) Included or determined to be eligible for inclusion in the California Register of Historical Resources.

(B) Included in a local register of historical resources as defined in subdivision (k) of Section 5020.1.

(2) A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Section 5024.1 for the purposes of this paragraph, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.

(b) A cultural landscape that meets the criteria of subdivision (a) is a TCR to the extent that the landscape is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape.

(c) A historical resource described in Section 21084.1, a unique archaeological resource as defined in subdivision (g) of Section 21083.2, or a "nonunique archaeological resource" as defined in subdivision (h) of Section 21083.2 may also be a TCR if it conforms with the criteria of subdivision (a).

Assembly Bill (AB) 52

AB 52 (effective July 1, 2015) added Public Resources Code Sections 21073, 21074, 21080.3.1, 21080.3.2, 21082.3, 21083.09, 21084.2, and 21084.3 to CEQA, relating to consultation with California Native American tribes, consideration of TCRs, and confidentiality. AB 52 provides procedural and substantive requirements for lead agency consultation with California Native American tribes and consideration of effects on TCRs, as well as examples of mitigation measures to avoid or minimize impacts to TCRs. AB 52 establishes that if a project may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a TCR, that project may have a significant effect on the environment. Lead agencies must avoid damaging effects to TCRs, when feasible, and shall keep information submitted by tribes confidential.

AB 52 requires a lead agency to consult with California Native American tribes that are traditionally and culturally affiliated with the geographic area of the proposed project, if the tribe requested to the lead agency, in writing, to be informed by the lead agency of proposed projects in that geographic area and the tribe requests consultation. Public Resources Code Section 21080.3.1(d) states that within 14 days of determining that an application for a project is complete or a decision by a public agency to undertake a project, the lead agency shall provide formal notification to the designated contact of, or tribal representative of, traditionally and culturally affiliated California Native American tribes that have requested notice, which shall be accomplished by means of at least one written notification that includes a brief description of the proposed project, a location map, the lead agency contact information, and a notification that the California Native American tribe has 30 days to request consultation pursuant to this section.

Public Resources Code, Section 5097.98

Public Resources Code Section 5097.98 states that whenever the Native American Heritage Commission receives notification of Native American human remains from a county coroner, the Native American Heritage Commission shall immediately notify the most likely descendant. The most likely descendant may, with permission from the owner of the land on which the human remains were found, inspect the site and recommend to the owner, or the responsible party conducting the excavation work, a means for treating

and/or disposing of the human remains and any associated grave goods. The most likely descendant is required to complete their site inspection and make their recommendation within 48 hours of their notification from the Native American Heritage Commission.

California Health and Safety Code, Section 7052 and 7050.5

Section 7052 of the California Health and Safety Code states that the disturbance, mutilation, or removal of interred human remains is a felony if the remains are within a dedicated cemetery and a misdemeanor if interred outside of a dedicated cemetery. Section 7050.5 requires that construction or excavation be stopped in the vicinity of discovered human remains until the coroner examines the find and determines whether the remains are subject to various laws, including recognizing whether the remains are or may be those of a Native American. If determined to be Native American, the coroner must contact the Native American Heritage Commission.

California Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act, Health and Safety Code Section 8010 through 8030

In the California Health and Safety Code, Division 7, Part 2, Chapter 5 broad provisions are made for the protection of Native American cultural resources. The Act sets the state policy to ensure that all California Native American human remains and cultural items are treated with due respect and dignity. The Act also provides the mechanism for disclosure and return of human remains and cultural items held by publicly funded agencies and museums in California. Likewise, the Act outlines the mechanism with which California Native American tribes not recognized by the federal government may file claims to human remains and cultural items held in agencies or museums.

California Native American Historical, Cultural, and Sacred Sites Act

The California Native American Historical, Cultural, and Sacred Sites Act applies to both state and private lands. This law requires that if human remains are discovered, construction or excavation activity must cease, and the County Coroner must be notified. If the remains are of a Native American, the coroner must notify the Native American Heritage Commission. The Native American Heritage Commission then notifies those persons most likely to be descended from the Native American whose remains were discovered. The California Native American Historical, Cultural, and Sacred Sites Act stipulates the procedures the descendants may follow for treating or disposing of the remains and associated grave goods.

Local

Sacramento County General Plan

Sacramento County's 2030 General Plan serves as a guide for growth and development within the unincorporated county to 2030. The strategies of the plan focus on economic growth, environmental sustainability, and addressing issues and needs of existing communities while accommodating growth based on smart growth principles (Sacramento County 2011, as updated in 2017). The Conservation Element of the General Plan provides goals, objectives, and policies to inventory, protect, and interpret

Sacramento County's TCRS. Policies applicable to TCRs to the Specific Plan are provided below:

Policy CO-151. Projects involving an adoption or amendment of a General Plan or Specific Plan or the designation of open space shall be noticed to all appropriate Native American tribes in order to aid in the protection of traditional tribal cultural places.

Policy CO-154. Protection of significant prehistoric, ethnohistoric and historic sites within open space easements to ensure that these resources are preserved in situ for perpetuity.

Policy CO-155. Native American burial sites encountered during preapproved survey or during construction shall, whenever possible, remain in situ. Excavation and reburial shall occur when in situ preservation is not possible or when the archeological significance of the site merits excavation and recording procedure. On-site reinterment shall have priority. The project developer shall provide the burden of proof that off-site reinterment is the only feasible alternative. Reinterment shall be the responsibility of local tribal representatives.

Policy CO-156. The cost of all excavation conducted prior to completion of the project shall be the responsibility of the project developer.

Policy CO-157. Monitor projects during construction to ensure crews follow proper reporting, safeguards, and procedures.

Policy CO-158. As a condition of approval of discretionary permits, a procedure shall be included to cover the potential discovery of archaeological resources during development or construction.

Policy CO-159. Request a Native American Statement as part of the environmental review process on development projects with identified cultural resources.

Policy CO-169. Restrict the circulation of cultural resource location information to prevent potential site vandalism. This information is exempt from the "Freedom of Information Act".

Policy CO-170. Cooperate with other agencies to enforce laws and aggressively prosecute illegal collection of artifacts.

IMPACTS AND ANALYSIS

SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA

Based on Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, the proposed Specific Plan would have a significant impact on TCRs if it would:

- cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a TCR.

IMPACT TCR-1: CAUSE A SUBSTANTIAL ADVERSE CHANGE IN THE SIGNIFICANCE OF A TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCE

There are no known TCRs located within the Specific Plan Area. A search of the NAHC's sacred lands file database did not reveal any known tribal resources. Pursuant to the AB 52 and SB 18 consultation requirement, formal notification letters were sent on January 12, 2026 to Native American tribal contacts who previously requested to be notified of Sacramento County projects within their traditionally and culturally affiliated area. No responses were received from any of the tribes during the 30-day consultation period. However, there is potential for encountering unanticipated significant TCRs as a result of ground disturbance during site clearing and construction. If such unanticipated discoveries were encountered, impacts on encountered TCRs would be **potentially significant**.

MITIGATION MEASURES

TCR-1: Mitigate for Inadvertent/Unanticipated TCR Discoveries.

> If any suspected TCRs or resources of cultural significance to tribes, including but not limited to features, anthropogenic/cultural soils, cultural belongings or objects (artifacts), shell, bone, shaped stones or bone, or ash/charcoal deposits are discovered by any person during construction activities including ground-disturbing activities, all work shall stop immediately within 100 feet of the discovery. Work shall cease in and within the immediate vicinity of the discovery regardless of whether the construction is being actively monitored by a Tribal Monitor, cultural resources specialist, or professional archaeologist.
>
> The County shall be immediately notified and must locate a Tribal Representative from culturally-affiliated tribes who shall be immediately notified and shall determine if the discovery is a TCR (Public Resources Code Section 21074). The Tribal Representative will make recommendations regarding the treatment of the discovery.
>
> Work at the discovery location cannot resume until all necessary investigation and evaluation of the discovery under the requirements of the CEQA, including AB 52, has been satisfied.
>
> The contractor shall implement any measures deemed by the CEQA lead agency to be necessary and feasible to preserve in place, avoid, or minimize impacts to the resource, including, but not limited to, facilitating the appropriate tribal treatment of the discovery, as necessary.

SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION

Implementation of Mitigation Measure TCR-1 would reduce potential impacts in the event of the unanticipated discovery of TCRs during future construction within the Specific Plan Area. Actions identified in the measure include cessation of construction activities proximate to the discovery; notification of the appropriate Tribal Representative(s); and

implementation of provisions to preserve in place, avoid, or minimize impacts to the TCR. As a result, with implementation of this recommended mitigation measure, the impact on TCRs would be **less than significant**.

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18 UTILITIES AND SERVICES SYSTEMS

INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes the environmental setting for the Specific Plan Area as it relates to water supply, wastewater service, and solid waste disposal; a summary of the relevant federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and policies; and describes the potential environmental impacts related to utilities and service systems in the Specific Plan Area.

Stormwater drainage is addressed in Chapter 10, "Hydrology and Water Quality." Energy resources, including electricity and natural gas, are addressed in Chapter 8, "Energy."

ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

EXISTING WATER SYSTEM

WATER SUPPLY

The Specific Plan Area encompasses approximately 705 acres along a 4-mile segment of Watt Avenue from Antelope Road/U Street in the north to I-80 in the south within unincorporated Sacramento County. The Specific Plan Area is within the Sacramento Suburban Water District's (SSWD) service area, specifically within SSWD's North Service Area. Water is supplied to the Specific Plan Area from groundwater and surface water; however, groundwater wells are the primary source of water supply. The entirety of SSWD's service area is within the Sacramento Valley Groundwater Basin, North American Subbasin. Groundwater in the Specific Plan Area is managed by the Sacramento Groundwater Authority, which is a joint powers agency comprised of the cities of Citrus Heights, Folsom, and Sacramento, and the County of Sacramento. The Sacramento Groundwater Authority manages groundwater in accordance with the Water Forum Agreement, and the adopted Groundwater Sustainability Plan for the North American Subbasin (GEI Consultants, Inc. 2021) as required by the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act. The North American Subbasin is not in a condition of overdraft.

For the North Service Area, SSWD purchases surface water from Placer County Water Agency, and is also eligible to receive Section 215 Central Valley Project water from the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation. However, these surface water supplies have usage conditions (Brown and Caldwell 2021):

1. Surface water flows are seasonal and are dependent on flows in the American River—per SSWD's Water Forum Agreement, water flows must be above a certain quantity for SSWD to take and use surface water.

2. Surface water flows are also contingent on available treatment capacity at San Juan Water District's Peterson Treatment Plant—if capacity is not available, SSWD must decrease or stop usage.

SSWD's *2020 Urban Water Management Plan* (UWMP) (Brown and Caldwell 2021) demonstrates water supply reliability in SSWD's service area for normal years, single-dry years, and droughts lasting at least 5 years over a 20-year planning horizon as required by California Water Code Sections 10631–10635 (Table UT-1).

Table UT-1. SSWD Water Supply and Demand (Acre-Feet Per Year)

Water Year Type	2025	2030	2035	2040	2045
Normal Year Supply	93,064	93,064	93,064	93,064	93,064
Normal Year Demand	38,184	38,617	38,611	38,574	38,536
Difference (Surplus)	54,880	54,447	54,453	54,490	54,528
Single Dry Year Supply	48,000	48,000	48,000	48,000	48,000
Single Dry Year Demand	38,184	38,617	38,611	38,574	38,536
Difference (Surplus)	9,816	9,383	9,389	9,426	9,464
Multi-Year Drought					
Year 1 Supply	48,000	48,000	48,000	48,000	48,000
Year 1 Demand	38,184	38,617	38,611	38,574	38,536
Difference (Surplus)	9,816	9,383	9,389	9,426	9,464
Year 2 Supply	48,000	48,000	48,000	48,000	48,000
Year 2 Demand	38,184	38,617	38,611	38,574	38,536
Difference (Surplus)	9,816	9,383	9,389	9,426	9,464
Year 3 Supply	48,000	48,000	48,000	48,000	48,000
Year 3 Demand	38,184	38,617	38,611	38,574	38,536
Difference (Surplus)	9,816	9,383	9,389	9,426	9,464
Year 4 Supply	48,000	48,000	48,000	48,000	48,000
Year 4 Demand	38,184	38,617	38,611	38,574	38,536
Difference (Surplus)	9,816	9,383	9,389	9,426	9,464
Year 5 Supply	48,000	48,000	48,000	48,000	48,000
Year 5 Demand	38,184	38,617	38,611	38,574	38,536
Difference	9,816	9,383	9,389	9,426	9,464

Source: Brown and Caldwell 2021:Tables 7-4, 7-5, and 7-6

As shown in Table UT-1, SSWD has a water surplus of more than 54,000 acre-feet per year (afy) in normal water years. In single-dry and multiple-dry years, SSWD has a surplus of over 9,000 afy (Brown and Caldwell 2021).

Water Demand

Wood Rodgers prepared a *Domestic Water Study* (Water Study) for the Specific Plan Area. The Water Study identified water demand factors, evaluated system capacity constraints, and identified existing water infrastructure upgrades required to provide service to the Specific Plan Area (Wood Rodgers 2026a). The Water Study identifies existing water demand for areas anticipated to develop under the proposed Specific Plan, shown in Table UT-2, to replace with estimates of water demand from new development. The Water Study also presents estimates of additional water demand associated with development of properties that are not currently SSWD customers.

Table UT-2. Water Demands from Existing SSWD Customers on Properties Assumed to Develop

Average Day Demand[1] (gpm)	Maximum Day Demand[2] (gpm)
57	108

Notes: gpm = gallons per minute
[1] Average Day Demand is the total yearly amount of water divided by 365 days.
[2] Maximum Day Demand is the single highest 24-hour water use day in a year, as influenced by factors such as weather, season, and type of land use.
Source: Wood Rodgers 2026a

Water Conveyance Infrastructure

As discussed in the Water Study (Wood Rodgers 2026a), existing water infrastructure within the Specific Plan Area consists of 6-, 8-, 10-, 12- and 16-inch water mains. The Specific Plan Area has two separate water distribution systems: north of the Union Pacific Railroad, and south of the railroad.

SSWD requires minimum pipe sizes for water distribution mains to adequately deliver domestic and public fire protection to all new development. The minimum water distribution main sizes are determined with reference to real property use zones established by Sacramento County. Per SSWD Improvement Standards, Section D-2, a minimum 12-inch water main is required within a commercial corridor (SSWD 2018). The water system in the Specific Plan Area along Watt Avenue north of the Union Pacific railroad tracks is comprised of predominantly 8-inch water mains. There is a 12-inch water main from Larry Way south to Karl Drive (Wood Rodgers 2026a).

The existing water mains in the Specific Plan Area south of the Union Pacific railroad tracks vary in size from 6 to 16 inches in diameter. Some portions of this area were previously redeveloped, and therefore the water mains were upgraded to meet SSWD requirements in those areas. The water system in the Specific Plan Area south of the railroad is looped throughout the properties to provide supporting facilities for fire protection (Wood Rodgers 2026a).

WASTEWATER

WASTEWATER CONVEYANCE

Wood Rodgers prepared a *Level 1 Sewer Study* (Sewer Study) for the Specific Plan Area. The Sewer Study identified wastewater generation rates, evaluated system capacity constraints, and recommends wastewater infrastructure upgrades to serve buildout of the proposed Specific Plan (Wood Rodgers 2026b).

Wastewater conveyance infrastructure in the Specific Plan Area is provided by the Sacramento Area Sewer District (SacSewer), which provides local wastewater collection and conveyance services and infrastructure throughout the Sacramento region. Small local sewer collection pipelines discharge into sewer mains and trunk mains and then to larger regional sewer interceptor pipes.

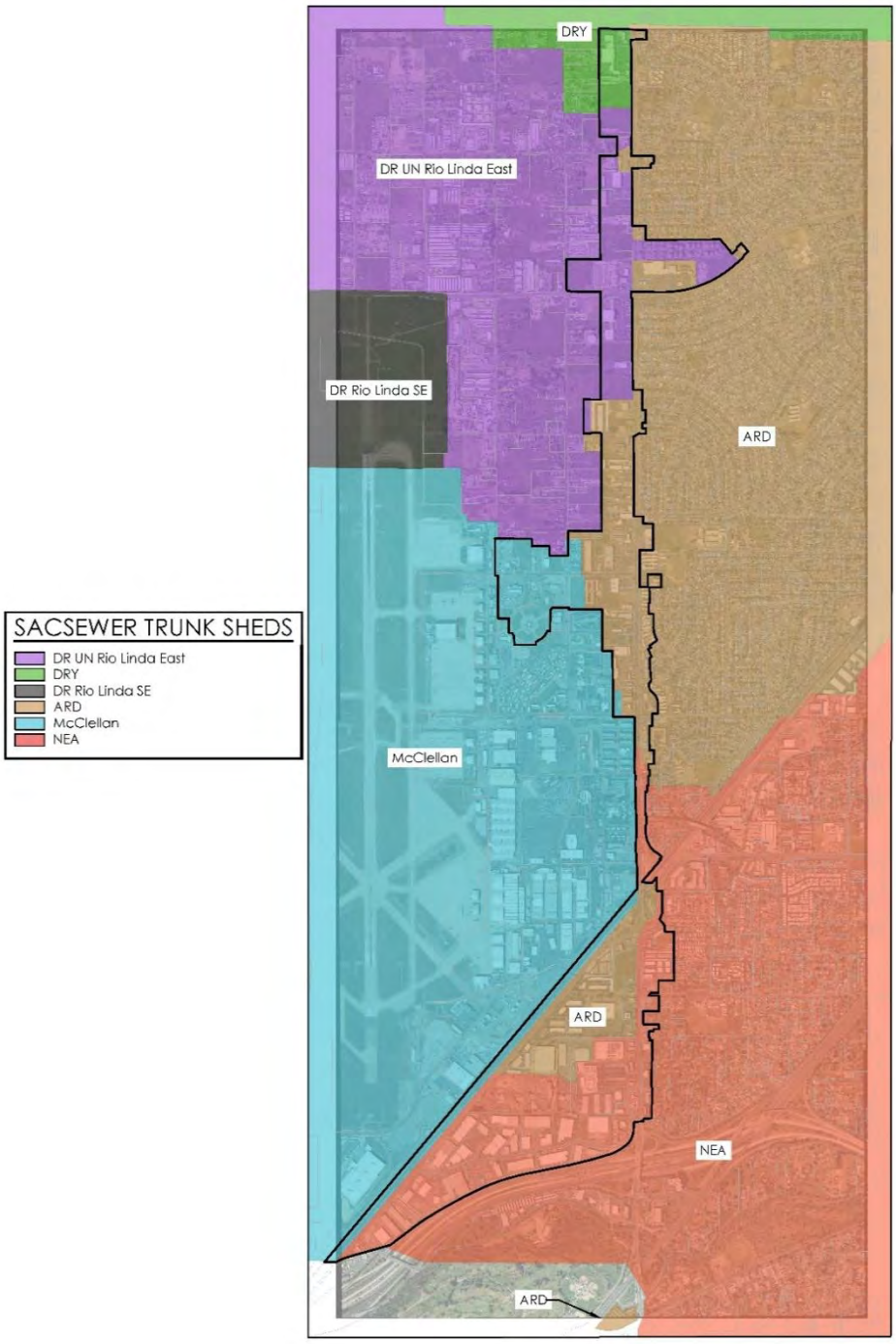
The Specific Plan Area is served by a series of collection systems which range from 6- to 15-inch gravity sewer mains. The collection system conveys wastewater to the two existing sewer interceptors which bisect the Specific Plan Area: the Upper Northwest Interceptor located in Elkhorn Boulevard, and the McClellan Interceptor located in Roseville Road. The interceptor system conveys wastewater collected by four contributing agencies directly to the EchoWater Resource Recovery Facility: (1) City of Folsom, (2) City of Sacramento, (3) City of West Sacramento, and (4) SacSewer. SacSewer provides sewage treatment service within the cities of Sacramento, West Sacramento, and Folsom, and collection and treatment services to unincorporated Sacramento County, and the cities of Elk Grove, Rancho Cordova, and Citrus Heights.

A sewer trunk shed or sewer shed is a geographic area defined by topography where all wastewater flows into a relatively larger sewer pipeline, typically known as "trunk line." The concept of sewer sheds is used to break down large areas into smaller areas where sewer capacity can be examined in more detail, producing specific recommendations for new sewer lines or expanded capacity in existing sewer lines. The Specific Plan Area includes portions of five sewer trunk sheds, which are identified by SacSewer as follows: DR UN Rio Linda East, DRY, ARD, McClellan, and NEA (see Plate UT-1).

There are no existing or proposed sewer pump stations within the Specific Plan Area. Existing pump station S121 is located within the McClellan trunk sewer shed, approximately one-half mile west of the Specific Plan Area, and serves a very small area anticipated to develop under the proposed Specific Plan.

SacSewer has indicated that there are currently areas within and adjacent to the Specific Plan Area where the existing infrastructure does not have sufficient capacity or are experiencing overflows, under existing conditions (see Table UT-3).

Plate UT-1. Specific Plan Area Sewer Trunk Sheds



Source: Wood Rodgers 2026b

Table UT-3. Specific Plan Area – Existing Wastewater Capacity Constraints

Trunk Sewer Shed	Location	Existing Constraints
NEA and ARD	South of Roseville Road and south of Palm Street	Capacity deficient
ARD and McClellan	West of Watt Avenue surrounding James Way	Capacity deficient with predicted overflows at two off-site manholes

Source: Wood Rodgers 2026b

Wastewater Treatment

Wastewater flows collected from sewer interceptors are ultimately transported to the EchoWater Resource Recovery Facility west of Elk Grove, which is owned and managed by SacSewer. The EchoWater Facility currently treats an average of 135 million gallons per day (mgd) of wastewater (SacSewer 2023). Treated wastewater is either discharged to the Sacramento River or recycled. Currently the EchoWater Facility recycles 392 million gallons of water per year.

The EchoWater Facility has a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit issued by the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) for discharge of up to 181 mgd average dry-weather flow of treated effluent into the Sacramento River (Central Valley RWQCB 2023). An update to the NPDES permit is being considered for adoption in 2026, but the proposed update would not increase the facility's treatment capacity or amount of permitted discharge (Central Valley RWQCB 2026).

SacSewer expects per-capita consumption to fall 25 percent over the next 20 or more years through the ongoing installation and use of water meters, as well as compliance with conservation mandates, such as the Water Conservation Act of 2009 (SB X7-7). Substantial additional conservation is expected throughout the service area, allowing the existing 181 mgd average dry-weather flow capacity to be adequate through at least 2044 (Ascent Environmental 2014:6-2).

Solid Waste and Recycling

The Sacramento County Department of Waste Management & Recycling (DWMR) manages the operations, maintenance, and development of the solid waste management system within unincorporated Sacramento County, including the Specific Plan Area. DWMR operates and manages the North Area Recovery Station (NARS) and the Kiefer Landfill. The NARS, which is situated within the southern end of the Specific Plan Area, accepts standard business and household waste. Waste from the NARS is ultimately transported to Kiefer Landfill, approximately 13.5 miles southeast of the Specific Plan Area.

Standard residential refuse and recycling collection service in the project area is provided by Sacramento County DWMR. Commercial waste, recycling, and organics collection services are provided by Sacramento County DWMR's local franchised waste haulers.

The NARS is permitted to receive up to 2,400 tons per day (California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery [CalRecycle] 2026a). Kiefer Landfill is permitted to accept a maximum of 10,815 tons per day, has a remaining capacity of 102,300,000 cubic yards, and an estimated closure date of 2080 (CalRecycle 2026b).

REGULATORY SETTING

FEDERAL

No federal plans, policies, regulations, or laws pertaining to utilities and service systems are applicable to the proposed Specific Plan.

STATE

SENATE BILL 610 AND WATER SUPPLY ASSESSMENTS

The State of California has enacted legislation that is applicable to the consideration of larger projects under CEQA. SB 610 (Chapter 643, Statutes of 2001; Section 21151.9 of the Public Resources Code and Section 10910 et seq. of the Water Code) requires the preparation of "water supply assessments" for large developments (i.e., more than 500 dwelling units or nonresidential equivalent; shopping centers or business establishments employing more than 1,000 persons or having more than 500,000 square feet of floor space; commercial office buildings employing more than 1,000 persons or having more than 250,000 square feet of floor space; or industrial, manufacturing, processing plants, or industrial parks planned to house more than 1,000 persons, occupying more than 40 acres of land, or having more than 650,000 square feet of floor area). These assessments, prepared by "public water systems" responsible for serving project areas, address whether existing and projected water supplies are adequate to serve the project, while also meeting existing urban and agricultural demands and the needs of other anticipated development in the service area in which the project is located. If the appropriate water supply agency's Urban Water Management Plan did not account for the project's water demand, or if the public water system has no Urban Water Management Plan, the project's water supply assessment must discuss whether the system's total projected water supplies (available during normal, single-dry, and multiple-dry water years during a 20-year projection) would meet the project's water demand in addition to the system's existing and planned future uses, including agricultural and manufacturing uses.

CALIFORNIA INTEGRATED WASTE MANAGEMENT ACT

The California Integrated Waste Management Act (CIWMA) of 1989 is the result of two pieces of legislation: AB 939 and SB 1322. The CIWMA was intended to minimize the amount of solid waste that must be disposed of in landfills by requiring all cities and counties to divert 25 percent of all solid waste from landfill facilities by January 1, 1995, and 50 percent by January 1, 2000.

The CIWMA created the California Integrated Waste Management Board (now known as CalRecycle). CalRecycle is the agency designated to oversee, manage, and track California's waste. CalRecycle provides grants and loans to help cities, counties, businesses, and organizations meet the state's waste reduction, reuse, and recycling goals. In addition to many programs and incentives, CalRecycle promotes the use of new technologies for waste disposal that will divert waste away from landfills. CalRecycle is responsible for ensuring that waste management programs are primarily carried out through local enforcement agencies.

California Green Building Standards Code

The California Green Building Standards Code (CALGreen Code) (Title 24, Part 11 of the California Code of Regulations) was developed to enhance the design and construction of buildings to improve energy efficiency, water efficiency and conservation, material conservation and resource efficiency, and environmental air quality. The CALGreen Code includes requirements for efficiency improvements for attics, walls, water heating, and lighting and standards for residential plumbing fixtures (water closets and urinals) and fittings (faucets and showerheads) to reduce indoor demand for potable water. The CALGreen Code requires all residential and nonresidential construction contractors to reduce construction waste and demolition debris by at least 65 percent. Code requirements include preparing a construction waste management plan that identifies the materials to be diverted from disposal by efficient usage, recycling, reuse on the project, or salvage for future use or sale; determining whether materials will be sorted on-site or mixed; and identifying diversion facilities where the materials collected will be taken. The code also specifies that the amount of materials diverted should be calculated by weight or volume, but not by both.

Assembly Bill 341

In an effort to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from disposing of recyclables in landfills, AB 341 requires local jurisdictions to implement commercial solid waste recycling programs. Multi-family dwellings of five units or more and businesses that generate four cubic yards or more of solid waste per week must arrange for recycling services. In order to comply with AB 341, jurisdictions' commercial recycling programs must include education, outreach, and monitoring of commercial waste generators and report on the process to CalRecycle. Jurisdictions may enact mandatory commercial recycling ordinances to outline how the goals of AB 341 will be reached. For businesses to comply with AB 341, they must arrange for recyclables collection through self-haul, subscribing to franchised haulers for collection, or subscribing to a recycling service that may include mixed waste processing that yields diversion results comparable source separation.

Assembly Bill 1826

In order to further reduce GHG emissions from disposing of organics materials in landfills, AB 1826 requires businesses to recycle their organic waste, beginning April 1, 2016, depending on the amount of solid waste they generate per week. Similar to AB 341, jurisdictions are required to implement an organic waste recycling program that includes

the education, outreach and monitoring of businesses that must comply. Organic waste refers to food waste, green waste, landscaping and pruning waste, nonhazardous wood waste, and food-soiled paper that is mixed with food waste.

California Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance

The California Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance (MWELO) sets restrictions on outdoor landscaping. Because the Sacramento County is a "local agency" under the MWELO, it must require project applicants to prepare plans consistent with the requirements of the MWELO for review and approval by the County. The MWELO reduces the allowable coverage of high-water-use plants to 25 percent of the landscaped area for new construction with a landscape area greater than 500 square feet. The MWELO also requires use of a dedicated landscape meter on landscape areas for residential landscape areas greater than 5,000 square feet or nonresidential landscape areas greater than 1,000 square feet, and requires weather-based irrigation controllers or soil-moisture-based controllers or other self-adjusting irrigation controllers for irrigation scheduling in all irrigation systems.

Local

Sacramento County General Plan

The Sacramento County General Plan of 2005–2030 (Sacramento County 2019) includes the following policies related to utilities and service systems that apply to the proposed Specific Plan.

Policy AG-27. The County shall actively encourage groundwater recharge, water conservation and water recycling by both agricultural and urban water users.

Policy CO-1. Support conjunctive use water supply for development.

Policy CO-7. Support the Water Forum Agreement Groundwater Management Element. Prior to approving any new development a water supply plan shall be approved that demonstrates consistency with an adopted groundwater management plan.

Policy CO-9. Developments in areas with significant contamination shall utilize remediated groundwater as part of their water supply when feasible.

Policy CO-14. Support the use of recycled wastewater to meet non-potable water demands where financially feasible.

Policy CO-16. Ensure developments are consistent with the County Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance, which shall be updated as needed to conform to state law.

Policy CO-34. Development applications shall be subject to compliance with applicable sections of the California Water Code and Government

Code to determine the availability of an adequate and reliable water supply through the Water Supply Assessment and Written Verification processes.

Policy CO-35. New development that will generate additional water demand shall not be approved and building permits shall not be issued if sufficient water supply is not available, as demonstrated by Water Supply Assessment and Written Verification processes.

Policy CO-36. Water supply entitlements will be granted on a first come first serve basis to optimize the use of available water supplies.

Policy PF-4. Connector fees for new development shall cover the fair share of costs to acquire and distribute surface water to the urban area.

Policy PF-6. Interceptor, trunk lines, and flow attenuation facilities shall operate within their capacity limits without overflowing.

Policy PF-7. Although sewer infrastructure will be planned for full urbanization consistent with the Land Use Element, an actual commitment of additional sewer system capacity will be made only when the land use jurisdiction approves development to connect and use the system.

Policy PF-8. Do not permit development which would cause sewage flows into the trunk or interceptor system to exceed their capacity.

Policy PF-15. Support County Sanitation District No. 1 (CSD-1) and Sacramento Regional County Sanitation District (SRCSD) [now SacSewer] policies to fund new trunk and interceptor capital costs through connection fees for new development.

Policy PF-16. Support SRCSD policy to fully fund treatment plant operation through monthly service charges to system users. Fund treatment plant expansion and upgrades and existing trunk and interceptor replacements or improvements through connection fees or other revenue sources.

Policy PF-18. New development projects which require extension or modification of the trunk or interceptor sewer systems shall be consistent with sewer facility plans and shall participate in established funding mechanisms. The County should discourage development projects that are not consistent with sewer master plans or that rely upon interim sewer facilities, particularly if the costs of those interim facilities may fall on ratepayers. Prior to approval of a specific Commercial Corridor redevelopment project which requires extension or modification of the trunk or interceptor sewer systems, a sewer study and financing mechanism shall be prepared and

considered along with the proposed Corridor redevelopment project, in consultation with the Sacramento Area Sewer District.

Policy PF-19. Extension or modification of trunk or interceptor sewer systems that are required for new developments shall be consistent with sewer facility plans and shall participate in an established funding mechanism. New development that will generate wastewater for treatment at the Sacramento Regional Wastewater Treatment Plant (SRWTP) [now EchoWater Facility] shall not be approved if treatment capacity at the SRWTP is not sufficient to allow treatment and disposal of wastewater in compliance with the SRWTP's NPDES Permit.

Policy PF-23. Solid waste collection, handling, recycling, composting, recovery, transfer and disposal fees shall recover all capital, operating, facility closure and maintenance costs.

Policy PF-24. Solid waste disposal fees and rate structures shall reflect current market rates and provide incentives for recovery.

IMPACTS AND ANALYSIS

SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA

Based on Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, impacts related to utilities and service systems would be considered significant if implementation of the proposed Specific Plan would:

- require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause environmental effects;
- have insufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry, and multiple dry years;
- result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider, which serves or may serve the project that it does not have adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments;
- generate solid waste in excess of state or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals; or
- result in noncompliance with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste.

IMPACT US-1: RESULT IN ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS ASSOCIATED WITH RELOCATION OR CONSTRUCTION OF NEW OR EXPANDED WATER, WASTEWATER TREATMENT, OR STORM WATER DRAINAGE FACILITIES, ELECTRIC POWER, NATURAL GAS, OR TELECOMMUNICATIONS FACILITIES, THE CONSTRUCTION OR RELOCATION OF WHICH COULD CAUSE SIGNIFICANT ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

The Specific Plan Area is served by existing infrastructure and is mostly developed today. As a result, the level of infrastructure improvements is limited. Most properties developing under the proposed Specific Plan would connect with adjacent, existing infrastructure.

Construction and expansion of water supply, wastewater, stormwater drainage, electrical, natural gas, or telecommunications lines would result in physical environmental impacts that are addressed in each topic area chapter of this EIR, as appropriate. In addition to assumptions regarding the amount of private development and descriptions of planned transportation improvements, Chapter 2 of this EIR, Project Description, and the technical analysis throughout this EIR incorporates impacts related to infrastructure, public utilities, and public facility improvements required to serve development anticipated under the proposed Specific Plan. Where development of the Specific Plan Area, including the necessary utilities infrastructure, would result in potentially significant or significant environmental impacts, mitigation measures are identified to reduce those impacts in each topic area chapter of this EIR, as appropriate.

Transportation improvements required to support development under the proposed Specific Plan are detailed in Chapter 2 of this EIR, “Project Description,” and impacts of the construction and operation of these facilities are addressed throughout this EIR. Similarly, improvements to parks and recreational facilities are described in the Project Description and addressed throughout this EIR.

Electrical service is present within the Specific Plan Area and future development under the proposed Specific Plan would provide connections to existing nearby electrical facilities. The County anticipates that some undergrounding of exiting aboveground electrical lines could occur during buildout of the Specific Plan Area and that it is possible substations may be required. However, the County does not anticipate and the proposed Specific Plan does not allow uses that would have unusually high electricity demand. To the extent that relocation of electrical facilities or new substations are required, these improvements would occur within the areas assumed to be disturbed and developed, with impacts reported and mitigated as necessary throughout the technical chapters of this EIR.

Natural gas service would be provided by way of new connections to existing infrastructure located along streets within the immediate vicinity of properties developed under the proposed Specific Plan.

Telecommunications/internet services would be provided by way of new connections to existing infrastructure located along streets within the immediate vicinity of properties

developed under the proposed Specific Plan. Future development under the proposed Specific Plan would not require major relocation or expansion of any telecommunications/internet service infrastructure.

Impacts related to stormwater drainage infrastructure are addressed in Chapter 10, "Hydrology and Water Quality."

Water Supply Infrastructure

As modeled by Brown and Caldwell (2026) and discussed in the Water Study (Wood Rodgers 2026a), the SSWD water conveyance system in the vicinity of the Specific Plan Area meets the evaluation criteria for peak hourly maximum day demand for potable water. However, when the fire flow requirements for the Specific Plan Area were added to the model, deficiencies in the existing system were identified. Therefore, to meet fire flow requirements plus peak daily maximum demand in the Specific Plan Area, parts of the existing water system require improvements as listed in Table UT-4 and shown in Specific Plan Exhibits 4-3 through 4-7.

Table UT-4. Water System Infrastructure Improvements to Meet Demand

Required Water System Upgrade	Water Study Parcel Numbers[1]
Upsize existing 8-inch water main to 12-inch water main	20801420320000, 20801420330000, 20801420340000, 20801420350000
Fire flow requirements are met if this area is looped.	**24001530130000** ~~20801530220000~~
Install new 12-inch water main and hydrants along Dudley Boulevard and Freedom Park Drive, and connect to the existing North Service Area mains.	21500930010000, 21501820010000, 21501820040000
Install new 12-inch water main in Watt Avenue from A Street to Poplar Drive and make connections to existing system to provide a looped system.	21802310010000, 21802310020000, 21802310030000, 21802310080000, 21802330120000, 21802330130000, 21802330140000, 21802330150000, 21802330160000, 21802330170000, 21802810010000
Upsize existing 6-inch water main to 12-inch water main in Myrtle Avenue from Palomino Lane to Watt Avenue, and in Watt Avenue from Myrtle Avenue to Oakdell Avenue.	**24000110170000, 24000110200000, 24000110280000 24000110290000, 24000110320000, 24000110370000, 24000810120000** ~~266, 268, 271, 273, 275, 276, 304~~

Notes: gpm = gallons per minute
[1] Shown in the Water Study, Appendix C Proposed Conditions Exhibits (Wood Rodgers 2026a)
Source: Wood Rodgers 2026a

Per SSWD Improvement Standards, Section D-2, commercial corridors must be served by a minimum 12-inch water main (SSWD 2018). As noted by Brown and Caldwell (2026), improvements in the Specific Plan Area listed in Table UT-5 are not required to meet water system hydraulic standards, however they are required to meet SSWD standards. Improvements needed solely to address existing water supply system compliance with SSWD standards would be coordinated by the County and SSWD through capital improvement planning, grant funding, connection fees, or other funding mechanisms as applicable.

Table UT-5. Water System Infrastructure Improvements to Meet SSWD Standards

Required Water System Upgrade	Water Study Parcel Numbers[1]
Upsize existing 8-inch water main to 12-inch water main in Watt Avenue from Antelope Road to Larry Way.	20801220090000, 20801220390000, 20801220550000, 20801220660000, 20801220670000,20801320080000, 20801320280000, 20801330350000, 20801330390000, 20801420040000, 20801420050000, 20801420200000, 20801420220000, 20801420300000, 20801420360000, 20801520150000, 20801520370000, 20801530190000, 20801530200000,20801530210000, 20801530220000, 20801530240000, 20801620180000, 20801620240000, 20801620270000
Upsize existing 8-inch water main to 12-inch water main in Watt Avenue, from Karl Drive to just south of James Way.	21501820100000, 21501820110000, 21501820120000, 21501820130000, 21501820270000, 21501900110000, 21501900530000, 21801610010000, 21801610260000, 21801610270000, 21802310010000

Notes: gpm = gallons per minute
[1] Shown in the Water Study, Appendix C Proposed Conditions Exhibits (Wood Rodgers 2026a)
Source: Wood Rodgers 2026a

Wastewater Conveyance Infrastructure

As modeled by SacSewer, projected wastewater generation associated with development anticipated under the proposed Specific Plan would result in overflows or potentially substantial surcharging, as shown in Table UT-6.

Table UT-6. Projected Wastewater Capacity Constraints

Trunk Sewer Shed[1]	Location	Projected Surcharging and Overflows
DRY, ARD, and DR UN Rio Linda East	North of Elkhorn Boulevard and east side of Watt Avenue, north of Palm Street	Substantial surcharging
ARD and McClellan	West of Watt Avenue surrounding James Way	Predicted overflows at four additional off-site manholes[2]

Notes:
[1] See Plate UT-1.
[2] These four manholes are in addition to the two manholes where overflows are occurring under existing conditions (see Table UT-3).
Source: Wood Rodgers 2026b

SacSewer has preliminarily identified the scope of a relief project to address the capacity deficiencies within the McClellan and ARD trunk sewer sheds. The relief project would affect seven parcels within the Specific Plan Area. If any of these parcels were developed prior to SacSewer proceeding with the relief project, these development projects may be required to make the necessary improvements. The system upgrades and affected parcels are listed in Table UT-7 and shown on Exhibit 4-9 in the Specific Plan.

Table UT-7. Required Wastewater System Infrastructure Improvements

Trunk Sewer Shed[1]	Required Infrastructure Improvements	Sewer Study Parcel Numbers[2]
ARD and McClellan	Upsize existing S121 pump station, located at James Way and Price Ave, from 0.89 mgd to 3.49 mgd. Upsize approximately 860 lineal feet of S121 force main, adjacent to James Way, from 8 inches to 10 inches. Upsize approximately 900 lineal feet of downstream gravity main to larger diameter pipe	21500920010000, 21500920020000, 21500920080000, 21500920110000, 21500930010000, 21501820010000, 21501820040000

Notes: mgd = million gallons per day
[1] See Plate UT-1.
[2] Shown in the Sewer Study, Appendix C Proposed Sewer System Exhibits (Wood Rodgers 2026b)
Source: Wood Rodgers 2026b

Finally, SacSewer has designated trunk sewer shed DR UN Rio Linda (shown on Plate UT-1) as an expansion shed, which will require the construction of improvements prior to, or in conjunction with the development of four parcels that are inside the Specific Plan Area (APNs 20801620180000, 20801620240000, 20801620270000, and 20801720020000). ~~The two options for improvements to serve these parcels included as a part of the proposed Specific Plan include:~~

- ~~Construct minimum 8-inch sewer main in I Street from APN 20801720020000 to Watt Avenue (approximately 850 lineal feet), and construct minimum 8-inch sewer main in Watt Avenue from I Street to Elkhorn Boulevard, (approximately 2,600 lineal feet); or~~
- ~~Propose a trunk shed swap and include APNs 20801620180000, 20801620240000, 20801620270000, and 20801720020000 in the ARD trunk shed. Construct 8-inch minimum sewer in Watt Avenue from APN 20801620180000 to existing 6-inch sewer at the southern corner of APN 20801720080000, (approximately 800 lineal feet) and connect APN 20801720020000 into existing 6-inch sewer in I Street.~~

The expansion improvements and affected parcels are listed in Table UT-8.

Table UT-8. Trunk Shed Infrastructure Improvements

Trunk Sewer Shed[1]	Infrastructure Improvements	Sewer Study Parcel Numbers[2]
DR UN Rio Linda East	**Construct approximately 1,800 lineal feet of 8-inch sewer main in Watt Avenue from I Street to Elkhorn Boulevard** ~~Construct minimum 8-inch sewer main in I Street from APN 20801720020000 to Watt Avenue and construct minimum 8-inch sewer main in Watt Avenue from I Street to Elkhorn Boulevard; or~~ ~~Trunk shed swap and include APNs 20801620180000, 20801620240000, 20801620270000, and 20801720020000 in the ARD trunk shed. Construct 8-inch minimum sewer in Watt Avenue from APN 20801620180000 to existing 6-inch sewer at the southern corner of APN 20801720080000, and connect APN 20801720020000 into existing 6-inch sewer in I Street.~~	20801620180000, 20801620240000, 20801620270000, ~~20801720020000~~
ARD	**Process trunk shed swap, and construct 8-inch sewer service for APN 20801720020000 and connect to existing 6-inch main in I Street**	**20801720020000**

Notes:
[1] See Plate UT-1.
[2] Shown in the Sewer Study, Appendix C Proposed Sewer System Exhibits (Wood Rodgers 2026b)
Source: Wood Rodgers 2026b

As described previously, Chapter 2 of this EIR, Project Description includes not just the development anticipated under the proposed Specific Plan, but also construction and expansion of water supply, wastewater, stormwater drainage, transportation, and parks and recreational facility improvements. Assumptions regarding areas and depth of disturbance for improvements to utilities, including electrical, natural gas, and telecommunications, as well as water, sewer, and drainage were used to inform the analysis presented throughout this EIR. There is no significant environmental impact associated with relocation or construction of new or expanded utility services beyond that which is addressed in this EIR. The impact is **less than significant**.

Future development projects in the Specific Plan Area will be required to demonstrate adequate water and sewer service or will be conditioned to demonstrate appropriate water and sewer service, consistent with applicable standards, prior to project approvals. Water and sewer improvements to serve future development within the Specific Plan Area may be implemented through coordination among Sacramento County, SSWD, and SacSewer, may be constructed as a part of future development projects, or may be accomplished through a combination of strategies. Enforcement of existing standards through the development process would ensure that water supply and wastewater conveyance systems have appropriate capacity.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required.

IMPACT US-2: EXCEED REASONABLY FORESEEABLE FUTURE WATER SUPPLY CAPACITY

The proposed Specific Plan is designed to attract future residential development and complementary non-residential development, which would demand additional SSWD. The potable water demands for planned development in the Specific Plan Area are shown in Table UT-9.

Table UT-9. Projected Potable Water Demand

Land Use	Dwelling Units	Commercial Acres	Average Day Demand[1] (GPD) Residential	Average Day Demand[1] (GPD) Commercial	Average Day Demand[1] (GPD) Total	Maximum Day Demand[2] GPD	Maximum Day Demand[2] GPM
Small Multi-Family	45	N/A	9,405	N/A	9,405	17,870	12
Medium Lot Mixed-Use	1,192	47.65	200,256	75,430	275,686	523,803	364
Large Lot Mixed-Use	5,986	158.91	1,005,648	251,551	1,257,199	2,388,678	1,659
Totals	**7,223**	**206.56**	**1,215,309**	**326,980**	**1,542,289**	**2,930,350**	**2,035**

Notes: GPD = gallons per day; GPM = gallons per minute; N/A = Not Applicable. The terminology "Small Multi-Family," "Medium Lot Mixed-Use," and "Large Lot Mixed-Use" was used for analytical purposes and does not necessarily reflect differences in lot size in every case or reflect any policy or requirement for specific uses.

[1] Average Day Demand is the total yearly amount of water divided by 365 days.

[2] Maximum Day Demand is the single highest 24-hour water use day in a year, as influenced by factors such as weather, season, and type of land use.

Source: Wood Rodgers 2026a

The modeled average day demand for potable water for development within the Specific Plan Area is approximately 1,542,289 gpd, which equates to 1,727 afy. As shown in Table UT-1 (in the Environmental Setting), SSWD has a water surplus of more than 54,000 afy in normal water years. In single-dry and multiple-dry years, SSWD has a surplus of over 9,000 afy (Brown and Caldwell 2021). Even after providing water for development in the Specific Plan Area, SSWD would still have a surplus of more than 7,000 afy in dry and multiple-dry years. Therefore, SSWD has sufficient water supply in all water year types to meet its existing and projected water demands, including the increased demand for potable water and fire flow from the proposed Specific Plan. Therefore, this impact would be **less than significant**.

MITIGATION MEASURES

No mitigation measures are required.

IMPACT US-3: EXCEED THE CAPACITY OF THE WASTEWATER TREATMENT PROVIDER

The proposed Specific Plan is designed to attract future residential development and complementary non-residential development, which would generate additional wastewater, which would increase the demand for wastewater treatment at SacSewer's EchoWater Resource Recovery Facility.

The Sewer Study (Wood Rodgers 2026b) estimates total wastewater demand in terms of "equivalent single-family dwelling units," a standardized metric that allows wastewater demand from different land uses to have a common numeric expression – the Specific Plan proposes a total of 6,668 equivalent single-family dwelling units. As estimated in the Sewer Study, buildout of the Specific Plan Area would generate an additional 2.3 mgd of average dry-weather flow (Wood Rodgers 2026c).

The EchoWater Facility has a designed treatment and permitted discharge capacity of 181 mgd. As of 2023, the EchoWater Facility received and treated an average of 135 mgd of wastewater. The combination of projected wastewater flows from the Specific Plan Area with the current EchoWater Facility average dry-weather flows (135 mgd) would result in a total of 137.5 mgd. Therefore, implementation of the development within the Specific Plan Area would not result in an increase in wastewater flows that exceed the EchoWater Facility's treatment capacity. Furthermore, SacSewer anticipates that conservation measures implemented throughout its service area would mean that the existing 181 mgd average dry-weather flow capacity would be adequate through at least 2044 (Ascent Environmental 2014:6-2).

Future development within the Specific Plan Area would require payment of applicable SacSewer connection fees, as mandated by SacSewer Sewer Ordinance SDI-0079, which are used to help fund construction of wastewater conveyance improvements throughout the SacSewer service area. Development within the Specific Plan Area would also require payment of applicable SacSewer impact fees, as mandated by the former Regional San (now SacSewer) Consolidated Ordinance SRSD-0124, which are used to help fund maintenance of larger regional conveyance lines and wastewater treatment at the EchoWater Facility.

Therefore, SacSewer would have adequate capacity to treat wastewater flows generated by future development within the Specific Plan Area in addition to its existing commitments, and this impact would be **less than significant**.

MITIGATION MEASURES

No mitigation measures are required.

IMPACT US-4: GENERATE SOLID WASTE IN EXCESS OF STANDARDS OR IN EXCESS OF THE CAPACITY OF LOCAL INFRASTRUCTURE

Demolition of existing structures and construction associated with development within the Specific Plan Area would result in site clearing and generation of various construction-

related waste, concrete, siding, stucco, wood, scrap metal, cardboard, wood pallets, and common trash. Construction contractors for future development projects in the Specific Plan Area would be required to comply with the CALGreen Code, which requires that at least 65 percent of construction and demolition waste be diverted from landfills. A Waste Management Plan must be approved that identifies a waste hauler and a construction and demolition sorting facility and waste log must document the 65 percent diversion requirement. Construction and demolition debris would be recycled at local facilities identified by Sacramento County DWMR as certified construction and demolition debris sorting facilities, which may include the Kieffer Landfill, or other permitted facilities at the discretion of the contractor(s).

Operation of proposed development in the Specific Plan Area would also result in the generation of additional long-term solid waste. Sacramento County DWMR provides solid waste curbside pickup services for garbage, recycling, organics, and bulky waste collection to residences in the Specific Plan Area. Recycling and waste collection for businesses are provided by the Sacramento County DWMR's certified franchise waste providers. The estimated solid waste generation from development in the Specific Plan Area is shown in Table UT-10.

Table UT-10. Projected Solid Waste Generation

Land Use	Generation Rate	Equivalent Dwelling Units[1]	Square Footage/Jobs	Annual Solid Waste Generation
Residential	4.9 pounds per person per day	Up to 7,260	N/A	71,148 lbs/day (35 tons/day) (12,984 tons/yr)
Employment-Generating	14.7 pounds per employee per day	N/A	1.9 million (3,190 jobs)	46,893 lbs/day (23 tons/day) (8,557 tons/year)
Total				**118,041 lbs/day** **(58 tons/day)** **(21,541 tons/year)**

Notes: N/A = Not applicable
[1] Assumes two adults per equivalent dwelling unit.
Sources: CalRecycle 2024, Data compiled by AECOM in 2026

Waste generated by future development in the Specific Plan Area would be collected and transported to NARS for processing and then to Kiefer Landfill for disposal. Solid waste would be either recycled in accordance with state and County programs and requirements, composted as organic materials, or placed into Kiefer Landfill. The NARS currently processes 1,200 tons of solid waste per day and is permitted to receive up to 2,400 tons per day (CalRecycle 2026a). Solid waste generated by development within the Specific Plan Area (approximately 58 tons per day) would represent an increase of approximately 4.8 percent of the amount of solid waste currently processed at the NARS facility and approximately 2.4 percent of the facility's permitted capacity. Therefore, sufficient solid waste processing capacity would be available to serve development in the Specific Plan Area.

Kiefer Landfill has a total remaining capacity of 102,300,000 cubic yards, with a maximum of 10,815 tons per day, and an estimated closure date of 2080 (CalRecycle 2026b). Project-related waste (58 tons per day) would represent approximately 0.5 percent of the permitted daily capacity of Kiefer Landfill. Therefore, sufficient landfill disposal capacity would be available to serve the development in the Specific Plan Area.

Future development in the Specific Plan Area would be required to comply with all applicable State and local solid waste statues and regulations, including compliance with the CalGreen Code. The NARS facility and Kiefer Landfill have sufficient capacity available to accommodate solid-waste disposal needs for the proposed development within the Specific Plan Area. Therefore, impacts related to sufficient landfill capacity and compliance with applicable statutes and regulations related to solid waste would be **less than significant**.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required.

19 ALTERNATIVES

INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes reasonable alternative versions of the proposed North Watt Avenue Specific Plan (Specific Plan) that could lessen potential environmental impacts. An evaluation comparing impacts of the alternatives to the impacts of the proposed Specific Plan is included.

The following impact discussions are presented in either a qualitative or a quantitative manner depending on resource topic, and are generally briefer than those found in the topical chapters of this EIR (i.e., Chapters 3 through 18), consistent with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines Section 15126.6(d). This chapter does not repeat background discussions or other subject matter, which has already been described in the topical chapters of this EIR, but focuses on those alternative impacts which are substantively different than the impacts described for the proposed Specific Plan.

REGULATORY CONTEXT

CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT REQUIREMENTS

As stated in Section 15126.6 of the CEQA Guidelines:

> *An EIR shall describe a range of reasonable alternatives to the project, or to the location of the project, which would feasibly attain most of the basic objectives of the project but would avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the project, and evaluate the comparative merits of the alternatives.*

The CEQA Guidelines provide that the discussion of alternatives in an EIR should focus on alternatives to the project or its location which are capable of avoiding or substantially lessening any significant effects of the project (CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6[b]). The CEQA Guidelines also provide that "alternatives shall be limited to ones that would avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the project" (CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6[f]; Public Resources Code Sections 21002, 21002.1[b], 21081[a] [discussing mitigation of "significant" impacts]; *North Coast Rivers Alliance v. Marin Municipal Water Dist*. [2013] 216 Cal. App. 4th 614, 649; *Tracy First v. City of Tracy* (2009) 177 Cal.App.4th 912, 928 [reduced size alternative not required because it would not lessen significant effects]). The CEQA Guidelines further require consideration of a "No Project" alternative (Section 15126.6[d][e]).

The range of potentially feasible alternatives required in an EIR is governed by a "rule of reason" that requires the EIR to set forth only those alternatives necessary to permit a reasoned choice. The potential feasibility of an alternative may be determined based on

a variety of factors, including economic viability, availability of infrastructure, and other plans or regulatory limitations. As stated in Public Resources Code Section 21081[a][3], the ultimate determination as to whether an alternative is feasible or infeasible is made by the lead agency's decision-making body.

In determining what alternatives should be considered in the EIR, it is important to acknowledge the objectives of the project, the project's significant effects, and unique project considerations. These factors are crucial to the development of alternatives that meet the criteria specified in CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(a).

FACTORS IN THE SELECTION OF ALTERNATIVES

ATTAINMENT OF PROJECT OBJECTIVES

Pursuant to Section 15126.6 of the CEQA Guidelines, an alternative must "attain most of the basic objectives of the project." The project objectives consist of the following:

- Identify and implement public infrastructure improvements necessary to support infill development.
- Enhance streetscapes with shade trees and landscaping features to create safe, attractive, and climate-resilient public realms that encourage walking, biking, and transit.
- Remove regulatory constraints and increase opportunities for by-right approval of infill development, consistent with the Board of Supervisors' 2024 housing and infill development resolution.
- Accelerate private investment, including infill development that will add housing near jobs and services, increase local economic activity, and catalyze additional investment.
- Create new public gathering spaces, including new parks and open spaces areas, that provide passive recreational opportunities, increase community connectivity, and can host regular and special events.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS OF THE PROJECT

Chapters 3 through 18 of this EIR identify the environmental impacts of implementing the proposed Specific Plan. Potentially feasible alternatives were developed with consideration of avoiding or lessening environmental impacts of the project, as summarized below.

The significant and unavoidable environmental impacts of the proposed Specific Plan are:

- Chapter 4, Air Quality
    - o Generate Long-Term Operational Emissions of Criteria Pollutants and Precursors (reactive organic gases [ROG], nitrogen oxides [NO_X], particulate

matter equal to or less than 10 micrometers in diameter [PM_{10}], and particulate matter equal to or less than 2.5 micrometers in diameter [$PM_{2.5}$]) that Exceed Standards

  - Cumulative Short-Term Construction Emissions of Criteria Pollutants for Which the Region is in Nonattainment
  - Cumulative Long-Term Operational Emissions of Criteria Pollutants for Which the Region is in Nonattainment

- Chapter 11, Noise
  - Generate Construction Noise that Exceeds County Standards
  - Generate Excessive Construction Vibration
  - Generate a Substantial Permanent Increase in Traffic Noise Levels
  - Cumulative Increases in Traffic Noise Levels

The potentially significant impacts of the Specific Plan that can be reduced to less than significant with mitigation consist of:

- Chapter 4, Air Quality
  - Generate Short-Term Construction Emissions of Criteria Pollutants and Precursors (ROG, NOx, PM_{10}, and $PM_{2.5}$) that Exceed Standards
  - Expose Sensitive Receptors to Substantial Pollutant Concentrations
- Chapter 5, Biological Resources
  - Have a Substantial Adverse Effect on Special-Status Species
  - Have a Substantial Adverse Effect on Riparian Habitat or Other Sensitive Natural Communities
  - Have a Substantial Adverse Effect on State or Federally Protected Wetlands
  - Interfere Substantially with the Movement of Any Native Resident or Migratory Species or Impede the Use of Native Wildlife Nursery Sites
  - Conflict with Any Local Policies or Ordinances Protecting Biological Resources, such as a Tree Preservation Policy or Ordinance
- Chapter 6, Climate Change
  - Generate Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions, Either Directly or Indirectly, That May Have a Significant Impact on the Environment and Conflict with an

Applicable Plan, Policy, or Regulation Adopted for the Purposes of Reducing GHG Emissions

- Chapter 7, Cultural and Paleontological Resources
    - Cause a Substantial Adverse Change in the Significance of an Archaeological Resource
    - Disturb any Human Remains, Including Those Interred Outside of Dedicated Cemeteries
    - Damage to or Destruction of Unique Paleontological Resources or Site
- Chapter 9, Hazards and Hazardous Materials
    - Release of Hazardous Materials from Routine Transport, Use, or Disposal of Hazardous Materials or Reasonably Foreseeable Upset and/or Accident Conditions Involving the
    - Result in Hazardous Emissions or Use of Hazardous Materials Within One-Quarter Mile of Schools
    - Potential Release of Hazardous Materials from Site Listed in California Government Code Section 65962.5 (Cortese List)
- Chapter 11, Noise
    - Expose New or Existing Sensitive Receptors to New Stationary Noise Sources that Exceed County Standards
- Chapter 17, Tribal Cultural Resources
    - Cause a Substantial Adverse Change in the Significance of a Tribal Cultural Resource

RANGE OF ALTERNATIVES

To foster meaningful public discussion and informed decision-making, a range of reasonable alternatives to the proposed Specific Plan were developed, as summarized below. Some of the alternatives considered were infeasible and rejected without detailed analysis, for the reasons explained below.

The reasonable range of alternatives for this project is determined to consist of:

- Alternative 1: No Project
- Alternative 2: Avoid Creek Corridors and Adjacent Habitat

CEQA does not require a particular number of alternatives, only that a reasonable range be considered. The purpose of the "No Project" alternative is to allow the hearing body to compare the impacts of approving the project to the impacts of not approving the project. The "No Project" alternative describes what would happen if the existing land use designations remained in effect. As outlined in Section 15126.6(f)(3) of the CEQA Guidelines, an EIR need not evaluate an alternative that is considered speculative, theoretical, or unreasonable.

The alternatives studied constitute a reasonable range because they contain enough variation to facilitate informed decision making and public participation that leads to a reasoned choice (CEQA Guidelines, 15126.6[a]-[f]). Also, according to CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(d), discussion of each alternative should be sufficient "to allow meaningful evaluation, analysis, and comparison with the project." Therefore, the significant effects of each alternative are discussed in less detail than those of the proposed project, but in enough detail to provide decision makers with perspective and a reasoned choice among alternatives to the project.

An EIR need not consider an alternative whose effects cannot be reasonably identified, whose implementation is remote or speculative, or one that would not achieve most of the basic project objectives. CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(e)(2) provides that if the "No Project" alternative is the environmentally superior alternative, the EIR should also identify an environmentally superior alternative among the other alternatives.

The purpose of this chapter is to identify alternatives that would mitigate, lessen, or avoid the significant or potentially significant effects of the proposed Specific Plan (listed above).

ALTERNATIVES DISMISSED FROM FURTHER EVALUATION

Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(c), the alternatives that were considered but rejected as infeasible are briefly discussed below. An alternative may be considered but not carried forward for various reasons, such as not meeting the objective(s) of the project; not being feasible; conditions outside the control of the project applicant or lead agency (e.g., land ownership, right-of-way acquisition); or other constraints. As stated in CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(f)(1), factors that may be considered when a lead agency is assessing the feasibility include:

> *… site suitability, economic viability, availability of infrastructure, general plan consistency, other plans or regulatory limitations, jurisdictional boundaries (projects with a regionally significant impact should consider the regional context), and whether the proponent can reasonably acquire, control, or otherwise have access to the alternative site.*

The following discussion describes alternatives that were considered, but were ultimately rejected for the factors cited above. After further consideration of the alternatives discussed in the following sections, it was determined that they would not be feasible,

would not substantially meet most of the project objectives, or would not avoid or lessen potentially significant adverse impacts that were identified for the proposed Specific Plan. Therefore, these alternatives have been rejected as viable alternatives.

Remove Non-Residential Focus Area

The County considered reducing the overall size of the Specific Plan Area – specifically eliminating the portion of the Specific Plan Area south of Peacekeeper Way – the southern triangular-shaped portion of the Specific Plan Area. Most of this portion of the Specific Plan Area has a different character compared to the balance of the Specific Plan Area, and the County's vision for this area is different, as well, accommodating non-residential development, rather than residential and mixed-use development. However, the County ultimately elected not to eliminate this portion of the Specific Plan Area since reducing the Specific Plan Area in this way would not substantially reduce potentially significant effects attributable to the proposed Specific Plan, and since the County wanted to use the guidance and implementation strategies from the Specific Plan for this portion of the Specific Plan Area, and ensure that development in this portion of the Specific Plan Area complemented existing and future development in the rest of the Specific Plan Area, and encourage infill development in the southern portion of the Specific Plan Area along Watt Avenue near the Watt/I-80 light rail station. Eliminating the southern portion of the Specific Plan Area would not reduce the project's significant environmental impacts related to noise or air quality to less than significant, and redevelopment within the southern portion of the Specific Plan Area is an important part of the Specific Plan because it provides employment opportunities for potential residents as part of the proposed redevelopment. Therefore, this alternative was not carried forward for further evaluation.

Reduced Density Alternative

The County considered an alternative that would cap density maximums for residential development to 30-40 dwelling units per acre, consistent with the density that was required by the County's 2021-2029 Housing Element rezoning program. The proposed Specific Plan allows up to 50 units per acre in the Mixed-Use Neighborhood (MU-N) zoning district and up to 100 units per acre in the Mixed-Use Corridor (MU-C) zoning district. The reduction in density originally considered by the County as a part of this alternative would have been intended to reduce air pollutant emissions, GHG emissions, vehicular travel demand, and other impacts that are associated with the amount of construction and development. However, one of the project objectives is to "accelerate infill development that will increase local economic activity, improve transit ridership, [and] add housing near jobs and services," and the County determined that this objective would not be fulfilled to a satisfactory degree with the limit on maximum density originally contemplated as a part of a Reduced Density Alternative. The proposed Specific Plan is designed to facilitate a range of residential densities including higher-density, transit-supportive development, and if the County is able to meet relatively more demand for development in low-vehicular travel demand locations such as the Specific Plan Area, this could provide environmental benefits for the County overall. The County dismissed this Reduced Density Alternative from further evaluation.

REDUCED PACE OF DEVELOPMENT ALTERNATIVE

The County also considered, but ultimately rejected an alternative that would have slowed the pace of development within the Specific Plan by limiting the proactive involvement in encouraging infill development. For example, due to the ongoing and current high costs of construction, under the proposed Specific Plan, under the proposed Specific Plan, the County would seek funding for and/or identify financing strategies for infrastructure improvements. The intent would be to reduce the need for infill development to provide up-front funding for infrastructure improvements before the subject project is generating revenue.

The proposed Specific Plan includes a strong emphasis on strategies that would reduce up-front infrastructure costs through collaboration with other public service agencies to identify grant opportunities and/or provide financing mechanisms for necessary water, sewer, and stormwater drainage improvements, as well as strategies to reduce up-front costs related to surface transportation improvements. Under the proposed Specific Plan, infill development may have the flexibility to limit improvements to that which would be necessary to make the infill development property consistent with adjacent existing developed properties, rather than construct street and frontage improvements to the County improvement standards (like what is required for new development), thus facilitating infill development by reducing the high costs of initial construction.

The County had been considering an alternative that would involve less funding for infrastructure improvements, fewer proactive steps to encourage infill development, and less flexibility with regard to public improvement standards compared to the proposed Specific Plan. Therefore, the County anticipated that this may result in a slower development pace, compared to the proposed Specific Plan, through the 2050 planning horizon.

Ultimately, however, the County rejected this alternative from further consideration. The 2030 General Plan places an emphasis on prioritizing County resources for infill development as opposed to greenfield development, identifying the economic, fiscal, environmental, and social benefits of accommodating as much demand for development as is feasible in infill locations.

The General Plan Land Use Element (Sacramento County 2022a) sets forth the County's vision for development of the vacant and underutilized land within existing commercial corridors, which offer an opportunity to accommodate future residential and commercial growth in compact, mixed-use developments that can positively contribute to the existing community. The Land Use Element includes policies that are designed to promote reinvestment and infill development in areas designated for higher-intensity residential and mixed use development with transit access and that can allow walking and bicycling to meet daily needs and thereby reduce air pollutant and greenhouse gas emissions and transportation noise. The 2030 General Plan was designed to "to concentrate a portion of expected growth into previously urbanized areas; to grow intensively rather than extensively; to invest in and revitalize existing communities; to build stronger, more connected and balanced neighborhoods; and to ensure protection of the County's

invaluable natural resources from urban encroachment" (Sacramento County 2022a, Land Use Element pages 1-2). Through the 2030 General Plan, the County communicated the intent direct development away from greenfield areas and toward targeted infill investment areas, such as the Specific Plan Area. The first goal of the Land Use Element is to "Direct new growth to previously urbanized areas, planned growth areas and strategically located new growth areas to promote efficient use of land, to reduce urban sprawl and its impacts, to preserve valuable environmental resources, and to protect agricultural and rangeland operations" (Sacramento County 2022a, Land Use Element page 20). Given the policy framework of the 2030 General Plan, the County rejected from further consideration an alternative that would have devoted fewer resources and proactive attention to stimulating infill development within the Specific Plan Area.

Description of Alternatives Selected for Further Consideration

Alternative 1: No Project

CEQA requires an evaluation of the no project alternative so that decision makers can compare the impacts of approving the project with the impacts of not approving the project. According to CEQA Guidelines (Section 15126.6[e]; 14 CCR 15000 et seq.), the no project alternative must include: (a) the assumption that the existing environmental conditions at the time of the Notice of Preparation (NOP) (i.e., baseline environmental conditions) would not be changed since the project would not be installed; and (b) the events or actions that would be reasonably expected to occur in the foreseeable future if the project were not approved.

The 2012 North Watt Avenue Corridor Plan and the 2008 North Highlands Town Center Development Code currently regulate the Specific Plan Area. These regulatory documents were intended to facilitate infill development along Watt Avenue and create a pedestrian-oriented, mixed-use town center for the North Highlands community. Since the adoption of these regulatory documents, the development envisioned by the Corridor Plan and North Highlands Town Center Development Code has not occurred. This is due, in part, to a of variety of barriers to infill development that the proposed Specific Plan is designed to address.

For the No Project Alternative, it is assumed that recent trends would continue. Although the 2012 North Watt Avenue Corridor Plan and the 2008 North Highlands Town Center Development Code assumed substantive infill development, since the adoption of these regulatory documents, the assumed level of development has not occurred. Considering the ongoing high cost of construction relative to achievable rents within the Specific Plan Area, unless conditions significantly change, it is reasonable to expect that very little infill development would occur within the Specific Plan Area. While the County anticipates a substantial amount of new residential construction and complementary local-serving commercial uses under the proposed Specific Plan, under this alternative, a reduced level

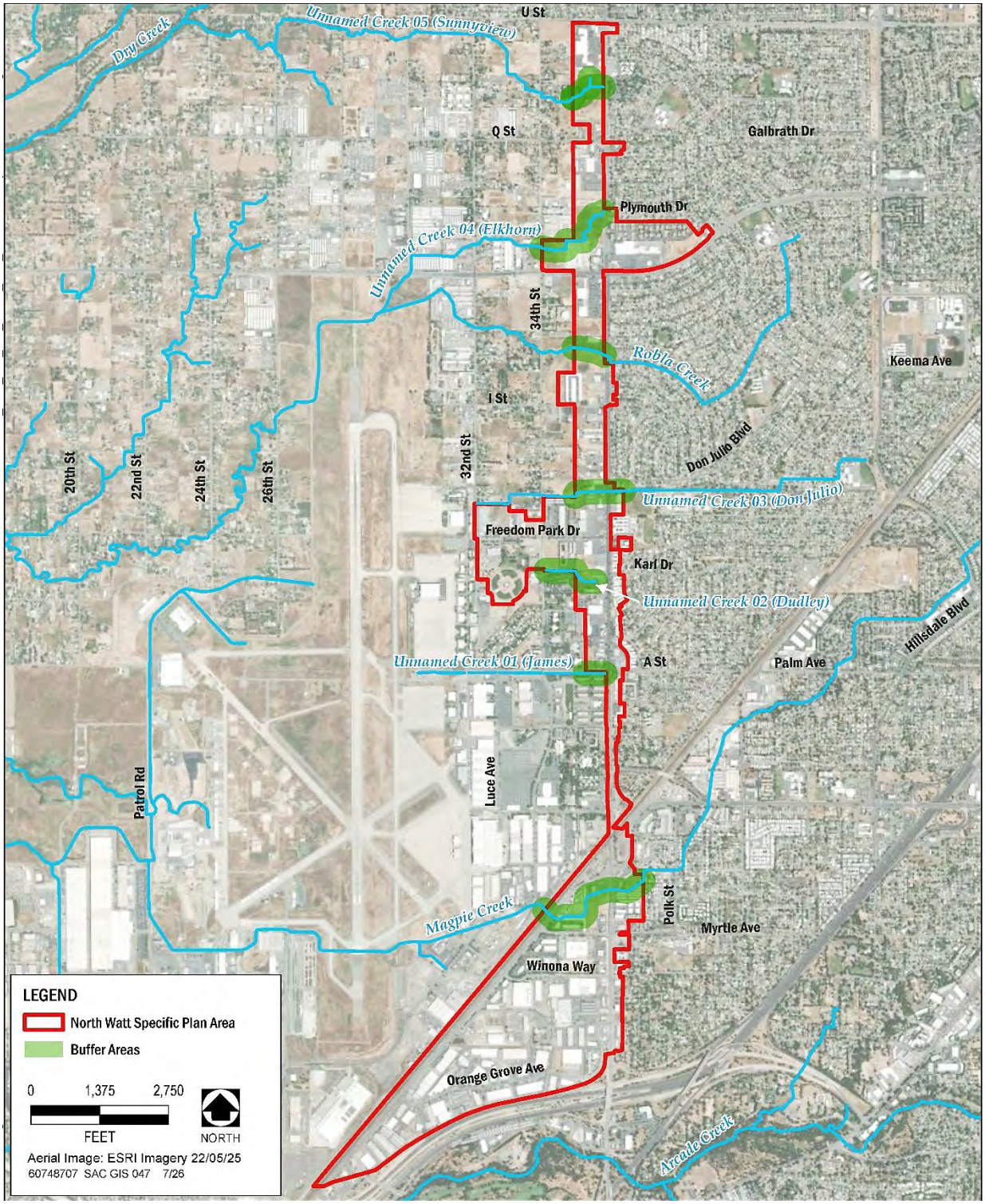
of development would occur. Instead of the 2,100 to 7,260 new dwelling units and 1.2M square feet of non-residential building square footage assumed under the proposed Specific Plan, under this alternative, there would be a total of approximately 550 new multi-family dwelling units and 50,000 net new square feet of non-residential development. This assumption for development under Alternative 1 is based on the rate of development activity within the Specific Plan Area between 2012, when the 2012 Corridor Plan was adopted and 2025, when the Notice of Preparation for the proposed Specific Plan EIR was published.

ALTERNATIVE 2: AVOID CREEK CORRIDORS AND ADJACENT HABITAT

Alternative 2 would include development within the Specific Plan Area similar in character to the proposed Specific Plan. However, development would not occur along the creek corridors, and broad open space buffers along the creeks would remain undeveloped. (Plate ALT-1). Many of the vacant parcels within the Specific Plan have creeks without their boundaries – nearly 60 acres of land area include parcels with creeks where the County has assumed development under the proposed Specific Plan.[1] Assuming the broad open space buffers would reduce the developable area by 2/3rds on the parcels with creeks, this could reduce the overall development under Alternative 2 by approximately 20 percent compared to the proposed Specific Plan. For these properties, with wide open space buffers applied on each side of the creek corridors, the development capacity would be reduced. In some cases, with broad open space buffers applied, some properties would be less feasible for development. While the proposed Specific Plan would not result in any significant and unavoidable impacts to biological resources, or to hydrology and water quality, this alternative would reduce potentially significant impacts related to loss of special-status plants and wildlife, fill of jurisdictional wetlands, loss of sensitive habitat, loss of wildlife nursery sites and corridors, conflicts with policies intended to reduce impacts on biological resources, and hydromodification and degradation of water quality. Although mitigation imposed within this EIR would mitigate each of these impacts to a less-than-significant level, under Alternative 2, these impacts would be avoided. Additionally, the properties that have creek corridors also have annual grasslands; therefore, the large buffers or avoidance along the creek corridors would also substantially reduce the amount of annual grasslands that would be converted to urban infill development.

[1] This includes Assessor's Parcel Numbers 20801220660000, 20801220670000, 20801420200000, 20801420220000, 20801420300000, 20801420360000, 20801520100000, 20801520110000, 20801520280000, 20801620240000, 20801620270000, 21500720230000, 21501820040000, 21501820120000, 21501820130000, 21802830010000, 21802830050000, 21802830060000, 21802830190000, 21802830200000, 22801740030000, 24006600100000, 24006600110000, and 24006600140000.

Plate ALT-1. Alternative 2



Sources: Sacramento County 2012, AECOM 2026

Alternative 2 would eliminate the trails, linear open spaces and park spaces (i.e., new greenways) that would be adjacent to, and along the creek corridors; and instead, new parkland would be placed within underutilized parcels, including parcels that may have accommodated past or present urban development.

Because areas surrounding creek corridors would not be developed, this alternative would accommodate a reduced amount of residential development and complementary non-residential development compared to the proposed Specific Plan.

COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES

The comparison of alternatives provided in this chapter satisfies the requirements of CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(d), Evaluation of Alternatives (14 CCR 15000 et seq.). This comparison does not consider the beneficial impacts of any alternative above and beyond its ability to reduce or avoid significant effects of the project.

The discussion of the environmentally superior alternative is based on a comparison of significant impacts that would result from the proposed Specific Plan and the alternatives identified in the EIR. Although this EIR identifies an environmentally superior alternative, CEQA does not require the lead agency to select the environmentally superior alternative for approval. It is possible that the lead agency could choose to balance the importance of each impact area differently, as well as take into consideration non-environmental factors (e.g., social, economic) and reach a different conclusion during the project approval process. Therefore, the County may approve a project that is not the environmentally superior alternative.

Table ALT-1 presents an analysis of the potential environmental impacts for Alternative 1 and Alternative 2 as compared to the proposed Specific Plan.

Table ALT-1. Alternatives Analysis

Environmental Topic Area	Alternative 1: No Project	Alternative 2: Avoid Creek Corridors and Adjacent Habitat
Aesthetics	A relatively low level of development would occur along the Watt Avenue corridor under Alternative 1. Because the proposed Specific Plan incorporates County Zoning Code requirements, and General Plan and Design Criteria guidelines, the proposed Specific Plan would not conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality, as with Alternative 1. Thus, the potential impacts related to visual character and quality would be **similar**. Since little to no additional nighttime lighting would be created under Alternative 1, this impact would be **reduced**.	Although the amount of development would be reduced and would occur on fewer parcels under Alternative 2, neither the proposed Specific Plan nor Alternative 2 would conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality. This impact would be **similar**. Under Alternative 2, as with the proposed Specific Plan, there would be aesthetics benefits from improved visual character and quality throughout the Specific Plan Area, resulting in a **similar** impact. Because the amount of development would be reduced under Alternative 2, there would be less potential for the project to result in substantial new sources of nighttime light and glare. Thus, the potential skyglow and nighttime glare impacts would be **reduced**.
Air Quality	Very little development would occur along the Watt Avenue corridor under Alternative 1. Thus, there would be minimal impacts related to construction or operational emissions of criteria air pollutants, substantial new mobile-source carbon monoxide (CO) concentrations, substantial new TAC concentrations, conflicts with an air quality plan, or exposure to objectionable odors. The potential air quality impacts would be **reduced**.	Alternative 2 would mostly avoid infill development on the parcels that contain creek corridors, which would reduce both the number of units and the future population by approximately 20 percent. Potential impacts from construction-related activities that could result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of criteria pollutants for which the region is nonattainment, and impacts from long-term operational emissions of criteria pollutants and precursors that exceed standards, would be **reduced**. Development under Alternative 2 would result in a **similar** impact from exposure of sensitive receptors to substantial mobile-source CO concentrations and a **similar** impact from exposure of sensitive receptors to substantial TAC concentrations because new infill development under Alternative 2 would still occur in proximity to existing sensitive receptors. As with the proposed Specific Plan, Alternative 2 would align with the priorities and strategies of the 2025 Blueprint to reduce regional emissions by facilitating infill development and growth that is compact and efficient, but Alternative 2 would result in less criteria pollutant emissions; therefore, impacts from potential conflicts with an air quality plan would be **reduced**. Because Alternative 2 would involve less construction, impacts from exposure of substantial numbers of people to objectionable odors would be **reduced**.
Biological Resources	Very little development would occur along the Watt Avenue corridor under Alternative 1. Thus, there would be very low potential for adverse impacts to special-status plants or animals, riparian habitat or other sensitive natural communities, state or federally protected wetlands, nursery (e.g., nest) sites and migratory habitat for wildlife, and no potential conflicts with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources. Thus, the potential biological resources impacts would be **reduced**.	Alternative 2 would avoid development on the parcels that contain creek corridors, which is where the majority of the biological resources within the Specific Plan Area are located – or, under Alternative 2, large buffers would be imposed along creek corridors. Fourteen special-status plant species have the potential to occur in annual grassland or aquatic habitat within the Specific Plan Area, including along waterways. Avoiding development along creek corridors and adjacent annual grasslands would **reduce** potential impacts to special-status species. Monarch butterfly breeding has been documented within five miles of the Specific Plan Area and suitable milkweed host plants may be present in annual grassland habitat. Therefore, avoiding development of annual grassland adjacent to creek corridors would **reduce** this potential impact. Crotch's bumblebee have been documented within 5 miles of the Specific Plan Area, and suitable habitat for the species is present within the annual grassland and ornamental plantings. Therefore, avoiding development of annual grassland adjacent to creek corridors would **reduce** this potential impact. Northwestern pond turtles could be present in aquatic habitats and adjacent uplands within the Specific Plan Area. Therefore, avoiding development of creek corridors and adjacent uplands would **reduce** this potential impact. The Specific Plan Area provides marginally suitable habitat for Swainson's hawk, and avoiding development along creek corridors and adjacent grasslands that have trees suitable for Swainson's hawk nesting would **reduce** this potential impact. The Specific Plan Area provides nesting habitat for nesting raptors and migratory birds, including white-tailed kite, within undeveloped properties, including along creek corridors and adjacent grasslands, therefore, this potential impact would be **reduced**. The Specific Plan Area provides potential bat roosting habitat in trees, buildings, and bridges and foraging opportunities in annual grassland and aquatic habitats. Therefore, avoiding infill development along creek corridors and adjacent grasslands, particularly where trees are present, would **reduce** this impact. Limited woody riparian vegetation is present in narrow bands and patches along intermittent streams within the Specific Plan Area, and sensitive natural communities may be present in mapped annual grassland or aquatic habitat. Therefore, avoiding development along creek corridors would **reduce** this impact on riparian habitat or other sensitive natural communities. Undeveloped grassland and aquatic habitats have the potential to provide nursery (e.g., nest) sites and migratory habitat for common wildlife species. Therefore, avoiding development along creek corridors and adjacent grasslands would **reduce** this impact. Some native and non-native trees in vacant, semi-rural, and landscaped portions of the Specific Plan Area are protected by the County's Tree Preservation Ordinance, and General Plan Policies CO-137 through CO-139, CO-145, and CO-146 which address the protection of native oak trees, landmark and heritage trees, other native trees, and non-native tree canopy. Therefore, avoiding development along creek corridors and adjacent grasslands where there are trees present would **reduce** this impact.

Environmental Topic Area	Alternative 1: No Project	Alternative 2: Avoid Creek Corridors and Adjacent Habitat
Climate Change	Very little development would occur along the Watt Avenue corridor under Alternative 1. Thus, there would be a very low level of GHG emissions during construction. Implementation of the proposed Specific Plan is beneficial in terms GHG efficiency (i.e., GHG emissions per service population) compared to existing conditions within the Specific Plan Area and compared to the GHG efficiency of development elsewhere in the County – to the extent that the County can accommodate more demand for development in low-VMT areas such as the Specific Plan Ares, GHG efficient would be improved countywide. Under Alternative 1, very little development of new housing and employment-generating uses would occur. While the proposed Specific Plan would be more GHG-efficient compared to Alternative 1, the absolute amount of GHG emissions under Alternative 1 would be reduced. Therefore, the impacts associated with GHG emissions and climate change would be **similar** compared to the proposed Specific Plan.	Alternative 2 would reduce both the number of residential units and the future population by approximately 20 percent, along with a similar reduction in new, complementary non-residential development. Similar to the proposed Specific Plan, Alternative 2 would be designed primarily to accommodate more compact housing types and would be comprised of transit-oriented development with supporting streetscape and infrastructure improvements. The benefit of reduced VMT per service population and improvement in GHG efficiency associated with infill development under Alternative 2 would be similar to the proposed Specific Plan. Therefore, impacts associated with GHG emissions and climate change would be **similar** compared to the proposed Specific Plan.
Cultural and Paleontological Resources	Very little development would occur along the Watt Avenue corridor under Alternative 1. Thus, there would be a very low potential for adverse impacts to archaeological resources, human remains, or unique paleontological resources, and the impacts would be **reduced**. Since there are no historical resources in the Specific Plan Area, the potential for an impact would be **similar**.	Alternative 2 would avoid development along creek corridors and adjacent buffer areas. Although there are no known archaeological resources within the Specific Plan Area, creek corridors have historically served as settlement areas for Native American peoples. Thus, by avoiding development in these parcels, a greater degree of protection would be provided to unknown resources that may be present. Because many of the larger undeveloped infill parcels contain creek corridors and therefore would not be developed or would experience less development, Alternative 2 would result in less earthmoving activities in paleontologically sensitive rock formations in the Specific Plan Area, where undisturbed sedimentary deposits are present. Therefore, the potential for adverse impacts to archaeological resources, human remains, and unique paleontological resources would be **reduced.** Since there are no historical resources in the Specific Plan Area, the potential for an impact would be **similar**.
Energy	Very little construction would occur along the Watt Avenue corridor under Alternative 1, and therefore construction energy demand would be **reduced**. Implementation of the proposed Specific Plan would result in an improvement in energy efficiency (i.e., energy consumption per service population) since transportation is the top user of energy, and since the proposed Specific Plan would accommodate a relatively larger amount of development in an area with relatively lower vehicular travel demand. Under Alternative 1, a low level of development would occur. While energy efficiency under the proposed Specific Plan would be improved compared to Alternative 1, the total energy demand during construction and operation under Alternative 1 would be reduced. Therefore, the impact would be **similar**. Similar to the proposed Specific Plan, Alternative 1 would have a less-than-significant impact related to state or local plans for renewable energy or energy efficiency.	Alternative 2 would reduce both the number of units and the future population by approximately 20 percent, along with a similar reduction in the amount of new complementary non-residential development. Therefore, impacts from construction-related energy consumption, primarily in the form of fossil fuels (e.g., gasoline, diesel fuel) and electricity for the duration of construction would be **reduced**. Similar to the proposed Specific Plan, Alternative 2 would be designed primarily to accommodate more compact housing types and would be comprised of transit-oriented development with supporting streetscape and infrastructure improvements. Improvement in energy efficiency associated with infill development under Alternative 2 would be akin to the proposed Specific Plan. Therefore, impacts associated with operational energy consumption would be **similar** compared to the proposed Specific Plan. Similar to the proposed Specific Plan, Alternative 2 would have a less-than-significant impact related to state or local plans for renewable energy or energy efficiency.
Hazards and Hazardous Materials	Very little development would occur along the Watt Avenue corridor under Alternative 1. Thus, there would be a low potential for adverse impacts related to hazards or hazardous materials, and the impacts would be **reduced**.	Alternative 2 would avoid development along creek corridors and adjacent buffer areas. Since most of these parcels have not been previously developed with urban land uses, they are less likely to have older buildings that contain asbestos and lead-based paint, although the potential to encounter aerially deposited lead from excavation within 30 feet of high-volume roadways, or result in accidental damage to underground hazardous utility lines during construction would be **similar**. For the same reasons, the potential for emission or use of hazardous materials within one-quarter mile of schools, and creation of new safety hazards associated with land use compatibility and the McClellan Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan would also be **similar**. There would be fewer new residents under Alternative 2 that would require evacuation during an emergency. Therefore, these impacts would be **reduced**.
Hydrology and Water Quality	Very little development would occur along the Watt Avenue corridor under Alternative 1. Thus, there would a low potential for significant adverse hydrology or water quality effects, and therefore impacts would be **reduced**.	Alternative 2 would avoid development along creek corridors and adjacent buffer areas. Alternative 2 would **reduce** the potential for direct and indirect impacts from erosion, sediment transport, and degradation of water quality because new development adjacent to the seven creeks that flow through the Specific Plan Area would not occur. Avoiding development on the parcels with creeks would also **reduce** the potential for alteration of existing drainages with resulting hydromodification effects. Alternative 2 would also result in **reduced** operational erosion and water quality impacts and therefore reduced potential for conflicts with adopted Basin Plan water quality objectives. Since most of the parcels along the creeks have not been previously developed with urban land uses, there would be a substantially reduced potential for new impervious surfaces that would reduce groundwater recharge, along with a decrease in the required water supplies, resulting in a **reduced** potential for conflicts with the adopted Groundwater Sustainability Plan. Less development along the creeks would also **reduce** the potential for new buildings to impede or redirect flood flows or risk release of pollutants from flooding along the creeks that flow through the Specific Plan Area.

Environmental Topic Area	Alternative 1: No Project	Alternative 2: Avoid Creek Corridors and Adjacent Habitat
Land Use and Planning	Under Alternative 1, as with the proposed Specific Plan, a physical division of an existing community would not occur, and therefore the level of impact would be **similar**. Very little development would occur along the Watt Avenue corridor under Alternative 1. The 2012 North Watt Avenue Corridor Plan would continue to be in place, and therefore Alternative 1 would be inconsistent with the County Board of Supervisors' 2024 Resolution regarding Housing and Infill Development that directs staff to increase corridor development that can be built by-right. Furthermore, the lack of any new infill development within the Watt Avenue corridor would also be inconsistent with SACOG 2025 Blueprint. Therefore, Alternative 1 would result in a **greater** level of potential conflict with land use policies that were partly developed to reduce environmental impacts.	Alternative 2 would avoid development along creek corridors and adjacent buffer areas. The overall amount of infill development would be less as compared to the proposed Specific Plan. However, since the proposed Specific Plan would not physically divide any existing community, Alternative 2 would result in a **similar** level of impact. Although Alternative 2 would involve a 20-percent reduction in the number of proposed housing units, this alternative would result in housing units that would be consistent with SACOG's regional housing projections for the Watt Avenue corridor (similar to the proposed Specific Plan), and would also be consistent with adjacent County-designated Special Planning Areas and the North Highlands Community Plan (similar to the proposed Specific Plan). The same changes as proposed under the Specific Plan that would increase the amount of development that can occur by right would also occur under Alternative 2. Therefore, a **similar** level of impact related to consistency with regional and local land use planning would occur under Alternative 2.
Noise	Very little development would occur along the Watt Avenue corridor under Alternative 1. Thus, a low level construction-related noise and groundborne vibration would occur, resulting in a **reduced** level of impact. Under Alternative 1, there would be very little new traffic generation, and therefore, this would **reduce** long-term traffic noise impacts compared with the proposed Specific Plan. Because very little development would occur under Alternative 1, there would be a low potential for new stationary or non-transportation noise sources from land use incompatibilities to impact sensitive receptors in excess of local standards, resulting in a **reduced** level of impact. Similarly, there would be a very low potential to expose new people residing or working in the project area to excessive aircraft noise, resulting in a **reduced** level of impact.	Alternative 2 would avoid infill development on the parcels that contain creek corridors; therefore, the overall amount of infill development would be less as compared to the proposed Specific Plan. Thus, the potential impacts from new construction-related noise or groundborne vibration would be substantially **reduced**. Under Alternative 2, the reduction in the total anticipated development would generate less traffic compared with the proposed Specific Plan, and this would **reduce** long-term traffic noise impacts compared with the proposed Specific Plan. Because less development on fewer sites would occur under Alternative 2, the potential impacts from new stationary or non-transportation noise sources from land use incompatibilities on sensitive receptors in excess of local standards would be **reduced**. Similarly, fewer new residents and workers would be exposed to aircraft noise, resulting in a **slightly reduced** level of impact.
Population and Housing	Very little development would occur along the Watt Avenue corridor under Alternative 1. The County's 2030 General Plan proposed a substantial increase in population growth and housing along the North Watt Corridor and other commercial corridors in the County, in part to reduce environmental impacts compared to a scenario where more demand for development would occur in greenfield locations. Under Alternative 1, with a reduced level of development in the Specific Plan Area, this would be inconsistent with the County's planned population growth, including residential development consistent with the County's share of the regional housing needs assessment. Similarly, since a reduced amount of new transit-oriented development would occur, Alternative 1 would be inconsistent with SACOG's regional planning for population and housing growth, as presented in the 2025 Blueprint. Given the above, there would be **greater** potential for conflict with regional and local plans for population and housing growth under Alternative 1. Neither the proposed Specific Plan nor Alternative 1 would displace substantial population or housing requiring replacement elsewhere and the impact would be **similar**.	The reduced amount of infill development along creek corridors and adjacent buffer areas under Alternative 2 would result in fewer new local residents. However, redevelopment of the North Watt Avenue corridor with substantial new housing in the form of transit-oriented development was included in the County's 2030 General Plan and therefore, as with the proposed Specific Plan, Alternative 2 would not result in substantial unplanned population growth. As with the proposed Specific Plan, Alternative 2 would accommodate more compact housing types – townhomes, small-lot homes, condominiums, and multi-family dwelling units of different types consistent with the SACOG 2025 Blueprint for infill locations near transit. Furthermore, even with the reduction in the number of housing units under Alternative 2, this alternative would still be consistent SACOG 2025 Blueprint principles. Given the above, Alternative 2 would result in a **similar** impact. Neither the proposed Specific Plan nor Alternative 2 would displace substantial population or housing requiring replacement elsewhere and the impact would be **similar**.
Public Services	Very little development would occur along the Watt Avenue corridor under Alternative 1. Thus, there would be less development that would require fire or police protection services and a lower demand for library services and educational services. Thus, Alternative 1 would result in a **reduced** level of impacts.	The reduced amount of infill development along creek corridors and adjacent buffer areas under Alternative 2 would result in less development that would require increased fire or police protection services or increased need for schooling or libraries. Thus, Alternative 2 would result in a **reduced** level of impacts.

Environmental Topic Area	Alternative 1: No Project	Alternative 2: Avoid Creek Corridors and Adjacent Habitat
Recreation	Very little development would occur along the Watt Avenue corridor under Alternative 1, but there would also not be additional parkland or recreation trail spaces made available for the local population. Due to the decreased demand for parks and recreational spaces and services, Alternative 1 would result in a **reduced** level of impacts.	The reduced amount of development along creek corridors and adjacent buffer areas under Alternative 2 would result in a smaller population increase and therefore a reduced need for new parks and recreational facilities. However, the proposed Specific Plan would place new park space, trails, and greenways along the existing creeks. Having these recreational facilities, particularly trails, along the creeks would provide benefits for new residents. Creekside parks and trails can offer serene, accessible natural retreats that reduce stress and encourage physical activity, along with providing new off-street bicycle and pedestrian connections to parks and other destinations within and near the Specific Plan Area. Having the new parks in other locations within the Specific Plan Area under Alternative 2 would still fulfill the County's and the local park district acreage requirements, but would result in a different type of recreational amenity. Furthermore, because Alternative 2 avoids or reduces development on the larger undeveloped parcels (which contain grassland and sensitive plants, wildlife, habitat, and natural communities), new parks would more likely be developed on parcels with historic past or present urban uses that could require demolition and remediation, resulting in increased physical environmental impacts from development of necessary park lands. Thus, Alternative 2 would result in a **greater** level of impact.
Transportation	Very little development would occur along the Watt Avenue corridor under Alternative 1. Thus, there would be a **greater** potential for conflict with General Plan policies focused on infill development near transit under Alternative 1 compared to the proposed Specific Plan. Similarly, Alternative 1 would involve a very low level of development in an area of the county that has relatively low rates of vehicle miles traveled (VMT), and this would have the potential to **increase** conflicts with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3(b), which, in part, is focused placement of residential, office, and commercial uses in areas with transit service or where land uses are mixed in proximity, allowing for pedestrian and bicycle access to destinations and associated low VMT rates. Neither the proposed Specific Plan nor Alternative 1 would involve hazards due to geometric design features or incompatible uses, so this impact would be **similar**. Similarly, neither Alternative 1 nor the proposed Specific Plan would result in inadequate emergency access – the Specific Plan Area is served by a circulation system that does not include cul-de-sacs or other substantial barriers to emergency access, and where access to properties is available from multiple points. Neither Alternative 1 nor the proposed Specific Plan would change emergency access and therefore the impact is **similar**.	While the amount of development in the Specific Plan Area would be somewhat reduced under Alternative 2 compared with the proposed Specific Plan, the conceptual approach would be similar and therefore, there would be a **similar** potential for conflict with General Plan policies focused on infill development near transit. Alternative 2 would have a somewhat reduced amount of infill development in this low-VMT location, but the development that would occur would have a similarly low VMT rate per capita and per employee, and therefore the potential for conflict with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3(b) would be **similar**. Neither the proposed Specific Plan nor Alternative 2 would involve hazards due to geometric design features or incompatible uses, so this impact would be **similar**. Similarly, neither Alternative 2 nor the proposed Specific Plan would result in inadequate emergency access – the Specific Plan Area is served by a circulation system that does not include substantial barriers to emergency access, and where access to properties is available from multiple points. Neither Alternative 2 nor the proposed Specific Plan would change emergency access and therefore the impact is **similar**.
Tribal Cultural Resources	Very little development would occur along the Watt Avenue corridor under Alternative 1. Thus, there would be a low level of potential for adverse impacts to tribal cultural resources, and the impact would be **reduced**.	Alternative 2 would avoid development along creek corridors and adjacent buffer areas. Although there are no known tribal cultural resources within the Specific Plan Area, creek corridors have historically served as settlement areas for Native American peoples. Thus, by avoiding development in these parcels, a greater degree of protection would be provided to any resources that may be present. Therefore, the potential for adverse impacts to tribal cultural resources would be **reduced.**
Utilities and Service Systems	Very little development would occur along the Watt Avenue corridor under Alternative 1. Thus, there would be a relatively low additional demand for utilities such as water supply, wastewater conveyance and treatment, and stormwater drainage, and therefore the impact would be **reduced**. Similarly, there would be very little new water supply demanded, wastewater generated, or solid waste generated and impacts would be **reduced**.	Alternative 2 would avoid development along creek corridors and adjacent buffer areas. Despite the reduced development, the necessary physical improvements requiring earthmoving activities to install additional water supply, wastewater conveyance, and stormwater drainage lines would still occur, with a slightly **reduced** potential for physical environmental impacts. However, a reduced amount of new potable water supplies, and a reduced amount of additional wastewater requiring treatment, would be generated under Alternative 3 because of the smaller new population. Similarly, the reduced amount of infill development would result in less solid waste from demolition and a smaller new population that would generate less household and workplace solid waste. Therefore, the impacts related to utilities and service systems would be **reduced**.

Source: Data compiled by AECOM in 2026

COMPARISON OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

For comparison purposes, Table ALT-1 provides the impacts of the proposed Specific Plan before mitigation, and the impacts of Alternative 1 (No Project) and Alternative 2 (Avoid Creek Corridors and Adjacent Habitat). The following terms are used in Table ALT-2 as described below.

- NI: proposed Specific Plan's impact is no impact
- LTS: proposed Specific Plan's impact is less than significant
- PS: proposed Specific Plan's impact is potentially significant
- PCC: proposed Specific Plan cumulative impact is potentially cumulatively considerable
- S: proposed Specific Plan's impact is significant
- Less: alternative's impact is less than the proposed Specific Plan
- Similar: alternative's impact is equal or similar to the proposed Specific Plan
- Greater: alternative's impact is greater than the proposed Specific Plan

Table ALT-2. Summary of Alternatives Impacts Compared to the Proposed Specific Plan

Impact Category	Proposed Specific Plan Before Mitigation	Alternative 1: No Project	Alternative 2: Avoid Creek Corridors and Adjacent Habitat
Aesthetics			
Impact AES-1: Conflict with Applicable Zoning and Other Regulations Governing Scenic Quality	LTS	Similar	Similar
Impact AES-2: Create Substantial New Sources of Light or Glare	LTS	Less	Less
Air Quality			
Impact AQ-1: Generate Short-Term Construction Emissions of Criteria Pollutants and Precursors (ROG, NOx, PM_{10}, and $PM_{2.5}$) that Exceed Standards	PS	Less	Less
Impact AQ-2: Generate Long-Term Operational Emissions of Criteria Pollutants and Precursors (ROG, NOx, PM_{10}, and $PM_{2.5}$) that Exceed Standards	S	Less	Less
Impact AQ-3: Expose Sensitive Receptors to Substantial Mobile-Source CO Concentrations	LTS	Less	Similar
Impact AQ-4: Expose Sensitive Receptors to Substantial Pollutant Concentrations	PS	Less	Similar
Impact AQ-5: Conflict with an Air Quality Plan	LTS	Less	Less
Impact AQ-6: Expose Substantial Numbers of People to Objectionable Odors	LTS	Less	Less
Biological Resources			
Impact BR-1: Have a Substantial Adverse Effect on Special-Status Species	PS	Less	Less
Impact BR-2: Have a Substantial Adverse Effect on Riparian Habitat or Other Sensitive Natural Communities	PS	Less	Less
Impact BR-3: Have a Substantial Adverse Effect on State or Federally Protected Wetlands	PS	Less	Less
Impact BR-4: Interfere Substantially with the Movement of Any Native Resident or Migratory Species or Impede the Use of Native Wildlife Nursery Sites	PS	Less	Less
Impact BR-5: Conflict with Any Local Policies or Ordinances Protecting Biological Resources, such as a Tree Preservation Policy or Ordinance	PS	Less	Less

Impact Category	Proposed Specific Plan Before Mitigation	Alternative 1: No Project	Alternative 2: Avoid Creek Corridors and Adjacent Habitat
Climate Change			
Impact CC-1: Generate Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Either Directly or Indirectly, that May have a Significant Impact on the Environment and Conflict with an Applicable Plan, Policy, or Regulation Adopted for the Purposes of Reducing GHG Emissions	PCC	Similar	Similar
Cultural and Paleontological Resources			
Impact CR-1: Cause a Substantial Adverse Change in the Significance of a Historical Resource	NI	Similar	Similar
Impact CR-2: Cause a Substantial Adverse Change in the Significance of an Archaeological Resource	PS	Less	Less
Impact CR-3: Disturb any Human Remains, Including Those Interred Outside of Dedicated Cemeteries	PS	Less	Less
Impact CR-4: Damage to or Destruction of Unique Paleontological Resource or Site	PS	Less	Less
Energy			
Impact EN-1: Result in Wasteful, Inefficient, or Unnecessary Consumption of Energy During Project Construction	LTS	Less	Less
Impact EN-2: Result in Wasteful, Inefficient, or Unnecessary Consumption of Energy During Project Operation	LTS	Similar	Similar
Impact EN-3: Conflict with or Obstruct a State or Local Plan For Renewable Energy or Energy Efficiency	LTS	Similar	Similar
Hazards and Hazardous Materials			
Impact HAZ-1: Release of Hazardous Materials from Routine Transport, Use, or Disposal of Hazardous Materials or Reasonably Foreseeable Upset and/or Accident Conditions	PS	Less	Similar
Impact HAZ-2: Result in Hazardous Emissions or Use of Hazardous Materials Within One-Quarter Mile of Schools	PS	Less	Similar
Impact HAZ-3: Potential Release of Hazardous Materials from Site Listed in California Government Code Section 65962.5 (Cortese List)	PS	Less	Similar
Impact HAZ-4: Result in Airport Safety Hazards	LTS	Less	Similar

Impact Category	Proposed Specific Plan Before Mitigation	Alternative 1: No Project	Alternative 2: Avoid Creek Corridors and Adjacent Habitat
Impact HAZ-5: Impair Implementation of or Physically Interfere with an Adopted Emergency Response Plan or Emergency Evacuation Plan	LTS	Less	Less
Hydrology and Water Quality			
Impact HYD-1: Violate Water Quality Standards	LTS	Less	Less
Impact HYD-2: Impede Sustainable Groundwater Management of the Basin by Substantially Decreasing Groundwater Supplies or Interfering with Groundwater Recharge	LTS	Less	Less
Impact HYD-3: Substantially Alter Drainage Patterns or Add Impervious Surface Resulting in Substantial Erosion or Siltation	LTS	Less	Less
Impact HYD-4: Substantially Alter Drainage Patterns or Add Impervious Surfaces That Would Exceed Storm Drainage Systems, Substantially Increase the Rate or Amount of Surface Runoff Resulting in Flooding On- or Off-site, or Substantially Degrade Water Quality	LTS	Less	Less
Impact HYD-5: Substantially Alter Drainage Patterns or Add Impervious Surface That Would Impede or Redirect Flood Flows or Risk Release of Pollutants due to Inundation in Flood Hazard Area	LTS	Less	Less
Impact HYD-6: Conflict with a Water Quality Control Plan or Sustainable Groundwater Management Plan	LTS	Less	Less
Land Use and Planning			
Impact LU-1: Physically Divide an Established Community	LTS	Similar	Similar
Impact LU-2: Cause a Significant Environmental Impact Due to a Conflict with any Land Use Plan, Policy, or Regulation Adopted for the Purpose of Avoiding or Mitigating an Environmental Effect	LTS	Greater	Similar
Noise			
Impact NOI-1: Generate Construction Noise That Exceeds County Standards	S	Less	Less
Impact NOI-2: Generate Excessive Construction Vibration	S	Less	Less
Impact NOI-3: Generate a Substantial Permanent Increase in Traffic Noise Levels	S	Less	Less

Impact Category	Proposed Specific Plan Before Mitigation	Alternative 1: No Project	Alternative 2: Avoid Creek Corridors and Adjacent Habitat
Impact NOI-4: Expose New or Existing Sensitive Receptors to New Stationary Noise Sources That Exceed County Standards	PS	Less	Less
Impact NOI-5: Expose People Residing or Working in the Specific Plan Area to Excessive Aircraft Noise	LTS	Less	Less
Population and Housing			
Impact PH-1: Induce Substantial Unplanned Population Growth	LTS	Greater	Similar
Impact PH-2: Displace Substantial Numbers of Existing People or Housing, Necessitating the Construction of Replacement Housing Elsewhere	LTS	Less	Similar
Public Services			
Impact PS-1: Result in Substantial Adverse Physical Impacts Associated with the Provision of Fire Protection Services	LTS	Less	Less
Impact PS-2: Result in Substantial Adverse Physical Impacts Associated with the Provision of Law Enforcement Services	LTS	Less	Less
Impact PS-3: Result in Substantial Adverse Physical Impacts Associated with the Provision of Schools	LTS	Less	Less
Impact PS-4: Result in Substantial Adverse Physical Impacts Associated with the Provision of Libraries	LTS	Less	Less
Recreation			
Impact REC-1: Result in the Substantial Physical Deterioration of Existing Parks or Result in Substantial Adverse Physical Impacts Associated with the Provision of Parks and Recreation Services	LTS	Less	Greater
Transportation			
Impact TR-1: Adversely Affect an Existing Bicycle and Pedestrian Facility or Public Transit Operations, Interfere with the Implementation of a Planned Bikeway, Result in Unsafe Conditions for Bicyclists or Pedestrians, or Fail to Provide Access to Transit	LTS	Greater	Similar
Impact TR-2: Generate VMT That Exceeds County Standards	LTS	Greater	Similar

Impact Category	Proposed Specific Plan Before Mitigation	Alternative 1: No Project	Alternative 2: Avoid Creek Corridors and Adjacent Habitat
Impact TR-3: Substantially Increase Hazards Due to a Geometric Design Feature or Incompatible Uses	LTS	Similar	Similar
Impact TR-4: Result In Inadequate Emergency Access	LTS	Similar	Similar
Tribal Cultural Resources			
Impact TCR-1: Cause a Substantial Adverse Change in the Significance of a Tribal Cultural Resource	PS	Less	Less
Utilities and Service Systems			
Impact US-1: Result in Environmental Effects Associated with Require Relocation or Construction of New or Expanded Water, Wastewater Treatment, or Storm Water Drainage Facilities, Electric Power, Natural Gas, or Telecommunications Facilities, the Construction or Relocation of Which Could Cause Significant Environmental Effects	LTS	Less	Less
Impact US-2: Exceed Reasonably Foreseeable Future Water Supply Capacity	LTS	Less	Less
Impact US-3: Exceed the Capacity of the Wastewater Treatment Provider	LTS	Less	Less
Impact US-4: Generate Solid Waste in Excess of Standards or in Excess of the Capacity of Local Infrastructure	LTS	Less	Less

Source: Data compiled by AECOM in 2026

ENVIRONMENTALLY SUPERIOR ALTERNATIVE

The CEQA Guidelines require evaluation of a no project alternative. When the no project alternative is the environmentally superior alternative, another environmentally superior alternative among the other alternatives must also be identified (CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6[e][2]).

As described above, the CEQA Guidelines provide that the discussion of alternatives in an EIR should focus on alternatives to the project "which are capable of avoiding or substantially lessening any significant effects of the project" (CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6[b]). Alternative 2, Avoid Creek Corridors and Adjacent Habitat, has been developed with a focus on reducing potentially significant effects of the proposed Specific Plan related to biological resources and hydrology and water quality.

Of the alternatives, Alternative 1, No Project, would reduce 43 impacts compared with the proposed Specific Plan, and would be the environmentally superior alternative. Other than the Alternative 1, Alternative 2, Avoid Creek Corridors and Adjacent Habitat, would reduce 35 impacts, would increase 1 impact, and would have similar impacts in 19 areas relative to the proposed Specific Plan and other than the No Project Alternative, is the environmentally superior alternative.

20 SUMMARY OF IMPACTS AND THEIR DISPOSITION

SUMMARY OF IMPACTS BY SIGNIFICANCE DETERMINATION

The following provides a summary of the conclusions reached in the evaluation of the project in Chapters 3 through 18 of this environmental impact report (EIR). For a tabulated summary of the impacts of the proposed Specific Plan, applicable mitigation, and significance determinations, refer to Table ES-1 in Chapter 1, Executive Summary.

SIGNIFICANT IMPACTS WHICH CANNOT BE AVOIDED

A "significant and unavoidable impact" is an impact that exceeds the defined standards of significance and cannot be eliminated or reduced to a less-than-significant level through the implementation of mitigation measures.

CHAPTER 4, AIR QUALITY

- Generate Long-Term Operational Emissions of Criteria Pollutants and Precursors (reactive organic gases [ROG], nitrogen oxides [NO_X], particulate matter equal to or less than 10 micrometers in diameter [PM_{10}], and], particulate matter equal to or less than 2.5 micrometers in diameter [$PM_{2.5}$]) that Exceed Standards
- Cumulative Short-Term Construction Emissions of Criteria Pollutants for Which the Region is in Nonattainment
- Cumulative Long-Term Operational Emissions of Criteria Pollutants for Which the Region is in Nonattainment

CHAPTER 11, NOISE

- Generate Construction Noise that Exceeds County Standards
- Generate Excessive Construction Vibration
- Generate a Substantial Permanent Increase in Traffic Noise Levels
- Cumulative Increases in Traffic Noise Levels

SIGNIFICANT IMPACTS WHICH COULD BE AVOIDED WITH IMPLEMENTATION OF MITIGATION MEASURES

The following impacts were determined to be less than significant with mitigation upon being evaluated in this document.

CHAPTER 4, AIR QUALITY

- Generate Short-Term Construction Emissions of Criteria Pollutants and Precursors (ROG, NOx, PM_{10}, and $PM_{2.5}$) that Exceed Standards
- Expose Sensitive Receptors to Substantial Pollutant Concentrations

Chapter 5, Biological Resources

- Have a Substantial Adverse Effect on Special-Status Species
- Have a Substantial Adverse Effect on Riparian Habitat or Other Sensitive Natural Communities
- Have a Substantial Adverse Effect on State or Federally Protected Wetlands
- Interfere Substantially with the Movement of Any Native Resident or Migratory Species or Impede the Use of Native Wildlife Nursery Sites
- Conflict with Any Local Policies or Ordinances Protecting Biological Resources, such as a Tree Preservation Policy or Ordinance

Chapter 6, Climate Change

- Generate Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions, Either Directly or Indirectly, That May Have a Significant Impact on the Environment and Conflict with an Applicable Plan, Policy, or Regulation Adopted for the Purposes of Reducing GHG Emissions

Chapter 7, Cultural and Paleontological Resources

- Cause a Substantial Adverse Change in the Significance of an Archaeological Resource
- Disturb any Human Remains, Including Those Interred Outside of Dedicated Cemeteries
- Damage to or Destruction of Unique Paleontological Resources or Site

Chapter 9, Hazards and Hazardous Materials

- Release of Hazardous Materials from Routine Transport, Use, or Disposal of Hazardous Materials or Reasonably Foreseeable Upset and/or Accident Conditions
- Result in Hazardous Emissions or Use of Hazardous Materials Within One-Quarter Mile of Schools
- Potential Release of Hazardous Materials from Site Listed in California Government Code Section 65962.5 (Cortese List)

Chapter 11, Noise

- Expose New or Existing Sensitive Receptors to New Stationary Noise Sources that Exceed County Standards

Chapter 17, Tribal Cultural Resources

- Cause a Substantial Adverse Change in the Significance of a Tribal Cultural Resource

IMPACTS FOUND NOT TO BE SIGNIFICANT

AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY RESOURCES

Based on Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, an impact related to agriculture and forestry resources is considered significant if the proposed project would do any of the following.

1. Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use.

   Based on a review of the 2020 Important Farmland Map for Sacramento County produced by the California Department of Conservation (DOC) under the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program, most of the Specific Plan Area is designated as Urban and Built-Up Land[1] (DOC 2020). A few parcels on the west side of North Watt Avenue, to the north and south of I Street within the Specific Plan Area, are designated as Other Land[2] (DOC 2020). There is no Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), within or near the Specific Plan Area. Thus, the proposed Specific Plan would not result in conversion of Farmland to a non-agricultural use, and there would be **no impact**.

2. Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use or a Williamson Act contract.

   Existing zoning within the Specific Plan Area consists primarily of Special Planning Area (SPA), with several Light Industrial (M-1) and Agricultural-Residential 1 (AR-1) zoned parcels. The AR-1 zone is intended to establish living areas within the County where development is limited to low density concentrations of single-family dwellings. None of these existing zones support agricultural uses. There are no Williamson Act Contracts within or near the Specific Plan Area (Sacramento County 2024). Thus, implementing the proposed Specific Plan would not conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use or a Williamson Act contract, and there would be **no impact**.

3. Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code section 12220[g]), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code section 51104[g]).

   The Specific Plan Area was initially urbanized in the 1940s to support McClellan Air Force Base (when it was operational); development within the Specific Plan Area and

[1] Land that is used for residential, industrial, commercial, construction, institutional, public administration, railroad and other transportation yards, cemeteries, airports, golf courses, sanitary landfills, sewage treatment, water control structures, and other developed purposes.

[2] Includes low-density rural developments; brush, timber, wetland, and riparian areas not suitable for livestock grazing; and vacant and nonagricultural land surrounded on all sides by urban development and greater than 40 acres.

the surrounding land to the east increased substantially in the 1960s. Existing zoning within the Specific Plan Area consists primarily of SPA, with several M-1 and AR-1 zoned parcels. None of these existing zones support forest land, timberland, or timberland zoned Timberland Production. Thus, there would be **no impact**.

4. Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use.

   The Specific Plan Area does not contain any forest land; thus, there would be **no impact**.

5. Involve other changes in the existing environment, which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use.

   Development under the proposed Specific Plan, including infrastructure improvements, would be limited to the Specific Plan Area, an area that has mostly been developed and urbanized. Land surrounding the Specific Plan Area is developed with residential, commercial, office, industrial, educational, and park uses. The nearest Farmland is more than five miles west of the Specific Plan Area, and the only existing forest land in the vicinity of the Specific Plan Area is along Arcade Creek (approximately 2.5 miles east of the Specific Plan Area, and approximately 900 feet south of the Specific Plan Area south of Interstate 80, at the closest point). Because all future development would be limited to the Specific Plan Area and because the Specific Plan Area and the surrounding area are developed and urbanized, the proposed Specific Plan would not result in conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use, and there would be **no impact**.

Geology and Soils

Based on Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, an impact related to geology and soils is considered significant if the proposed project would do any of the following.

1. Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death, involving rupture of a known earthquake fault as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault, liquefaction, or seismically induced landslides.

   The Specific Plan Area is not located within or near a fault designated under the Alquist-Priolo Act, or any other known active or potentially active fault (California Geological Survey [CGS] 2025, Jennings and Bryant 2010). The nearest active faults, including those that are classified under the Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone Act, are approximately 46 miles west in the Coast Ranges and approximately 54 miles north near Lake Oroville (Jennings and Bryant 2010, CGS 2025). Therefore, hazards from surface fault rupture are unlikely. Overall, the Specific Plan Area slopes gently towards the south with a decrease of approximately 20 feet in elevation over a distance of 4 miles. However, parcels throughout the Specific Plan Area have been graded flat for the existing urban development. There are no steep slopes within or adjacent to the Specific Plan Area, and therefore seismically induced landslides would

not represent a hazard. Finally, since active seismic sources are a relatively long distance away; the Specific Plan Area is composed of stable, artificial fill and native Pleistocene-age rock formations (Gutierrez 2011); and the depth to groundwater is approximately 110 feet below the ground surface (California Department of Water Resources 2024), seismically-induced liquefaction and other seismic-related ground failure at the Specific Plan Area would not occur. Thus, there would be **no impact**.

2. Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death, from strong seismic ground shaking.

   The Specific Plan Area is situated in the center of the Sacramento Valley; this area historically has not been seismically active (Jennings and Bryant 2010). The nearest active faults, including those that are classified under the Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone Act, are approximately 46 miles west in the Coast Ranges and approximately 54 miles north near Lake Oroville (Jennings and Bryant 2010, CGS 2025). The nearest known fault is the Bear Mountain Fault Zone, approximately 25 miles east of the Specific Plan Area, which is not classified as "active" (Jennings and Bryant 2010). The Specific Plan Area has a low potential for strong seismic ground shaking (Branum et al. 2016).

   Furthermore, development within the Specific Plan Area is required by law to comply with seismic safety standards of the California Building Standards Code (CBC) (California Code of Regulations [CCR] Title 24). The CBC focuses on “collapse prevention,” meaning that structures are designed for prevention of collapse for the maximum level of ground shaking that could reasonably be expected to occur at a site. Based on the seismic design category, the CBC requires an analysis of slope instability, liquefaction, and surface rupture attributable to faulting or lateral spreading, plus an evaluation of lateral pressures on basement and retaining walls, liquefaction and soil strength loss, and lateral movement or reduction in foundation soil-bearing capacity. It also requires that measures to reduce damage from seismic effects be incorporated in structural design. Measures may include, but are not limited to, ground stabilization, selection of appropriate foundation type and depths, selection of appropriate structural systems to accommodate anticipated seismic displacements, or any combination of these measures. Because the Specific Plan Area is situated in an area that would experience a low level of seismic ground shaking and because future development under the proposed Specific Plan would be required by law to implement the requirements of the CBC through preparation of geotechnical reports and site-specific design and engineering, which would be verified by the County Building Permits and Inspection Division prior to issuance of building permits, impacts related to strong seismic ground shaking would be **less than significant**.

3. Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil.

   A review of Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS 2024) soil survey data indicates that most of the Specific Plan Area is composed of Urban Land and Xerarents, with smaller discrete areas of the Fiddyment and San Joaquin Urban Land complexes, and the native Fiddyment and San Joaquin fine sandy loams. Urban Land

soils have been altered or obscured by urban works and structures; buildings and pavement cover more than 85 percent of the surface of this soil type. Xerarents are found in Mediterranean climates (like the Sacramento area), and they do not have soil horizons because they have been deeply mixed by plowing, spading, or other methods of moving by humans. Xerarents and Urban Land are not rated by the NRCS in terms of soil characteristics. The Fiddyment and San Joaquin fine sandy loam soils are rated by the NRCS (2024) with a moderate water erosion hazard and a high wind erosion hazard.

Construction activities associated with development under the proposed Specific Plan would require a variety of earthmoving activities, including excavating, trenching, grading, and compacting. Construction-related earthmoving activities would expose soils to potential erosion from wind and water. Earthmoving activities during the winter months would expose soils to rain events, which could mobilize loose soil and result in soil erosion. Subsequent soil transport during storm events could result in sedimentation within and downstream of the Specific Plan Area. Furthermore, earthmoving activities during the summer months could result in wind erosion.

However, prior to the start of earthmoving activities, applicants for development projects under the proposed Specific Plan must obtain a grading permit, as described in Sacramento County Code Chapter 16.44, and must demonstrate that all appropriate measures to reduce soil erosion would be implemented. Sacramento County Code Chapter 16.44.090 requires preparation and submittal of a detailed grading plan including specific grading locations and elevation contours; construction details; the location, implementation schedule, and maintenance schedule of all erosion control measures and sediment control measures to be implemented or constructed prior to, during, or after the proposed activity; and a description of measures designed to control dust and stabilize the construction site road and entrance.

Furthermore, applicants for development projects under the proposed Specific Plan are required by law to comply with the provisions of the State Water Resources Control Board's (SWRCB) *National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) General Permit for Storm Water Discharges Associated with Construction and Land Disturbance Activities* (Order WQ 2022-0057-DWQ) (Construction General Permit). The Construction General Permit regulates stormwater discharges for construction activities under the federal Clean Water Act, and applies to all land-disturbing construction activities that would disturb one acre or more. Project applicants must submit a notice of intent to discharge to the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB), and must prepare and implement a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) that includes site-specific Best Management Practices (BMPs) to minimize construction-related soil erosion. Construction techniques that could be implemented to reduce the potential for stormwater runoff and sediment transport may include minimizing site disturbance, controlling water flow over the construction site, stabilizing bare soil, and ensuring proper site cleanup. BMPs that could be implemented to reduce erosion may include silt fences, staked straw bales/wattles, silt/sediment basins and traps, geofabric, trench plugs, terraces, water

bars, soil stabilizers and re-seeding and mulching to revegetate disturbed areas. All NPDES permits also have inspection, monitoring, and reporting requirements.

Compliance with existing laws, regulations, and ordinances would ensure that the short-term, temporary construction impacts from soil erosion associated with future development in the Specific Plan Area would be **less than significant**. Following construction, all surfaces would be paved, would have building footprints, or would be landscaped, thus avoiding erosion during operational phases. (Impacts from construction and operation on water quality are evaluated in Chapter 10, “Hydrology and Water Quality.”)

4. Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse.

   As described previously, landslides and liquefaction do not represent hazards for development within the Specific Plan Area. As noted previously, most of the Specific Plan Area is composed of Urban Land and Xerarents. These soils have been extensively modified by human activities and are generally covered by existing buildings and pavement. The NRCS does not provide soil properties or ratings for these soil types. However, given the history of prior urban development throughout the Specific Plan Area, the native Fiddyment and San Joaquin soils have likely been previously graded and compacted for the existing development. Furthermore, the NRCS (2024) has not noted any substantial soil limitations for dwellings or small commercial buildings that may be constructed within the Fiddyment and San Joaquin fine sandy loam soils. Therefore, unstable soils are not likely to be present within the Specific Plan Area.

   A site-specific geotechnical report is required by law according to CBC and County standards, which is required to contain appropriate engineering and design recommendations related to seismic, soils, and other geologic considerations at the Specific Plan Area (including Sacramento County Code Chapter 16.44 related to grading). The geotechnical report would be submitted to the County for review. Applicants for future development projects under the proposed Specific Plan would be required by law to design and construct all buildings in compliance with the CBC (CCR Title 24), which includes implementing the recommendations contained in the geotechnical report to comply with CBC provisions that are specifically designed to address unstable soils. Therefore, impacts from unstable soils (in the unlikely event that any are present) would be **less than significant**.

5. Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994, as updated), creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property.

   As noted previously, most of the Specific Plan Area is composed of Urban Land and Xerarents. These soils have been extensively modified by human activities and are generally covered by existing buildings and pavement. The NRCS does not provide soil properties or ratings for these soil types. However, given the existing urban

development throughout the Specific Plan Area, and recognizing that native soils within the Specific Plan Area consist of the Fiddyment and San Joaquin fine sandy loams which are rated by the NRCS (2024) with a low expansion potential, it is unlikely that expansive soil would represent a hazard to redevelopment within the Specific Plan Area. Thus, there would be **no impact**.

6. Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water.

   Development within the Specific Plan Area would not utilize septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems. All development would be required by the County to connect to the regional wastewater conveyance pipeline system operated and maintained by the Sacramento Area Sewer District. The construction contractors for individual development projects under the proposed Specific Plan would contract with a portable restroom supplier to provide facilities and to pump wastewater for off-site disposal. Thus, there would be **no impact.**

7. Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature.

   Potential impacts to unique paleontological resources are evaluated in Chapter 7, “Cultural and Paleontological Resources.”

Mineral Resources

Based on Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, an impact related to mineral resources is considered significant if the proposed project would do any of the following.

1. Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the State.

   The Specific Plan Area is situated within the Greater Sacramento Area Production-Consumption Region for aggregate resources, as designated by the California Geological Survey. Regionally important mineral resource recovery areas where significant aggregate resources are known to be present are classified by the California Geological Survey as “MRZ-2.”

   The most recent mineral land classification for aggregate resources for the Greater Sacramento Area Production-Consumption Region (O’Neal and Gius 2018), indicates that the Specific Plan Area is classified as MRZ-1, which is defined as areas where available geologic information indicates that little likelihood exists for the presence of significant concrete aggregate resources. Therefore, the proposed Specific Plan would not result in the loss of availability of a regionally important mineral resource, and there would be **no impact**.

2. Result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan, or other land use plan.

Sacramento County has adopted the same classifications as the California Geological Survey related to mineral land classification within the County boundaries (Sacramento County 2017). As described above, the mineral land classification for the Specific Plan Area is MRZ-1. The County's Land Use Diagram includes a combining land use designation for Aggregate Resource Areas that does not include any portion of the Specific Plan Area. Section 4.8 of the County's Zoning Code describes the Surface Mining Combining Zoning District, which is designed to protect the mineral resources of the county from incompatible land use, and does not apply to any portion of the Specific Plan Area. Therefore, for the same reasons provided above, implementing the proposed Specific Plan would not result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated in a local plan, and there would be **no impact**.

Wildfire

Based on Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, an impact related to wildfire is considered significant if the proposed project would do any of the following.

If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project:

Public Resources Code Sections 4201–4204 and Government Code Sections 51175–51189 require identification of fire hazard severity zones within the state of California. Fire hazard severity zones are measured qualitatively, based on vegetation, topography, weather, crown fire potential (a fire's tendency to burn upward into trees and tall brush), and ember production and movement within the area in question. The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) delineates three potential wildfire hazard ratings: moderate, high, and very high. These classifications indicate "hazard" not "risk." CAL FIRE's fire "hazard" rating is based on the physical conditions that create a likelihood for wildfire in combination with expected fire behavior, over a 30- to 50-year period (without considering measures such as home hardening, recent wildfires that have burned vegetation, or fuel reduction efforts).

State Responsibility Areas (SRAs) are areas where CAL FIRE is the primary emergency response agency responsible for fire suppression and prevention. Land where the primary responsibility for firefighting falls within the purview of a local agency are referred to as Local Responsibility Areas (LRAs). The Specific Plan Area is within an LRA, and is served by the Sacramento Metropolitan Fire Department.

Based on the most recent (2025) fire hazard severity zone ratings issued by CAL FIRE for LRAs, the Specific Plan Area and vicinity are in an urbanized unclassified fire hazard severity zone, meaning that CAL FIRE has determined that the fire hazard is low (i.e., they are not within moderate, high, or very high fire hazard severity zones) (CAL FIRE 2025).

The Specific Plan Area is not located in or near SRAs or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones. The nearest very high fire hazard severity zone is approximately 2.5 miles northeast of the Specific Plan Area, and consists of a small

grove of trees on a 65-acre parcel north of Dyer Road (CAL FIRE 2025). This area is also within an LRA. The nearest SRAs are in the Sierra Nevada foothills, approximately 17 miles to the northeast, east, and southeast (CAL FIRE 2025). Therefore, there is **no impact**.

1. Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan.

   The Specific Plan Area is not located in or near SRAs or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones.

2. Due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risks, and thereby expose project occupants to, pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire.

   The Specific Plan Area is not located in or near SRAs or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones.

3. Require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment.

   The Specific Plan Area is not located in or near SRAs or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones.

4. Expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes.

   The Specific Plan Area is not located in or near SRAs or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones.

CUMULATIVE IMPACTS AND ANALYSIS

INTRODUCTION AND IDENTIFICATION OF CUMULATIVE PROJECTS

The CEQA Guidelines Section 15355 defines a cumulative impact as “two or more individual effects which, when considered together, are considerable.” An individual impact need not itself be significant to result in significant cumulative impacts; the impact is the result of the incremental effects of the project combined with the effects of “other closely related past, present, and reasonably foreseeable probable future projects.”

The requirements for a cumulative analysis are described in CEQA Guidelines Section 15130. A cumulative analysis “need not provide as great detail as is provided for the effects attributable to the project alone.” The analysis should focus on analyzing the effects of the project to which other projects contribute, to the extent practical and

reasonable. These other projects may be identified either through the provision of a list of cumulative projects, or via a summary of projections contained in an adopted General Plan or an adopted EIR. This EIR uses the plan approach to analyze the potential cumulative effects of other reasonably foreseeable projects and the contribution to such effects from the proposed project. The significance criteria used for this cumulative analysis are the same as those used throughout the topical chapters of this document.

GEOGRAPHIC SCOPE

The geographic scope that influences the cumulative impact analysis varies depending on the issue topic. For example, the cumulative geographic scope for air pollutant impacts, such as those related to emissions of ozone precursors, is very broad, encompassing large areas within the same air basin. The cumulative geographic scope for stationary source noise impacts, on the other end of the spectrum, is relatively narrow, since noise attenuates substantially with distance, making impacts more localized.

Table SI-1 provides information on the geographic scope considered for cumulative impacts for the resource areas addressed in this EIR.

Table SI-1. Geographic Scope of Cumulative Impacts

Topic Area	Geographic Area
Aesthetics	North-central unincorporated Sacramento County and northeastern city of Sacramento
Air Quality	Sacramento Valley Air Basin; odor impacts are localized
Biological Resources	North-central unincorporated Sacramento County and northeastern city of Sacramento
Climate Change	Global, regional, and local
Cultural and Paleontological Resources	Historic buildings: former McClellan Air Force Base and surrounding area. Archaeological resources: North-central unincorporated Sacramento County. Paleontological resources: Central Valley.
Energy	Sacramento County
Hazards and Hazardous Materials	North-central unincorporated Sacramento County and northeastern city of Sacramento
Hydrology and Water Quality	Sacramento River Hydrologic Basin
Land Use and Planning	North-central unincorporated Sacramento County and northeastern city of Sacramento
Noise	Impacts are generally localized, including train and McClellan Airport noise; traffic noise impacts occur along local, countywide, and regional roadways
Population and Housing	North-central unincorporated Sacramento County and northeastern city of Sacramento
Public Services	North-central unincorporated Sacramento County and northeastern city of Sacramento
Recreation	North-central unincorporated Sacramento County and northeastern city of Sacramento
Transportation	Regional and local facilities affected by the proposed Specific Plan
Tribal Cultural Resources	North-central unincorporated Sacramento County
Utilities and Service Systems	Service territories of the Sacramento Suburban Water District, the Sacramento Area Sewer District, and the drainage sheds of Arcade Creek, Magpie Creek, and Robla Creek.

REGIONAL GROWTH PROJECTIONS

The Specific Plan Area is in North Highlands, within the north-central portion of unincorporated Sacramento County. The cumulative context for this analysis is based on regional growth projections, particularly in unincorporated areas of north-central Sacramento County and the northeastern portion of the city of Sacramento.

SACRAMENTO COUNTY GENERAL PLAN

This cumulative analysis is focused on the unincorporated areas of north-central Sacramento County (i.e., North Highlands, Foothill Farms, Antelope, Rio Linda, and Arden/Arcade). The 2030 General Plan proposes to revitalize existing mature communities by focusing County resources on commercial corridor planning and infill development. These commercial corridor plans seek to establish a land use framework for the design of new and rehabilitated structures in the private realm along roadways, and also advocate for change in the public realm (e.g., street and other utility infrastructure improvements), to retain and recapture vitality in these areas (Sacramento County 2010a).

The 2030 General Plan recognizes that opportunities for infill exist throughout the urbanized portion of the County and there are vacant and underutilized properties within established communities that are available for reuse or revitalization. The 2030 General Plan encourages revitalization efforts in older commercial corridors to encourage infill development, transportation improvements, and blight reduction while providing each corridor with a unique “Main Street” character. Maximizing development opportunities in these areas will support walking, biking and transit; provide residents with new nearby housing, employment, and shopping opportunities; improve air quality and reduce GHG emissions; and encourage economic growth (Sacramento County 2010a).

The 2010 population of the unincorporated communities of north-central Sacramento County which are included in this cumulative analysis was as follows: North Highlands 43,000; Foothill Farms 95,000; Antelope 46,000; Rio Linda 20,000; and Arden/Arcade 92,000 (Sacramento County 2010a). These communities are highly urbanized.

According to the 2021–2029 Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG) Regional Housing Needs Assessment, the unincorporated area of Sacramento County has a total housing construction need of 21,272 units (Sacramento County 2022a).

The 2030 General Plan and EIR identified 14 commercial corridors that could be revitalized by developing mixed-use centers and urban villages, including the North Watt Avenue Corridor (i.e., the Specific Plan Area) (Sacramento County 2010b: Plate PD-6). As discussed in the 2030 General Plan Land Use Element, accommodating new growth within commercial corridors will benefit the existing community through increased local economic activity, improved transit ridership, and additional housing near employment opportunities, resulting in reduced commute traffic. The 2030 General Plan and EIR estimated that approximately 19,000 total housing units could be developed throughout the identified 14 corridors (Sacramento County 2010b:2-4). The 2030 General Plan Land Use Element noted that the North Watt Corridor included approximately 80.7 acres of

vacant land and approximately 44.8 acres of underutilized land, for a total of approximately 125.5 acres of land that could accommodate infill and redevelopment (Sacramento County 2022b:Table 4).

The 2030 General Plan also identified four areas as New Growth Areas: West of Watt, Easton, Jackson Highway Corridor, and Grant Line East. The West of Watt area is an underutilized section of Watt Avenue that has been prevented from developing by the noise contours in the Comprehensive Land Use Plan for the former McClellan Air Force Base. The old noise contours were established based on military usage of the airport and have since been revised based on the latest airport usage data. The contours no longer encumber the West of Watt area. The 2030 General Plan estimated that this growth area could accommodate between 2,500 and 6,000 housing units (Sacramento County 2010b:2-4 and 2-5). The West of Watt new growth area is immediately adjacent to the Specific Plan Area.

The 2030 General Plan EIR estimated that at full buildout of the 2030 General Plan, the commercial corridors, infill areas outside of commercial corridors, and the West of Watt new growth area could accommodate 29,500–45,000 new housing units; could result in approximately 79,650–121,500 additional people in these areas[3]; and 81,561 jobs in these areas could be created (Sacramento County 2010b:2-13 and 9-105).

City of Sacramento General Plan

The City of Sacramento is situated in the center of Sacramento County, and encompasses approximately 100 square miles. The city is generally bounded by Sheldon Road on the south; Elkhorn Boulevard on the north; the western Natomas levee and Sacramento River on the west; and Sacramento McClellan Airport, Business 80, and South Watt Avenue on the east. The City spans a portion of the American River on both the north and south sides. The northeastern City limits are immediately adjacent to and south of the Specific Plan Area, south of Interstate 80 (I-80).

This cumulative analysis is focused on the northeastern portion of the City of Sacramento (i.e., north of the American River to Hansen Ranch Park, including Robla, Del Paso Heights, Hagginwood, and Del Paso Park), which is encompassed by the City's North Sacramento Community Plan Area. This area encompasses approximately 13 square miles, and was incorporated as the City of North Sacramento in 1924. In 1964, the City of North Sacramento merged with the City of Sacramento by voter approval. As with the Specific Plan Area, development in North Sacramento was influenced by the former McClellan Air Force Base, and many of the original structures were developed in the 1920s through the 1950s. The North Sacramento Community Plan indicates that the area has a population of more than 60,000 people, and provides approximately 16,500 jobs. The North Sacramento Community Plan envisions that new growth will occur primarily in the form of redevelopment, particularly along Marysville and Del Paso Boulevards (approximately 1.5 miles west/southwest of the Specific Plan Area). Redevelopment is

[3] Based on U.S. Census data indicating 2.7 people per single-family home in Sacramento County (Sacramento County 2010b:5-13).

anticipated to promote mixed-use areas near light rail and bus service (City of Sacramento 2024a).

As of 2026, the City as a whole had a population of approximately 540,000 people (Department of Finance 2026). The City of Sacramento General Plan forecasts that 69,000 new homes and 77,000 new jobs will be added to the city by 2040 (City of Sacramento 2024b). The City of Sacramento General Plan EIR estimates that the city's population will grow to approximately 638,433 by 2040 (Dudek 2023).

Sacramento Area Council of Governments' Metropolitan Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Plan (2025 Blueprint)

SACOG's 2025 Metropolitan Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (MTP/SCS), also known as the 2025 Blueprint, includes a regional land use and transportation scenario covering the period from 2020 to 2035 and 2050 (SACOG 2025b). The cumulative analysis in this chapter includes consideration of housing and employment growth for unincorporated Sacramento County and the city of Sacramento. The Specific Plan Area is identified within the 2025 Blueprint's adopted land use forecasts as part the "North Watt, Antelope Acres, Light Rail Station Area," which is classified by SACOG as a Center and Corridor Community. As noted by SACOG, land uses in Center and Corridor Communities are typically of higher density, include a greater mix of uses, and more variety of transportation infrastructure as compared to surrounding land uses. This cumulative analysis includes relevant Center and Corridor Communities identified by SACOG in the vicinity of the Specific Plan Area. Local general plans, specific plans, and other vested development rights form the foundation of the land use assumptions used by SACOG for future projections.[4]

In June of 2024, the SACOG Board of Directors adopted land use assumptions – a critical component required to update the MTP/SCS (SACOG 2025a). Table SI-2 below shows the dwelling units and Table SI-3 shows the jobs in the year 2020, 2035, and 2050.

As illustrated in Table SI-2 and Table SI-3, the unincorporated County and the city of Sacramento are expected to grow in the amount of housing and jobs, with the number of housing units increasing by 16 to 40 percent between 2020 and 2050, and the number of jobs increasing by 17 to 18 percent over this same period. Within the Center and Corridor Communities in the city and county, SACOG's land use assumptions show a relatively greater level of growth, with the total number of housing units increasing by up to 316 percent, and the number of jobs increasing by up to 45 percent. The County is planning for substantial investment for the Specific Plan Area during the planning horizon, and the County's focus on promoting development within existing developed areas is reflected in the SACOG land use assumptions shown in Table SI-2 and Table SI-3.

[4] SACOG does not regulate local land use authority or preclude a local jurisdiction from planning and approving growth that is different in terms of total units or geographic extent.

Table SI-2. SACOG Existing and Projected Dwelling Units, 2020–2050

Geography	2020	2035	2050	Growth '20-'35	Growth '20-'50
Sacramento County Unincorporated	224,640	241,210	254,330	7%	16%
City of Sacramento	202,300	248,995	286,065	23%	41%
Center and Corridor Communities – Unincorporated Sacramento County					
North Watt, Antelope Acres, Light Rail Station Area[1]	1,720	4,300	7,150	150%	316%
Arden-Arcade Corridors (Arden, Fair Oaks, Fulton, South Watt)	7,250	7,710	8,380	6%	16%
Auburn Blvd/Madison Ave	400	730	1,090	83%	173%
Fair Oaks Blvd Central–El Camino to Winding Way	3,730	4,185	4,610	12%	24%
Center and Corridor Communities – City of Sacramento					
Arden/Point West/Expo	1,030	1,925	2,430	87%	136%
North Blue Line Station Areas	4,440	5,290	6,090	19%	37%

Notes:
[1] Includes the Specific Plan Area.
Source: SACOG 2025a

Table SI-3. SACOG Existing and Projected Employment, 2020–2050

Geography	2020	2035	2050	Jobs '20-'35	Jobs '20-'50
Sacramento County Unincorporated	214,740	235,695	254,330	10%	18%
City of Sacramento	329,980	368,115	385,815	12%	17%
Center and Corridor Communities – Unincorporated Sacramento County					
North Watt, Antelope Acres, Light Rail Station Area[1]	8,310	9,900	12,070	19%	45%
Arden-Arcade Corridors (Arden, Fair Oaks, Fulton, South Watt)	25,910	28,710	30,910	11%	19%
Auburn Blvd/Madison Ave	8,180	9,140	9,840	12%	20%
Fair Oaks Blvd Central–El Camino to Winding Way	6,240	6,925	7,220	11%	16%
Center and Corridor Communities – City of Sacramento					
Arden/Point West/Expo	12,220	12,370	12,420	1%	2%
North Blue Line Station Areas	12,310	14,010	15,020	14%	22%

Notes:
[1] Includes the Specific Plan Area.
Source: SACOG 2025a

As of 2023, there were approximately 724,700 jobs in Sacramento County as a whole (inclusive of incorporated cities), and approximately 60 percent of those jobs were filled by residents of Sacramento County (U.S. Census Bureau 2023). With a total of 622,700 dwelling units, the jobs-to-housing ratio for Sacramento County as a whole is approximately 1.16 (Department of Finance 2026). This jobs-to-housing ratio is very similar to the 2020 Sacramento region jobs-to-housing ratio of 1.18 and higher than the 2020 ratio of jobs to housing units for unincorporated Sacramento County of 0.95. (SACOG 2025a).

As of 2023, unincorporated Sacramento County had approximately 201,000 jobs and 230,000 housing units, and a jobs-to-housing ratio of approximately 0.9 (U.S. Census Bureau 2023) The total labor force, which is the total number of individuals that are employed or seeking employment, was 763,600 in 2023 in all of Sacramento County and the total population in 2023 was 1,583,863. This means that Sacramento County as a whole had a labor force participation rate (total percentage of population employed or seeking employment) of 48 percent (EDD 2026, Department of Finance 2026). Assuming unincorporated Sacramento County has the same labor force participation rate as Sacramento County as a whole, this means that the unincorporated County had a labor force of approximately 292,000 and a labor-force-to-jobs rate of approximately 0.7 (U.S. Census Bureau 2023, EDD 2026, Department of Finance 2026).

By 2050, the jobs-to-housing ratio for unincorporated Sacramento County is projected to increase slightly between 2020 and 2050 to 0.96. As of 2020, the ratio of jobs to housing units for the North Watt, Antelope Acres, Light Rail Station Area (which includes the Specific Plan Area) is 4.8, which is 4 times higher than the regional jobs-to-housing ratio, and suggests an area that is very jobs-rich today (SACOG 2025a). By 2050, the 2025 Blueprint scenario shows the ratio of jobs to housing units for the North Watt, Antelope Acres, Light Rail Station Area at 1.68, indicating that substantially more residences (as included in the Specific Plan) would be built, bringing the area closer to jobs/housing balance.

CUMULATIVE IMPACT ANALYSIS METHODOLOGY

Cumulative impacts can result from individually minor but collectively significant projects taking place over a period of time. CEQA Guidelines Section 15130(a)(3) states that an EIR may determine that a project's contribution to a significant cumulative impact would be rendered less than cumulatively considerable, and thus not significant, if a project is required to implement or fund its fair share of a mitigation measure or measures designed to alleviate the cumulative impact. The lead agency shall identify facts and analysis supporting its conclusion that the contribution would be rendered less than cumulatively considerable.

For purposes of this EIR, the proposed Specific Plan would have a significant cumulative impact if it meets either one of the following criteria:

- The cumulative impacts of related projects (past, current, and probable future projects) without the project are not significant but the project's incremental impact is substantial enough, when added to the cumulative impacts, to result in a significant impact; or
- The cumulative impacts of related projects (past, current, and probable future projects) without the project are already significant and the project represents a considerable contribution to the already significant impact. The standards used herein to determine "considerable contribution" are that the impact either must be substantial or must exceed an established threshold of significance.

The analysis herein evaluates whether, after adoption of mitigation measures, the residual impacts of the proposed Specific Plan would cause a cumulatively significant impact or would contribute considerably to existing/anticipated (without the proposed Specific Plan) cumulatively significant impacts.

CUMULATIVE IMPACT ANALYSIS

AESTHETICS

Because there would be no impact associated with scenic vistas or state scenic highways, the proposed Specific Plan would not contribute to a cumulative impact; therefore, no further analysis is required.

The unincorporated areas of north-central Sacramento County (i.e., North Highlands, Foothill Farms, Antelope, Rio Linda, and Arden/Arcade), as well as northeastern city of Sacramento, are already developed. Future infill and redevelopment in these areas would be subject to applicable County and City Zoning/Municipal Codes and design standards that govern development and affect the visual appearance of new development. Because these areas are already developed, they are already sources of substantial nighttime light and glare. Future infill development of these areas would not result in a substantial increase in nighttime light and glare in the region or more limited views of the nighttime sky and skyglow effects. Therefore, the impacts of future infill and redevelopment in the unincorporated areas of north-central Sacramento County and northeastern city of Sacramento on aesthetic resources are considered **cumulatively less than significant.**

Future development in the Specific Plan Area could result in beneficial aesthetics impacts to the extent that surface parking fields that are visually prominent are replaced with views of new buildings and landscaping (Plate AE-1 in Chapter 3, “Aesthetics”). Pursuant to proposed Specific Plan design standards, the existing foreground views of parking lots would be replaced as parking associated with redevelopment would be reduced and would be moved to the side or back of new development, which would improve the visual character for those traveling along Watt Avenue and other transportation routes in the Specific Plan Area. The proposed Specific Plan would also result in aesthetics improvements in the form of landscaping along Watt Avenue and along major east-west streets, as well as landscape focal points at these major street intersections with Watt Avenue. New parks and open spaces, including trails, within the Specific Plan Area would also provide aesthetics benefits. The Re-imagine North Watt Corridor Plan, which would occur within the Specific Plan Area, would also result in improved visual character and quality resulting from proposed streetscape and landscape improvements in public rights-of-way. Other future development within the north-central area of the unincorporated County and the northeastern city of Sacramento would also be required to comply with applicable County and City standards that govern development (including lot sizes and lot coverage, setbacks, heights, landscaping, walls and fences, and parking, all of which directly influence aesthetics), as well as applicable County and City design standards (which guide features as storefront windows and entrances, awnings, arcades, building projections, and/or architectural details, as well as shielding of light fixtures to reduce light

spillover). Therefore, the proposed Specific Plan's contribution to cumulative impacts related to degradation of visual character, conflicts with zoning or other regulations governing scenic quality, and substantial increases in nighttime light and glare would be **less than cumulatively considerable**.

AIR QUALITY

By its nature, air pollution is largely a cumulative impact. The implementation of plans and projects within the Sacramento Valley Air Basin would contribute to this impact on a cumulative basis. The emissions of an individual project may be individually limited but cumulatively considerable when taken in combination with past, present, and future development projects. All new development that would result in an increase in air pollutant emissions would contribute to cumulative construction air quality impacts. The nonattainment status of regional pollutants is a result of past and present development within the air basin and nonattainment of federal and state ozone precursor and particular matter standards is a **significant cumulative** impact.

GENERATION OF SHORT-TERM CONSTRUCTION-RELATED EMISSIONS OF CRITERIA AIR POLLUTANTS AND PRECURSORS FOR WHICH THE REGION IS IN NONATTAINMENT, AND CONFLICT WITH OR OBSTRUCT AND AIR QUALITY PLAN

Construction-related activities associated with future development in the unincorporated areas of north-central Sacramento County and northeastern city of Sacramento, including the proposed Specific Plan, would result in temporary emissions of criteria air pollutants from ground disturbing activities, exhaust emissions from use of off-road equipment, material delivery, and construction worker commutes, building construction, asphalt paving, and application of architectural coatings. Daily activities associated with construction would generate criteria air pollutant and precursor emissions from mobile, energy, and area sources. Implementing Mitigation Measures AQ-1a and AQ-1b would reduce the proposed Specific Plan impacts to a less-than-significant level. Although Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District (SMAQMD) and County policies and regulations would reduce construction-related emissions associated with other future infill and development in the unincorporated areas of north-central Sacramento County and northeastern city of Sacramento, the effectiveness of these measures would depend on the number and extent of strategies feasible to incorporate in any given project. Because the timing and level of construction activities and specific projects to be implemented each year is unknown, it is not possible to estimate the extent to which the reduction strategies would result in emission reductions. Therefore, implementation of the proposed Specific Plan could combine with cumulative emissions and hamper implementation of the applicable air quality plan and result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of criteria air pollutants for which the project region is designated a nonattainment area under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard. Therefore, the impact of the proposed Specific Plan would be **cumulatively considerable** and **significant and unavoidable**.

Generation of Long-Term Operational Emissions of Criteria Air Pollutants and Precursors for Which the Region is in Nonattainment, or Conflict with or Obstruct and Air Quality Plan

Future development under the proposed Specific Plan would generate long-term operational emissions that exceed SMAQMD significance thresholds. SMAQMD currently enforces several rules and regulations that would reduce the long-term operational impacts, as described in Chapter 4, "Air Quality". Rules that establish emissions standards for various commercial and industrial emission sources (e.g., internal combustion engines, gasoline dispensing facilities, water heaters and boilers) and ROG concentrations in architectural coatings would help reduce operational emissions. In addition, vehicle emission standards established by the California Air Resources Board, such as the Low Emissions Vehicle Program and On-Road Heavy-Duty Program, would help reduce long-term mobile source emissions. Implementing Mitigation Measure CC-1 and AQ-2 would help to reduce operational emissions; however, emissions of ROG and PM_{10} from the proposed Specific Plan would still exceed the respective SMAQMD thresholds. Even with adherence to County 2030 General Plan and City 2040 General Plan policies, operational emissions from the proposed Specific Plan, combined with implementation of other future infill and redevelopment in the unincorporated areas of north-central Sacramento County and northeastern city of Sacramento, would result in a net increase of criteria air pollutant emissions that would exceed SMAQMD-recommended thresholds of significance. This EIR has included all feasible mitigation. Therefore, the impact of the proposed Specific Plan would be **cumulatively considerable** and **significant and unavoidable**.

Expose Sensitive Receptors to Substantial Mobile-Source (Carbon Monoxide) Concentrations

Carbon monoxide (CO) is a mobile-source pollutant of localized concern. CO hot spots are typically observed at heavily congested roadway intersections where a substantial number of gasoline-powered vehicles idle for prolonged durations throughout the day. Emissions and ambient concentrations of CO have decreased substantially throughout California in the past three decades. The national statewide CO standard is attained statewide in California, and an exceedance of NAAQS or CAAQS in the region has not been recorded since 1993. The SMAQMD CEQA guidance states: "As of June 1, 2018, the US EPA documented that transportation conformity requirements no longer apply for CO in the Sacramento region. Sacramento has demonstrated 20 years of maintenance of the federal 8-hour CO standard" (SMAQMD 2021). Even using other air district screening levels for CO (such as the Bay Area Air Quality Management District which has many high-volume roadways with prolonged idling throughout the day), the proposed Specific Plan would not violate air quality standards for CO nor have the potential to result in CO hotspots. This analysis is based on cumulative traffic volumes contributed from both the proposed Specific Plan and from development outside the Specific Plan Area. With attainment of the CO standard, there is **no significant cumulative impact**.

Expose Sensitive Receptors to Substantial Toxic Air Contaminant Concentrations

The primary TAC of concern generated during construction activities is diesel particulate matter (DPM). DPM emissions from construction throughout the region could create a significant cumulative impact.

Construction of development projects within the Specific Plan Area would generate DPM emissions from the use of off-road diesel-powered equipment required for grading and excavation, paving, and other construction activities, and some of this construction activity could occur proximate to sensitive receptors. However, construction-related emissions will decrease through the buildout of the Specific Plan Area with construction equipment fleet turnover, increased emissions technology, and more stringent emissions standards.

Operation of residential land uses do not typically generate substantial TAC emissions. However, operations of industrial land uses that involve stationary sources, manufacturing processes, and large-scale commercial, warehousing, logistics, or other uses that involve heavy truck traffic could result in substantial TAC emissions. Operational TAC sources also include freeways and high-traffic roads, rail yards, refineries, dry cleaners, and gasoline stations. New development within the proposed Specific Plan would not be anticipated to include distribution centers, gasoline stations, dry cleaning operations, or similar TAC-generating land uses from operations. Land uses such as manufacturing and assembly, warehousing and logistics, and research and development would be allowed within the Employment Flex Zone, but since the area is nearly built out, new development would generate emissions that would represent a **less than cumulatively considerable contribution**.

With implementation of Mitigation Measures AQ-1a, AQ-1b, CC-1, AQ-4a, and AQ-4b, potential TAC emissions from construction and operation of the proposed Specific Plan would be reduced to a less-than-significant level. Development in the Specific Plan Area would occur in phases over approximately 25 years in different portions of the Specific Plan Area, and TACs generated at individual project sites will disperse quickly at a relatively short distance and most equipment that generates emissions moves around project sites during construction. Therefore, even with multiple projects under the proposed Specific Plan under construction simultaneously or a development project under construction at the same time as a phase of construction for the Re-Imagine North Watt North Watt Corridor Plan, the combination of projects would not generate substantial TAC concentrations that could result in adverse health risks. Therefore, the impact of the proposed Specific Plan would be **less than cumulatively considerable.**

Expose Substantial Numbers of People to Objectionable Odors

Implementation of the proposed Specific Plan would generate odors that could be considered objectionable. During construction, the predominant source of power for construction equipment is diesel engines, but construction-related odors would be localized, and would not combine with other odor sources to create any cumulative impact. Similarly, diesel-fueled trucks traveling on local roadways would produce associated diesel exhaust fumes. However, odors associated with diesel fumes, asphalt

paving, and architectural coatings would be temporary and would disperse rapidly with distance from the source.

Operationally, the following land use types are widely considered major sources of odors: wastewater treatment and pumping facilities, chemical manufacturing facilities, sanitary landfills, fiberglass manufacturing facilities, transfer stations, painting/coating operations (e.g., auto body shops), composting facilities, food processing facilities, confined animal facilities, asphalt batch plants, rendering plants, metal smelting plants, and coffee roasters. The proposed Specific Plan would not include establishment of substantial new sources of odorous emissions from these sources, since these uses are either not allowed or the areas where they would be allowed are nearly built out. Other minor and dispersed odor sources include residential and commercial dumpsters, which can be in proximity of sensitive receptors. However, with proper disposal containers and regular trash collection services, odors from residential and commercial dumpsters are typically minimized. As with construction-related odors, operational odors disperse quickly from the source and do not generally combine with other sources of odors to create any cumulative impact. There is **no significant cumulative** impact.

BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

The unincorporated areas of north-central Sacramento County, as well as northeastern city of Sacramento, are already developed with urban land uses and are mostly built out. Therefore, habitat for special-status plants and wildlife, sensitive natural communities, State or federally protected wetlands, or wildlife migratory corridors or nursery sites are unlikely to be present in most areas. However, scattered parcels that are undeveloped which are present throughout the unincorporated areas of north-central Sacramento County and northeastern city of Sacramento may contain biological resources that would be adversely affected by infill development. As urban development expands, habitat for wildlife and plant species is converted to urban uses (i.e., buildings and pavement), which contributes to potential declines in special-status species, sensitive natural communities, and state or federally protected wetlands. Implementation of the County's 2030 General Plan and the City's 2040 General Plan policies and implementation strategies are intended to protect special-status species, habitats, and wildlife corridors by requiring new development, including future infill development on currently undeveloped parcels in the unincorporated areas of north-central Sacramento County and northeastern city of Sacramento, to avoid, minimize, and/or compensate for adverse effects on special-status plant and wildlife and suitable habitat for these species. Furthermore, state, and federal laws and regulations protecting special-status species and their habitats are required to be implemented as a part of all future development projects. However, development throughout this portion of unincorporated Sacramento County and the city of Sacramento, primarily since the 1950s, has converted habitat, including potential habitat for special-status species, to urban development and past, present, and future development in the area represents a **significant cumulative** impact.

Fourteen special-status plant species have the potential to occur in annual grassland or aquatic habitat within the Specific Plan Area. Vernal pool fairy shrimp could be present within the Specific Plan Area in suitable vernal pool or seasonal wetland habitat. Monarch

butterfly breeding has been documented within five miles of the Specific Plan Area and suitable milkweed host plants may be present in annual grassland habitat. Crotch's bumblebee have been documented within five miles of the Specific Plan Area, and suitable habitat for the species is present within the annual grassland and ornamental plantings. Northwestern pond turtles could be present in aquatic habitats and adjacent uplands within the Specific Plan Area. The Specific Plan Area provides marginally suitable habitat for Swainson's hawk. The Specific Plan Area provides nesting habitat for nesting raptors and migratory birds, including white-tailed kite, within undeveloped properties and ornamental plantings in developed areas. The Specific Plan Area provides potential bat roosting habitat in trees, buildings, and bridges and foraging opportunities in annual grassland and aquatic habitats. Woody riparian vegetation is present in narrow bands and patches along intermittent streams within the Specific Plan Area, and sensitive natural communities may be present in mapped annual grassland or aquatic habitat. Intermittent streams and a stockpond are present within the Specific Plan Area, along with potential vernal pools and seasonal wetlands in annual grassland habitat. Undeveloped grassland and aquatic habitats within the Specific Plan Area have the potential to provide nursery (e.g., nest) sites and migratory habitat for common wildlife species. Some native and non-native trees in vacant, semi-rural, and landscaped portions of the Specific Plan Area are protected by the County's Tree Preservation Ordinance, and by County 2030 General Plan Policies, which address the protection of native oak trees, landmark and heritage trees, other native trees, and non-native tree canopy. Implementation of Mitigation Measures BR-1a through BR-1i, BR-2, BR-3, BR-5a, BR-5b, and BR-5c described in Chapter 5, "Biological Resources", would reduce all potential impacts on biological resources attributable to the proposed Specific Plan to a less-than-significant level. The proposed Specific Plan Area is mostly developed, and the vegetation communities have been subjected to extensive modifications and provide little habitat value. In developed areas, vegetation is sparse and typically consists of roadside and ornamental landscape plantings, and in vacant (undeveloped) and semi-rural areas, vegetation is dominated by non-native annual grasses and forbs. Mitigation required would reduce the potential for any impact and therefore, the impact of the proposed Specific Plan would be **less than cumulatively considerable**.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Climate change impacts are inherently cumulative. Chapter 6, "Climate Change" considers the cumulative contribution of implementation of the proposed Specific Plan to the significant cumulative impact of climate change, and concludes that impacts the proposed Specific Plan would be consistent with State, regional, and local plans and policies adopted to reduce GHG emissions, thereby supporting achievement of statewide GHG reduction targets. Additionally, the proposed Specific Plan focuses on relatively compact forms of residential development which are inherently energy efficient. Even more important for GHG emissions is the location of the Specific Plan Area in a low-vehicle miles traveled (VMT) area with access to a mix of complementary land uses (parks, schools, retail, services) and transit. The design and location of the proposed Specific Plan is demonstrated to result in GHG-efficient development, and the more demand for development the County can facilitate in GHG-efficient locations such as the Specific Plan Area, the more the County will move toward its GHG emissions reduction

goals and consistency with the statewide legislative framework for reducing GHG emissions. The impact of the proposed Specific Plan would be **less than cumulatively considerable.**

CULTURAL AND PALEONTOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Because there would be no impact associated with a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource or on unique geologic features, the proposed Specific Plan would not contribute to any cumulative impacts; therefore, no further analysis is required.

CULTURAL RESOURCES

Cultural resources in the region include prehistoric sites and isolated artifacts. During the 19th and 20th centuries, localized urbanization and intensive agricultural use in the region caused the destruction or disturbance of numerous prehistoric sites. During the latter half of the 20th century to the present, the creation and enforcement of various regulations protecting cultural resources have substantially reduced the rate and intensity of these impacts. County 2030 General Plan and City of Sacramento 2040 General Plan policies, in addition to applicable state and federal laws and regulations, are intended to prevent adverse impacts to cultural resources from new development. Most of the area considered in this cumulative analysis is already developed with urban land uses and was previously disturbed by agricultural activities therefore, redevelopment is unlikely to encounter or result in adverse impacts on archaeological resources or human remains. County 2030 General Plan and City of Sacramento 2040 General Plan policies, in addition to applicable state and federal laws and regulations, are intended to prevent adverse impacts to cultural resources from new development throughout the region, including other infill development in unincorporated areas of north-central Sacramento County and northeastern City of Sacramento. However, past, present, and future development in the area has adversely affected cultural resources, and this is a **significant cumulative impact**.

The Specific Plan Area is situated in the indigenous tribal territory of the Nisenan, but has been developed with urban land uses since the 1950s and 1960s. It is highly developed with residential and commercial uses that have resulted in paving, grading, fill, and landscaping, and which contain buildings and structures. No significant pre-contact or historic-age archaeological resources were identified in the Specific Plan Area. Because most of the geographic area considered in this cumulative analysis, including the Specific Plan Area, is built out, an unanticipated discovery of buried archaeological deposits or human remains is unlikely. However, on undeveloped parcels where infill development may occur, there is a potential that these resources could be encountered. With implementation of Mitigation Measure CR-2 required and described in Chapter 7, “Cultural and Paleontological Resources”, the impacts of the proposed Specific Plan on archeological resources and human remains (if any are present) would be reduced to a less-than-significant level. Mitigation Measure CR-2 would prevent damage to or destruction of archaeological resources or human remains from the proposed Specific Plan, and because the Specific Plan Area is mostly developed and there are no

indications of cultural resources, the impact of the proposed Specific Plan would be **less than cumulatively considerable**.

Paleontological Resources

Fossil discoveries resulting from excavation and earth-moving activities associated with development are occurring with increasing frequency throughout the state. The value or importance of different fossil groups varies depending on the age and depositional environment of the rock unit that contains the fossils, their rarity, the extent to which they have already been identified and documented, and the ability to recover similar materials under more controlled conditions (such as for a research project). Unique, scientifically important fossil discoveries are relatively rare, and the likelihood of encountering them is based on the specific geologic rock formations that are present at any given project site. These geologic formations vary from location to location. A review of regional geologic mapping (Gutierrez 2011) indicates that all of the geographic areas considered in this cumulative analysis are underlain by paleontologically sensitive rock formations (i.e., the Riverbank and Turlock Lake Formations). County 2030 General Plan and City of Sacramento 2040 General Plan policies, in addition to applicable state and federal laws and regulations, are intended to prevent adverse impacts to paleontological resources from new development. Most of the area considered in this cumulative analysis is already developed with urban land uses; therefore, redevelopment is unlikely to encounter or result in adverse impacts on unique paleontological resources. However, past, present, and future development in the area has adversely affected paleontological resources, and this is a **significant cumulative impact**.

The Specific Plan Area, along with the other unincorporated areas of north-central Sacramento County and northeastern city of Sacramento, are comprised of the paleontologically sensitive Riverbank and Turlock Lake Formations. Although no unique paleontological resources are known to have been recovered and recorded within the Specific Plan Area, they have been recovered from other areas within the county and city over time in these formations during the process of urban development. Because most of the areas considered in this cumulative analysis, including the Specific Plan Area, are already built out with urban uses, an unanticipated discovery of buried unique paleontological resources is unlikely, and furthermore the presence of unique paleontological resources at any given location is extremely rare. However, there is a potential that unique paleontological resources could be encountered on undeveloped parcels where development may occur. With implementation of Mitigation Measure CR-4 required and described in Chapter 7, “Cultural and Paleontological Resources”, the impacts of the proposed Specific Plan on paleontological resources would be reduced to a less-than-significant level because the mitigation would prevent damage to or destruction of unique paleontological resources from the proposed Specific Plan, and the impact of the proposed Specific Plan would be **less than cumulatively considerable**.

Energy

Development in unincorporated and incorporated areas of Sacramento County, as well as the proposed Specific Plan, would result in increased consumption of electricity and

natural gas related to building operations. This could lead to a significant cumulative impact.

However, the design and construction of buildings in the Specific Plan Area, as well as all other development, are required to comply with the most recently adopted California Building Standards Code (including the Building Energy Efficiency Standards [Part 6 of Title 24] and CALGreen [Part 11 of Title 24]). This would ensure that future development would consume energy efficiently through the incorporation of such features as efficient water heating systems, high performance roofs and walls, and high efficacy lighting. Additionally, while operation of development under the proposed Specific Plan would result in increased energy consumption, energy consumption per capita would be reduced within the Specific Plan Area (as described in detail in Chapter 8, “Energy,”).

Transportation-related energy consumption, which is correlated with VMT, accounts for the greatest proportion of operational energy consumption. Many regulatory requirements reduce VMT, such as SB 375, which requires Metropolitan Planning Organizations to develop land use and transportation scenarios shown to reduce GHG emissions from cars and light duty trucks, reducing energy demand for transportation. To achieve regional reductions in VMT, SACOG’s 2025 Blueprint emphasizes revitalizing existing commercial corridors and main streets, compact growth, local job opportunities, reduced traffic congestion, and investment in public transportation infrastructure. A key implementation activity and critical component of the 2025 Blueprint is the Green Means Go program, which is a regional effort to accelerate infill development and electrify vehicle trips in locally adopted Green Zones. Green Zones are areas identified for infill development where future residents are likely to take fewer and shorter car trips than people in the surrounding community and the region. Further, Green Zones must be planned for growth and supported by local policies and actions that support increased development and redevelopment in the area, such as a specific plan. To accelerate infill development and implement the Green Means Go Program within the North Watt corridor area, the North Watt Corridor Green Zone was established, which is inclusive of the Specific Plan Area. In other words, the Specific Plan Area and immediately surrounding areas have been identified by SACOG as an area where projects that create more infill housing, increase mobility, and reduce VMT should be focused. The proposed Specific Plan would align with the priorities and strategies of SACOG’s 2025 Blueprint to reduce regional emissions by facilitating infill development and compact growth that achieves transportation-related efficiencies, reducing VMT and associated fuel consumption. Additionally, federal and state regulations regarding fuel efficiency standards for vehicles in California would continue to become more stringent, thereby resulting in increased fuel efficiency associated with long-term vehicle travel associated with operations under buildout of the proposed Specific Plan. SACOG’s 2025 Blueprint demonstrates energy efficiencies throughout the region over the life of the Blueprint’s planning horizon. Because regional transportation and building energy use will become more efficient between present and the SACOG MTP/SCS planning horizon (2050), and because the proposed Specific Plan incorporates strategies and promotes efficient energy use, the impact of the proposed Specific Plan would be **less than cumulatively considerable**.

HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

STORAGE, USE, DISPOSAL, TRANSPORT, AND ACCIDENTAL RELEASE OF HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Development in the unincorporated areas of north-central Sacramento County and northeastern city of Sacramento, including the proposed Specific Plan, would involve storage, use, disposal, and transport of hazardous materials to varying degrees during construction and operation. Impacts from these activities are reduced since the storage, use, disposal, and transport of hazardous materials is extensively regulated by various federal, state, and local agencies. Individual development projects are required to implement and comply with all existing hazardous materials laws, regulations, and policies. The proposed Specific Plan does not propose uses that would involve any unusual conditions related to use, storage, disposal, or transport of minor amounts of hazardous materials. Health and safety impacts associated with the storage, use, disposal, and transport of hazardous materials usually occur on a project-by-project basis, rather than in a cumulative manner. There is **no significant cumulative impact**.

Asbestos and lead-based paint are commonly present in older buildings that may be subject to potential redevelopment within the Specific Plan Area and in other unincorporated areas of north-central Sacramento County and northeastern city of Sacramento. However, all project applicants must comply with SMAQMD Rule 902, which requires that an asbestos survey be conducted and filed with the air district, and all asbestos-containing materials must be properly removed by a licensed asbestos abatement contractor. Furthermore, contractors handling the demolition of structures that have more than 100 square feet or 100 lineal feet of lead-based paint are required to comply with 8 CCR Section 1532.1 (Cal/OSHA's Lead in Construction Standard), which addresses the demolition, removal, cleanup, transportation, storage, and disposal of lead-containing material, as well as proper personal protective equipment for construction personnel. Without proper notifications, excavation near underground utilities could create public health hazards for construction workers and nearby residents, employees, and visitors. However, through County Standard Construction Specifications, construction contractors would be required to verify through field surveys and the use of the USA North underground service alert services the locations of all utilities that may be buried and that could be affected by excavation and construction activities at any site within the area considered for this cumulative analysis. Impact would be site-specific. There is **no significant cumulative impact**.

Development in the unincorporated areas of north-central Sacramento County and northeastern city of Sacramento, including the proposed Specific Plan, could result in construction along high-volume highways (particularly those regulated by Caltrans) where high concentrations of aerially deposited lead could be present within 30 feet of the roadway. However, Caltrans has formal procedures that are followed to reduce human health and ecological risks from the reuse of soils contaminated with aerially deposited lead. With implementation of Mitigation Measure HAZ-1a required and described in Chapter 9, "Hazards and Hazardous Materials", impacts associated with the proposed Specific Plan related to aerially deposited lead would be less than significant. The

proposed Specific Plan and other development in the unincorporated areas of north-central Sacramento County and northeastern city of Sacramento could also result in human health and ecological risks from exposure to metals and herbicides along railroad tracks during construction activities. However, with implementation of Mitigation Measure HAZ-1b required and described in Chapter 9, "Hazards and Hazardous Materials", impacts associated with the proposed Specific Plan related to hazardous materials along rail lines would be less than significant. Hazardous materials impacts would be site-specific. There is **no significant cumulative impact**.

Hazardous Emissions or use of Hazardous Materials Within One-Quarter Mile of Schools

Specific Plan-related demolition of existing structures and construction of infill and/or redevelopment of residential uses, along with construction of associated public facilities such as underground water and wastewater pipelines and roadway improvements, could occur within 0.25 mile of several existing schools within the Specific Plan Area. The primary source of hazardous emissions during construction would consist of DPM from the exhaust of construction equipment. With implementation of Mitigation Measures AQ-1a, AQ-1b, AQ-4b required and described in Chapter 4, "Air Quality" and Chapter 9, "Hazards and Hazardous Materials", impacts associated with the proposed Specific Plan from hazardous materials emissions near schools during construction would be less than significant. Furthermore, the County's 2030 General Plan and the City's 2040 General Plan contain policies that require the County and the City to carefully consider the siting of any uses utilizing, producing, or transporting hazardous materials and wastes and discourages their location around any residential, recreational, open space, and public uses, including schools. The California Department of Education enforces school siting requirements, and therefore new facilities would not be constructed within one-quarter mile of facilities emitting or handling materials based on California Department of Education requirements. Finally, permitting requirements for individual hazardous material handlers or emitters include enforcement of Public Resources Code Section 21151.4(a) and 21151.8(a), which would require consultation with the school district and public notification as part of the CEQA environmental review process for any proposed use where construction or alteration of a facility that has the potential to emit hazardous materials would be located within one-quarter mile of a school. These requirements apply to all future development in the unincorporated areas of north-central Sacramento County and northeastern city of Sacramento, as well as the proposed Specific Plan. Impacts would be site-specific. There is **no significant cumulative impact**.

Development on a Hazardous Materials Site (Cortese List)

Although the proposed Specific Plan would result in construction on known hazardous materials sites on the Cortese list, with implementation of Mitigation Measures HAZ-3a and HAZ-3b described in Chapter 9, "Hazards and Hazardous Materials, impacts would be less than significant. Construction associated with development in other areas of north-central Sacramento County and northeastern city of Sacramento could also occur on Cortese listed hazardous materials sites. However, in those cases, environmental site assessments that are specific to each project are required, results would be reported to the Sacramento County Environmental Management Department, and coordination with

the SWRCB and/or California Department of Toxic Substances Control would occur prior to the start of construction activities as required by state and local laws and regulations. Federal, State, and local regulations create and enforce standards for activities at known hazardous materials sites regardless of the amount or scale of use, and remediation is required by all regulatory agencies prior to the start of any construction activities at any hazardous material site. Impacts would be site-specific. There is **no significant cumulative impact**.

Airport Safety Hazards

Future development in the unincorporated areas of north-central Sacramento County and northeastern city of Sacramento could result in the exposure of additional residents and employees to airport hazards associated with Sacramento McClellan Airport (depending on the distance). However, new development applications in proximity to the airport requires review by the Airport Land Use Commission (i.e., Sacramento Area Council of Governments). The McClellan Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan contains land use compatibility guidelines for safety, also requires that land uses in proximity to the airport not include flashing lights, cause excessive glare, generate smoke, attract hazardous wildlife, or generate electrical interference; and may not include hazardous above-ground oil, gas, or chemical storage facilities. The proposed Specific Plan includes policies to ensure compatibility with the McClellan Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan to reduce airport hazards. The County and City require that development to comply with the McClellan Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan. There is **no significant cumulative impact**.

Interference with Adopted Emergency Plans

Future development in the unincorporated areas of north-central Sacramento County and northeastern city of Sacramento would increase the local and regional population would result in transportation improvements that could necessitate temporary, short-term lane closures that could slow emergency vehicles, thereby temporarily increasing response times, and future buildout would increase the number of people who may need to evacuate local or regional areas in the event of an emergency. However, the Sacramento County and City of Sacramento General Plans and codes contain policies and standards, including street widths and turning radii for access by emergency vehicles, based on the anticipated necessary carrying capacities. The unincorporated areas of north-central Sacramento County and northeastern city of Sacramento considered in this cumulative analysis are developed with urban uses and generally built out, including an interconnected grid network of streets that connect with higher volume roadways such as Interstate 80 and State Route 99 that would serve as regional evacuation routes in the event of an emergency. Furthermore, traffic control plans would be required for new development that would require temporary lane closures. Development within the Specific Plan Area, as well as other future development in the unincorporated areas of north-central Sacramento County and northeastern city of Sacramento, would increase the number of residents that could require evacuation in the event of an emergency. However, road improvements within the Specific Plan Area would be subject to the version of the County's Improvement Standards related to street design that are effect at the time of design and construction (currently Sacramento County Department of

Engineering 2018), as well as provisions in the County Municipal Code Title 10 (Vehicles and Traffic) and Title 22 Chapter 22.10 (Design and Improvement Standards), related to roadway widths and carrying capacities. Any necessary emergency evacuations in the vicinity of the Specific Plan Area would be coordinated by County officials through the Sacramento County Office of Emergency Services (SacOES). As discussed in the *Sacramento County Evacuation Plan* (SacCounty OES 2021), law enforcement would be the primary agency for managing the movement of people during an evacuation. Primary evacuation routes in Sacramento County consist of the major interstates, highways, and prime arterial roadways. Traffic conditions are monitored along evacuation routes, and operational adjustments would be made by County officials as necessary during an evacuation to maximize throughput. During an evacuation, County Department of Transportation traffic engineers, along with the California Department of Transportation, to quickly calculate traffic flow capacity and decide which of the available traffic routes should be used to move people in the correct directions and to adjust evacuation routes based on real-time conditions. Furthermore, the County's 2030 General Plan and the City's 2040 General Plan contain policies that require an effective evacuation network, update Emergency Preparedness Plans, participate in drills and trainings with local emergency service providers, and coordinate with local and State Emergency Management agencies to facilitate multi-agency emergency response. There is **no significant cumulative impact**.

HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

WATER QUALITY, EROSION, AND CONFLICTS WITH WATER QUALITY PLANNING

Earthmoving activities associated with development in the unincorporated areas of north-central Sacramento County and northeastern city of Sacramento have the potential to increase erosion and for accidental spills of hazardous materials during construction. During winter storm events, disturbed soils and hazardous materials could be transported downstream to receiving water bodies, resulting in degradation of water quality. Increases in stormwater runoff from construction could cause downstream erosion, sedimentation, and increase turbidity in receiving waters. Most of the area considered in this cumulative analysis is developed with urban land uses, and therefore would not result in substantial increases in impervious surfaces that would create increased pollutant transport. However, contaminated stormwater runoff from operation of new infill development could result in increased pollutant loading due to contact with petroleum and other contaminants deposited on impervious surfaces. Substantial degradation of water quality would result in conflicts with the water quality control plan (Basin Plan). However, all projects affecting one acre or more of land area are required to comply with the SWRCB's National Pollutant Discharge and Elimination System (NPDES) Construction General Permit requirements to implement a SWPPP and BMPs to reduce construction-related erosion. Compliance with the County and City NPDES municipal permit system (MS4) permit is required for all projects by implementing the requirements in the County and City Stormwater Management and Discharge Control Ordinances. The ordinances require dischargers to implement site-specific BMPs designed to reduce pollutants in operational stormwater runoff. The ordinances also include inspection and monitoring requirements. Projects are also generally required to install operational controls to prevent hydromodification, and to

implement Low Impact Development (LID) techniques designed to provide stormwater pre-treatment prior to discharge into the storm drainage systems. The County's 2030 General Plan and City 2040 General Plan also contain policies and implementation measures that apply to all new projects and specifically require that erosion and pollutant transport during construction and operation be prevented. Therefore, there is **no significant cumulative impact**.

Construction associated with infill and redevelopment in the Specific Plan Area has the potential to increase erosion, transport of sediment, and the potential for accidental spills of hazardous materials during construction, which could degrade downstream water quality. Most of the Specific Plan Area is developed, and therefore would not result in substantial increases in impervious surfaces that would create increased pollutant transport. However, vacant properties that are developed under the proposed Specific Plan would result in increased pollutant transport and the potential for associated water quality degradation during project operation. Compliance with the above-listed regulations, standards, ordinances, and permit terms would require development projects to reduce pollution and stormwater runoff generated within the Specific Plan Area through implementation of operation-related LID technologies, hydromodification management, BMPs, and pre-treatment, along with preparation of a SWPPP with associated BMPs designed to control construction-related erosion and pollutants. Furthermore, preservation and restoration of stream corridors through the Specific Plan Area, which may include naturalized drainage features and habitat restoration, as noted in the proposed Specific Plan, would also help to protect water quality and preserve hydrologic functions. All of the above measures would protect water quality as required by the Basin Plan. Therefore, the impacts of the proposed Specific Plan would be **less than cumulatively considerable.**

Groundwater Supplies, Recharge, and Sustainability Planning

Most of the area within north-central Sacramento County and northeastern city of Sacramento is developed with urban land uses. Although infill and redevelopment in these areas could result in localized areas of increased impervious surfaces, the amount of groundwater recharge that would be lost from this development would be very small in relationship to the existing impervious surface coverage. Furthermore, 2030 County General Plan policies require that existing stream corridors, which are the primary source of groundwater recharge, be preserved. Thus, only a minor increase in impervious surfaces would occur from the cumulative projects and the proposed Specific Plan, which would not substantially interfere with groundwater recharge.

Water for the area within north-central Sacramento County and northeastern city of Sacramento, including the Specific Plan Area, is supplied by the Sacramento Suburban Water District (SSWD). Groundwater is the primary source of water. The entirety of SSWD's service area is within the Sacramento Valley Groundwater Basin, North American Subbasin, which is not in a state of overdraft. The Sacramento Groundwater Authority manages groundwater in accordance with the Water Forum Agreement, and the adopted Groundwater Sustainability Plan for the North American Subbasin (GEI Consultants Inc. 2021) as required by the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act.

SSWD's *2020 Urban Water Management Plan* (Brown and Caldwell 2021) demonstrates water supply reliability in SSWD's service area for all water year types through the year 2045, which includes all projected future development in SSWD's service area through the year 2045. Per the Urban Water Management Plan, SSWD projects that it will have a water surplus of more than 54,000 afy in normal water years. In single-dry and multiple-dry years, SSWD will have a surplus of over 9,000 afy. Even after providing water for the projected development in the Specific Plan Area, SSWD would still have a surplus of more than 7,000 afy in dry and multiple-dry years. Therefore, SSWD has sufficient water supply in all water year types to meet existing and projected water demands, including the increased demand for potable water and fire flow from the proposed Specific Plan, and would still have a surplus supply available. Therefore, additional groundwater pumping from the North American Subbasin would not be required to supply the infill and redevelopment within north-central Sacramento County and northeastern city of Sacramento, including the proposed Specific Plan. There is **no significant cumulative impact**.

Stormwater Drainage Systems and Associated Flooding

Most of the unincorporated areas of north-central Sacramento County and northeastern city of Sacramento considered in this cumulative analysis are developed, and therefore development within the area would not result in substantial impacts related to stormwater drainage and flooding. However, development of previously undeveloped parcels would increase impervious surfaces and generate more stormwater runoff, which in some cases could exceed the capacity of existing stormwater drainage systems and result in flooding. However, all new development would be required to provide a combination of on-site drainage facilities and contribution to off-site drainage facilities that would be necessary to detain and convey the runoff, prevent flooding, and provide operational stormwater quality pre-treatment in compliance with the County/City National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System General Permit for Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems. Nonetheless, historic development and associated contributions to localized flooding prior to the establishment of current regulatory standards is considered a significant cumulative impact.

Although most of the Specific Plan Area is already developed with urban land uses that include substantial impervious surfaces, the existing stormwater drainage infrastructure within the Specific Plan Area has been identified as insufficient to convey stormwater runoff under existing conditions. Furthermore, development of previously undeveloped parcels would result in increases in impervious surfaces with increased stormwater runoff. Stormwater runoff discharges to seven creeks that flow through the Specific Plan Area plus Arcade Creek south of the Specific Plan Area. The Master Drainage Plan prepared for the Specific Plan Area identifies the need for drainage improvements in the form of detention basins to capture additional runoff volume, and replacement of storm drains with larger diameter pipes. One detention basin for each of the surface water bodies within the Specific Plan Area plus Arcade Creek, would be needed, for a total of eight detention basins. Modeling results in the Master Drainage Study demonstrate that the peak flow rates for each creek at the downstream limits of the Specific Plan Area with the proposed improvements would reduce peak flow rates under future developed conditions to a level

that would be below existing conditions. In addition, future development in the Specific Plan Area would be required to implement LID features and project controls designed to prevent hydromodification. Because a combination of County-initiated and project-required drainage improvements would be required for development under the proposed Specific Plan to convey stormwater runoff such that flooding would not occur, the impact of the proposed Specific Plan would be **less than cumulatively considerable**.

Impede or Redirect Flood Flows, or Risk Release of Pollutants Due to Project Inundation

Most of the unincorporated areas of north-central Sacramento County and northeastern city of Sacramento considered in this cumulative analysis are developed with urban land uses, and to the extent those uses are situated in flood-prone areas as designated by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) (100-year flooding) or by the Central Valley Flood Protection Plan (200-year flooding), such development already includes required infrastructure for flood protection. Furthermore, all new development is required to implement the respective County or City jurisdiction's Floodplain Management Ordinance, which is intended to prevent new development within regulatory floodways and ensure that any new development within 100- or 200-year floodplains is sufficiently elevated above the base flood elevation and is constructed to withstand the forces of flood flows. The Floodplain Management Ordinances also contain requirements related to protection of any temporary construction staging or storage areas that may be placed in flood-prone areas to prevent release of pollutants. There is no significant cumulative impact.

Most of the Specific Plan Area is outside of any mapped floodplains. The entirety of the Specific Plan Area is outside of the 200-year Urban Level of Flood Protection boundary. However, areas along several of the Robla Creek tributaries, and along Magpie Creek, have been classified by FEMA as special flood hazard Zones AE, AH, and Regulatory Floodways. No development within the Specific Plan Area would be within the Regulatory Floodways. Any development within the Specific Plan Area that occurs within FEMA 100-year floodplains would be subject to the requirements of the County's Floodplain Management Ordinance, which are specifically designed to prevent release of pollutants, structural damage, and loss of life from flooding. Therefore, the impacts of the proposed Specific Plan would be **less than cumulatively considerable**.

Land Use and Planning

The County's 2030 General Plan identifies 14 commercial corridors, including the North Watt Avenue corridor for revitalization. Future development projects within the Specific Plan Area would be supported by infrastructure improvements that would accommodate the proposed new land uses and enhance bicycle, pedestrian, and transit connections throughout the Specific Plan Area. Development under the proposed Specific Plan would connect via access to the existing transportation network, and the improvements to existing transportation network would not divide any neighborhoods or other developed areas. Furthermore, the Re-Imagine North Watt Corridor Plan would introduce vehicular, bicycle, and pedestrian improvements to Watt Avenue that would complement the

proposed Specific Plan. The proposed Specific Plan aims to remove development barriers and facilitate higher density and increased intensity of uses within the Specific Plan Area. The proposed Specific Plan would not physically divide an established community, and because most of the other development in the unincorporated areas of north-central Sacramento County and northeastern city of Sacramento would occur in areas that have been identified for revitalization, there is **no significant cumulative impact**.

CEQA Guidelines Section 15125(d) requires that an EIR analyze the potential for inconsistencies between proposed projects – in this case, the proposed Specific Plan – and other applicable plans. As detailed throughout this EIR, the proposed Specific Plan is consistent with the SACOG MTP/SCS, the regional housing needs assessment, and the County's 2030 General Plan. As explained in Chapter 16, "Transportation", the proposed Specific Plan would result in an improvement in the vehicular travel demand (measured according to vehicle miles traveled or "VMT") in the Watt Avenue corridor, the region will benefit based on the level of new residential development that can be accommodated in the Specific Plan Area, where new development would improve the jobs-to-housing balance and result in lower rates of new criteria air pollutant and GHG emissions through implementation of the proposed transit-supportive infill development. There are no inconsistencies between the proposed Specific Plan and other relevant plans, actions, and regulations that would result in any substantial adverse physical effects under CEQA. There is **no significant cumulative impact**.

NOISE AND VIBRATION

CUMULATIVE NOISE IMPACTS

Cumulative noise impacts consider the combined effect of the proposed Specific Plan in conjunction with other existing, planned, or reasonably foreseeable future projects in the vicinity. For this analysis, cumulative noise impacts may occur where multiple projects contribute to:

- Increased ambient noise levels from traffic, mechanical equipment, or on-site activities; and/or
- Overlapping construction periods that result in concurrent temporary increases in noise levels at nearby sensitive receptors.

The cumulative noise and vibration assessment considered both the planned buildout of the proposed Specific Plan and infrastructure improvements required to serve the Specific Plan Area at buildout, including transportation infrastructure improvements proposed under the Re-imagine North Watt Corridor Plan led by the Sacramento County Department of Transportation. These projects could overlap temporally and spatially, potentially resulting in additive construction noise and operational traffic noise along the corridor. The proposed Specific Plan would result in increases in noise during both construction and operation, including from construction equipment, building mechanical systems, and traffic generated by development projects within the Specific Plan Area.

Cumulative traffic noise conditions under 2050 reflect regional growth and implementation of the proposed Specific Plan within the broader cumulative framework. As shown in Table NOI-15 (in Chapter 12, "Noise"), traffic noise would increase between existing conditions and 2050 as a result of regional growth. The increase in traffic noise along roadways attributable to past, present, and future development is a significant cumulative impact.

Traffic noise levels would increase on some roadway segments under Cumulative Plus Project conditions relative to Cumulative No Project conditions, and certain segments experience increases of 3 dB or greater or greater, which would be considered perceptible, and a smaller number of segments experiencing increases of 5 dB or greater, which would be considered clearly noticeable. In addition, several roadway segments would experience noise levels at or above 65 dBA L_{dn} at distances where existing noise-sensitive land uses are located, which would conflict with applicable County noise standards. Most of the affected roadways do not have existing fronting residential development or other noise-sensitive uses, however there are noise-sensitive uses that would be exposed to cumulative noise in conflict with County standards. There is no feasible mitigation for future traffic noise impacts at existing noise-sensitive uses because the County does not control the affected private properties and because constructing barriers to attenuate noise in outdoor gathering areas would be expensive, would create visibility barriers, could require tree removal, and could interfere with fire or public utilities access. The increase in traffic noise is **cumulatively considerable** and **significant and unavoidable**.

In terms of stationary sources, HVAC systems and other operational equipment would be located on rooftops or within enclosed areas. These systems are expected to comply with applicable noise standards and, as evaluated, would not substantially increase cumulative ambient noise levels in the area.

Construction noise of a development project under the proposed Specific Plan could overlap with a nearby development project or an infrastructure improvement project identified under the proposed Specific Plan. However, due to the temporary and localized nature of construction noise, and the fact that construction noise attenuates with distance, there would not be a significant cumulative construction noise impact related to multiple adjacent construction projects happening simultaneously. Therefore, there is **no significant** cumulative construction-related noise impact.

Cumulative Vibration Impacts

Vibration impacts from construction are highly localized and attenuate rapidly with distance. The primary source of vibration from development projects and infrastructure improvement projects under the proposed Specific Plan would be heavy construction equipment, including pile drivers, though based on the anticipated type of construction under the proposed Specific Plan, the County does not anticipate the need for pile driving.

Implementation of Mitigation Measure NOI-2 would reduce the effects of construction-related groundborne vibration in the Specific Plan Area on sensitive receptors to a less-

than-significant level. Therefore, there is **no significant** cumulative construction-related vibration impact.

POPULATION AND HOUSING

Population growth, by itself, is not an environmental impact. However, the direct and indirect effects of population growth, such as housing and infrastructure needed to accommodate population growth, can lead to physical environmental effects. The region is expected to continue to grow through 2050. Regional plans such as the SACOG 2025 Blueprint (MTP/SCS) for the Sacramento region, as well as other county and city general plans, are designed to accommodate population growth, including each jurisdiction's share of the regional needs housing assessment. The physical impact associated with past, present, and future development within the region is a significant cumulative impact.

The County's 2030 General Plan accommodates urban growth within the unincorporated Sacramento County, including through Commercial Corridor Planning, which provides for new residential and commercial growth in compact, mixed-use developments. The 2030 General Plan notes that accommodating new growth within commercial corridors is intended to benefit the existing community through increased local economic activity, improved transit ridership, and additional housing near employment opportunities, resulting in reduced commute traffic (i.e., VMT). The population growth that could be accommodated by the new housing within the Specific Plan Area was accounted for in the County's 2030 General Plan and the SACOG 2025 Blueprint (MTP/SCS). Furthermore, there is no aspect of the proposed Specific Plan that would involve displacement of substantial housing or population. The proposed Specific Plan's impact would be **less than cumulatively considerable**.

PUBLIC SERVICES

FIRE AND POLICE SERVICES

Development in the unincorporated areas of north-central Sacramento County and northeastern city of Sacramento served by the Sacrament Police Department, the Sacramento County Sherrif, the City of Sacramento Fire Department, and the Sacramento Metropolitan Fire District would result in population increases, which could result in an additional need for additional fire protection staff, equipment or facilities. The extent to which impacts would be cumulative in nature would depend on the amount of development within each area served by specific Sacramento Metropolitan Fire District Battalions and Sacramento County Sheriff's Office Districts. All development projects would be required to incorporate California Fire Code, California Health and Safety Code, and CalOSHA requirements, as well as compliance with the Sacramento Metropolitan Fire District standards and requirements in development projects, and would be required to pay the County's or City's fire service development fees, as well as property taxes that fund police services. There is no significant cumulative impact.

Between present and 2050, the County assumes that between 2,100 and 7,260 new dwelling units could be constructed within the Specific Plan Area, providing opportunity for between 3,600 and 19,600 new residents depending on future housing types and

household sizes. Development within the Specific Plan Area would occur in phases over a period of approximately 25 years. There are two fire stations within the Specific Plan Area (Station Nos. 41 and 42) and two fire stations immediately adjacent to the Specific Plan Area (Station Nos. 112 and 114), all of which are within Battalion 5. Although SMFD is in the process of relocating Station Nos. 41 and 42 for improved operations, both would remain within or in proximity to the Specific Plan Area. The adopted travel time standard for Stations Nos. 41, 42, 112, and 114 is 4 minutes. The average response time for all emergency incidents during 2023 from these four fire stations ranged from 7:42 to 9:03 minutes (90 percent of the time). Because development within the Specific Plan Area would be near existing fire stations, firefighters would not have to travel longer distances as compared to existing conditions; however, the population density served by these four fire stations would increase. The new residential units in the Specific Plan Area could result in the need for additional fire protection staff, equipment, or facilities. New facilities could also be required for other development considered in this cumulative analysis. SMFD stated that the relocation and expansion of Station Nos. 41 and 42 are to accommodate anticipated future growth based on projections by SACOG and the County's growth strategy for commercial corridors. SMFD does not anticipate that any further changes would be needed to staffing or equipment based on the proposed Specific Plan (Frye, pers. comm. 2026). With incorporation of California Fire Code, California Health and Safety Code, and CalOSHA requirements, as well as compliance with the Sacramento Metropolitan Fire District standards and requirements in development projects, along with the required payment of the County's or City's fire service development fees, would reduce the dependence on fire department equipment and personnel by reducing fire hazards, assisting in fire suppression, and contributing funding towards fire department personnel, equipment, and facilities. Therefore, the proposed Specific Plan's impact would be **less than cumulatively considerable**.

Based on the Sheriff's Office service goal of 1 sworn officer per 1,000 people, up to 14 additional police officers could be required for the Specific Plan Area to serve the projected population increase. However, based on preliminary consultation with the County Sheriff's Office in 2026, additional staff and facilities would not be necessary to serve development within the Specific Plan Area. If it were determined in the future that a new police station was required, the County or City would prepare a separate CEQA document that would analyze the physical environmental impacts associated with construction and operation of any new police station. New staff, equipment, and facilities that would be necessary to provide additional law enforcement services would be funded by the County or City General Fund, primarily from property and sales taxes, and potentially other mechanisms, to ensure that adequate police protection personnel and equipment are provided. With incorporation of applicable County, City, or Specific Plan development and design standards, as well as compliance with any applicable County Sheriff's Office standards and requirements in new development projects, along with funding through the County's and City's General Fund from ongoing property taxes for development, the proposed Specific Plan's impact would be **less than cumulatively considerable**.

School Facilities

Future development in the unincorporated areas of north-central Sacramento County and northeastern city of Sacramento would result in population increases and therefore additional school facilities could be required in the Twin Rivers and/or San Juan Unified School Districts. However, all new development, including within the Specific Plan Area, is required by law to pay the State-mandated school impact fees that are being levied at the time of development in accordance with Senate Bill 50 to ensure the development of adequate school facilities. Developer fees may be used to finance new schools and equipment and to reconstruct existing facilities. The siting of new schools is regulated by the California Department of Education, not by the local or regional governments. Development of new school facilities will depend on the pace, location, and character of residential development, future regulations and standards of the California Department of Education, and changes in the local and regional demographics, among other factors. There is no significant cumulative impact.

The proposed Specific Plan would result in up to approximately 6,610 new housing units in the Twin Rivers Unified School District, and up to approximately 650 new housing units in the San Juan Unified School District. New development in the Specific Plan Area would occur over a period of approximately **20 to** 25 years. However, in the long term, at full buildout, there would not be enough capacity in the existing Twin Rivers Unified School District elementary schools to accommodate all of the projected elementary school students generated in the Specific Plan Area. The additional elementary students above existing capacity (which could be up to approximately 1,291 students in Twin Rivers) could potentially be accommodated in portable classrooms on the existing school campus, through construction of additional permanent classrooms, through changes in enrollment boundaries, or other strategy determined by the respective school district. However, all new development, including within the Specific Plan Area, is required by law to pay the State-mandated school impact fees that are being levied at the time of development in accordance with Senate Bill 50 to ensure the development of adequate school facilities. Because the California Legislature has declared that payment of the State-mandated school impact fee is deemed to be full and adequate mitigation under CEQA (California Government Code Section 65996), the proposed Specific Plan's impact would be **less than cumulatively considerable**.

Library Facilities

Future development in the unincorporated areas of north-central Sacramento County and northeastern city of Sacramento, including the proposed Specific Plan, would result in population increases and therefore additional library facilities could be required. The *Sacramento Public Library Facilities Vision Plan* (Group 4 Architecture 2023) is a facilities master plan intended to guide decision making about investments in library facilities in Sacramento communities over the next 10 to 20 years. The Vision Plan provides recommendations for the renovation of existing and recommended replacement of libraries. The joint powers authority members of the Sacramento Public Library authority are responsible for the routine and capital maintenance of the library buildings and sites they provide as well as for renovation, expansion, relocation, or replacement as appropriate. The Sacramento Public Library authority is responsible for library furnishings,

materials, equipment, staffing, and custodial services. Funding for Sacramento Public Library operations comes from County and City property taxes, and from City of Sacramento General Fund/Measure U and parcel tax (Measures B and X) revenues. Payment of County- and City-required developer impact fees and property taxes would contribute fair-share funding from future infill and redevelopment projects towards any additional library staff or facility upgrades that may be required in the future, for both the proposed Specific Plan and other future development in the unincorporated areas of north-central Sacramento County and northeastern city of Sacramento. Therefore, the impacts of the proposed Specific Plan's impact would be **less than cumulatively considerable**.

RECREATION

Future development in the unincorporated areas of north-central Sacramento County and northeastern city of Sacramento, including the proposed Specific Plan, would result in population increases that would increase the demand for new recreational facilities, and would increase the use of existing facilities. Several agencies provide parkland recreation services in the region, including counties, cities, and special districts. Each of these areas has their own parkland ratios and standards and is responsible for providing parkland to meet the local demand in accordance with the Quimby Act. County and City general plans and zoning codes contain policies and ordinances that require dedication of parkland and/or payment of in-lieu fees to acquire future parkland. Maintenance of existing parks comes from developer impact fees and County and City general fund tax revenues. Therefore, there is no significant cumulative impact.

Between present and 2050, the County assumes that between 2,100 and 7,260 new dwelling units could be constructed within the Specific Plan Area, providing opportunity for between 3,600 and 19,600 new residents depending on future housing types and household sizes. This new population would increase demand for new and existing parks, as well as recreation facilities. Additional parkland would be required to serve the population increase within the Specific Plan Area, and such parks would be developed on parcels within the Specific Plan Area and/or properties near the Specific Plan Area. Ensuring adequate provision of parkland as the Specific Plan Area is developed over time through coordination with local park districts as discussed in the proposed Specific Plan, would ensure against overuse of existing facilities that may cause their deterioration. Individual park districts have their own standards related to acreage of parkland per 1,000 people. The proposed Specific Plan provides flexibility in applying park standards, in terms of size, facilities, and service areas, so that existing and future needs can be met. As a method to achieve the local park land standards, alternative land dedications may be considered for lands that provide active and passive recreational value and/or by the payment of in-lieu fees. In-lieu fees provided by new development could also be used by the park districts to improve, expand, and maintain existing parks to ensure that accelerated deterioration does not occur. In addition, all new development is required to either provide park lands dedication or pay in-lieu fees. Therefore, the proposed Specific Plan's impact would be **less than cumulatively considerable**.

TRANSPORTATION

For transportation, cumulative conditions are represented by the SACOG 2025 Blueprint (MTP/SCS), modeled in SACSIM23. The SACSIM23 model reflects regional growth and transportation system changes through the 2050 horizon year established in the SACOG Blueprint (MTP/SCS). This includes forecasted population and employment growth, approved and reasonably foreseeable development within Sacramento County, continued buildout of McClellan Park, and implementation of planned regional and corridor-level transportation improvements. The 2050 Cumulative No Project scenario reflects regional growth consistent with adopted land use and transportation plans without implementation of the proposed Specific Plan. The 2050 Cumulative Plus Project scenario incorporates the proposed Specific Plan within that regional growth framework. Regional VMT growth represents a significant cumulative impact.

VEHICLE MILES TRAVELED

For transportation impacts evaluated under CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3, the relevant cumulative metric is VMT. As presented in Table TR-2 (in Chapter 16, "Transportation"), the Specific Plan Area is in a low-VMT area with transit service and would generate VMT per capita that would be more than 15 percent less than the regional average in 2050. The impact of the proposed Specific Plan is **less than cumulatively considerable**.

ROADWAY OPERATIONS

As shown in Table TR-1 (in Chapter 16, "Transportation"), traffic volumes increase on many regional arterials and freeway segments under 2050 cumulative conditions compared to Existing 2020 conditions. These increases are consistent with regional growth assumptions embedded in the SACOG SACSIM model and are not attributable solely to the proposed Specific Plan.

Comparison of the 2050 Cumulative No Project and 2050 Cumulative Plus Project scenarios indicates that the proposed Specific Plan results in localized increases on certain corridor segments and decreases on others due to network redistribution effects. These redistribution effects are inherent to regional travel demand modeling and reflect route choice adjustments as land use patterns and network characteristics evolve.

The proposed Specific Plan does not introduce new regional growth beyond the cumulative planning framework, nor does it add substantial new general-purpose roadway capacity that would fundamentally alter regional travel patterns. Rather, it reallocates growth within an established urban corridor consistent with adopted land use and transportation plans. The impact of the proposed Specific Plan is **less than cumulatively considerable**.

TRAFFIC SAFETY

Cumulative development within the Specific Plan Area and surrounding communities will increase overall traffic volumes and multi-modal activity under SACOG's 2050 cumulative conditions. Increased vehicle, bicycle, and pedestrian activity can increase exposure to

potential conflicts at intersections, driveways, and midblock crossings resulting from safety hazards related to geometric design or incompatible uses.

The 2050 Cumulative No Project scenario reflects regional growth consistent with the SACOG Blueprint (MTP/SCS) and adopted land use plans. Under cumulative conditions, roadway volumes increase throughout the corridor, particularly along major arterial facilities such as Watt Avenue, Roseville Road, and Interstate 80. The proposed Specific Plan incrementally reallocates a portion of regional growth into an infill corridor designated for mixed-use and transit-supportive development.

As discussed under Impact TR-3 (in Chapter 16, “Transportation”), implementation of the proposed Specific Plan does not authorize substandard geometric design, increased design speeds, or unconventional roadway configurations. All future roadway improvements must comply with applicable Sacramento County improvement standards. Access management, driveway placement, and multi-modal crossing treatments remain subject to engineering review and approval. In addition, truck activity would continue to be directed to designated arterial routes and would not be newly introduced onto local residential streets as a result of the proposed Specific Plan. Enhanced pedestrian crossings, median refuge islands, and complete streets cross-sections are intended to improve multi-modal safety relative to existing fragmented conditions.

Because the proposed Specific Plan would not introduce hazardous geometric features, incompatible land uses, or substandard access configurations, and because all improvements remain subject to enforceable engineering standards and review processes, the impact of the proposed Specific Plan is **less than cumulatively considerable**.

Emergency Access

Cumulative development within Sacramento County and the Specific Plan Area will increase overall population, employment, and service demand under SACOG 2050 cumulative conditions. Increased development can increase calls for emergency services and reliance on the roadway network for fire, law enforcement, and emergency medical response. This could represent a significant cumulative impact.

The 2050 Cumulative No Project scenario reflects regional growth consistent with the SACOG Blueprint (MTP/SCS) and adopted County land use designations. Under cumulative conditions, traffic volumes increase on major arterials and freeway facilities serving the Specific Plan Area. However, emergency access is governed by enforceable regulatory standards independent of traffic volume alone.

As discussed under Impact TR-4 (in Chapter 16, “Transportation”), all future roadway improvements and development within the Specific Plan Area must comply with applicable Sacramento County improvement standards, the California Fire Code, and Sacramento Metropolitan Fire District access requirements. These standards mandate minimum unobstructed roadway widths, maximum allowable dead-end lengths, required turnaround geometry, and secondary emergency access for larger developments. Raised medians, traffic calming devices, or access control features must be designed to

accommodate emergency vehicle access where required. No roadway or development project may proceed without fire district review and approval of emergency access provisions. The proposed Specific Plan would not remove existing public streets or reduce required emergency access standards.

Furthermore, implementation of the Re-Imagine North Watt Corridor Plan, which would occur within the Specific Plan Area, would also result in improved roadway access. Because emergency access requirements are mandatory and enforced at the project level, and because the proposed Specific Plan improves overall network connectivity rather than constraining it, implementation of the proposed Specific Plan would not impair emergency access. Therefore, the impact of the proposed Specific Plan is **less than cumulatively considerable**.

Multi-modal Policy Consistency

Cumulative transportation conditions in 2050 reflect implementation of the SACOG Blueprint (MTP/SCS), Sacramento County General Plan policies, adopted complete streets requirements, and planned multi-modal improvements throughout the region. These plans emphasize transit-supportive infill development, reduction of per capita VMT, improved bicycle and pedestrian connectivity, and coordinated land use-transportation integration.

As discussed under Impacts TR-1 and TR-5 (in Chapter 16, “Transportation”), the proposed Specific Plan maintains the adopted roadway hierarchy, preserves planned multi-modal corridors, and reinforces transit-supportive land use patterns along Watt Avenue and 34th Street. The proposed Specific Plan would not eliminate planned transit routes, remove adopted bicycle or pedestrian facilities, or downgrade multi-modal design standards. Instead, it would advance the objectives of the County’s 2030 General Plan by concentrating development within an established arterial corridor served by transit and planned bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

Under cumulative conditions, regional growth will increase travel demand and multi-modal activity. However, the proposed Specific Plan does not introduce land use or circulation changes that conflict with adopted multi-modal policies.

Because the proposed Specific Plan is consistent with, and supportive of, adopted regional and local multi-modal policies, the impact of the proposed Specific Plan is **less than cumulatively considerable**.

Tribal Cultural Resources

Tribal Cultural Resources are sites, features, places, cultural landscapes, sacred places, and objects, with cultural value to a California Native American tribe. A Tribal Cultural Landscape is defined as a geographic area (including both cultural and natural resources, and the wildlife therein), associated with a historic event, activity, or person, or exhibiting other cultural or aesthetic values. Unanticipated Native American human remains would also be considered a Tribal Cultural Resource. During the 19th and 20th centuries, localized urbanization and intensive agricultural use in the region caused the destruction

or disturbance of Tribal Cultural Resources. During the latter half of the 20th century to the present, the creation and enforcement of various regulations protecting Tribal Cultural Resources have substantially reduced the rate and intensity of these impacts. County 2030 General Plan and City of Sacramento 2040 General Plan policies, in addition to applicable state and federal laws and regulations, are intended to prevent adverse impacts to Tribal Cultural Resources from new development. Most of the area considered in this cumulative analysis is already developed with urban land uses; therefore, redevelopment is unlikely to encounter or result in adverse impacts on Tribal Cultural Resources. However, past, present, and future development represents a significant cumulative impact.

The Specific Plan Area is situated in the indigenous tribal territory of the Nisenan, but has been developed with urban land uses since the 1950s and 1960s. It is highly developed with residential and commercial uses that have resulted in paving, grading, fill, and landscaping, and which contain buildings and structures. No Tribal Cultural Resources were identified in the Specific Plan Area. Because most of the geographic area considered in this cumulative analysis, including the Specific Plan Area, is built out, an unanticipated discovery of buried archaeological deposits or human remains is unlikely. However, on undeveloped parcels where infill development may occur, there is a potential that these resources could be encountered. With implementation of Mitigation Measure TCR-1 required and described in Chapter 17, “Tribal Cultural Resources”, the impacts of the proposed Specific Plan on Tribal Cultural Resources (if any are found) would be reduced to a less-than-significant level. County 2030 General Plan and City of Sacramento 2040 General Plan policies, in addition to applicable state and federal laws and regulations, are intended to prevent adverse impacts to Tribal Cultural Resources from new development throughout the region, including other infill development in unincorporated areas of north-central Sacramento County and northeastern city of Sacramento. Because implementation of Mitigation Measure TCR-1 contained in Chapter 17, “Tribal Cultural Resources” would prevent damage to or destruction of Tribal Cultural Resources from the proposed Specific Plan, the impact of the proposed Specific Plan would be **less than cumulatively considerable**.

UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

CONSTRUCTION OF NEW OR EXPANDED UTILITIES

Construction of new infrastructure for utilities and service systems within north-central Sacramento County and northeastern city of Sacramento would result in ground-disturbing activities and operation of construction equipment, which could result in temporary visual impacts from construction equipment and materials, air pollutant emissions and generation of GHGs, loss of habitat for biological resources, potential destruction of unique paleontological resources, temporary handling of small quantities of hazardous materials (e.g., fuels and oils for construction equipment), and short-term lane closures in existing streets during construction. Therefore, the impacts of the cumulative projects would be cumulatively significant.

Construction of improved infrastructure for utilities and service systems necessary to serve the Specific Plan Area would result in similar impacts to those listed above for the cumulative projects. Recommended mitigation measures to reduce the proposed Specific Plan's level of impact are contained throughout all of the topic area chapters of this EIR (Chapters 3 through 18). Even with implementation of these mitigation measures, some of the proposed Specific Plan-related impacts would contribute to regionwide effects (e.g., air pollutant emissions). However, these impacts – including both project-level impacts and cumulative impacts – have been addressed in detail throughout this EIR, and there is no adverse environmental impact from utility expansion or new utilities that has not already been fully addressed. The Specific Plan Area is an existing developed part of unincorporated Sacramento County where existing utilities are available to serve infill development. Therefore, the impact is **less than cumulatively considerable**.

Increased Demand for Water Supply

Most of the area served by the SSWD is already developed with urban land uses. However, infill and redevelopment in these areas could result in localized areas of increased density, which would increase the demand for potable water supply from SSWD. As discussed in detail in Chapter 18, "Utilities," SSWD's *Urban Water Management Plan* considered water demand and supplies in all water year types through the year 2045 (Brown and Caldwell 2021), which includes all projected future development in SSWD's service area through the year 2045. The Urban Water Management Plan determined that SSWD has a water surplus of more than 54,000 afy in normal water years. In single-dry and multiple-dry years, SSWD has a surplus of over 9,000 afy. Even after providing water for the projected infill and redevelopment in the Specific Plan Area, SSWD would still have a surplus of more than 7,000 afy in dry and multiple-dry years. Therefore, there is **no significant cumulative impact**.

Increased Demand for Wastewater Treatment

Most of the area within north-central Sacramento County and northeastern city of Sacramento served by SacSewer for treatment and by SacSewer for collection in unincorporated areas and the City of Sacramento Department of Utilities for collection in incorporated areas is developed with urban land uses. However, infill and redevelopment in these areas would increase demand for wastewater treatment capacity at the EchoWater Resource Recovery Facility. The EchoWater Facility has a designed treatment and permitted discharge capacity of 181 million gallons per day (mgd) with the potential to expand to 218 mgd. The EchoWater Facility receives and treats an average of 135 mgd of wastewater. Therefore, even with the increase in treatment from wastewater generated by the proposed Specific Plan (an increase that is estimated to be approximately 2.3 mgd on average), the EchoWater Facility would still have substantial additional capacity remaining to treat wastewater generated by other projects in the region, in addition to the areas considered in this cumulative analysis. Therefore, there is **no significant cumulative impact**.

Increased Generation of Solid Waste and Compliance with solid waste reduction laws and programs

Most of the area within north-central Sacramento County and northeastern city of Sacramento is already fully developed with urban land uses. However, infill and redevelopment in these areas could result in localized areas of increased density, which would increase the volumes of solid waste and recyclable materials. However, with implementation of construction and operation waste diversion and recycling as required by State laws and local programs, the amount of waste generated would be less than the amount required to meet State targets, and local and regional landfills would have sufficient capacity to serve the projected future development. Construction contractors for all projects, including future development associated with the proposed Specific Plan, are required to comply with the CALGreen Code, which requires that at least 65 percent of construction and demolition waste be diverted from landfills. Residential solid waste from the Specific Plan Area would be collected and hauled by the County. Operational waste generated by proposed non-residential uses would be hauled by permitted haulers as selected by the individual operator, and wastes would be hauled to a variety of local or regional landfills, all of which have capacity for the proposed Specific Plan-related wastes when considering the City's existing and projected solid waste generation rates based on State solid waste reduction targets. Therefore, there is **no significant cumulative impact**.

Growth Inducement

An EIR must discuss the ways in which a proposed project could foster economic or population growth or the construction of additional housing in the vicinity of the project, and how that growth would, in turn, affect the surrounding environment (see CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.2[d]). Direct growth-inducement would result if a project involved construction of new housing. Indirect growth inducement would result, for instance, if implementing a project resulted in any of the following:

- substantial new permanent employment opportunities (e.g., commercial, industrial, or governmental enterprises); or,
- removal of an obstacle to additional growth and development, such as removing a constraint on a required public utility or service (e.g., construction of a major sewer line with excess capacity through an undeveloped area).

Growth-inducement itself is not an environmental effect, but it may lead to foreseeable environmental effects. These environmental effects may include increased demand on utilities and public services, increased traffic and noise, degradation of air or water quality, degradation or loss of plant or animal habitats, or conversion of agricultural and open space land to urban uses.

Development assumptions under the proposed Specific Plan are described in Chapter 2, "Project Description," and the environmental consequences related to the potential growth are analyzed throughout the individual topic areas in Chapters 3 through 18. The actual

level of buildout and the timing of construction and development activities would be subject to market conditions and other factors beyond the County's control or knowledge.

The County's 2030 General Plan accommodates urban growth within the unincorporated Sacramento County in part through Commercial Corridor Planning, which provides for new residential and commercial growth in compact, mixed-use developments. The 2030 General Plan notes that accommodating new growth within commercial corridors is intended to benefit the existing community through increased local economic activity, improved transit ridership, and additional housing near employment opportunities, resulting in reduced commute traffic (i.e., VMT). The 2030 General Plan identifies 14 target corridors, including the proposed North Watt Avenue Specific Plan. The proposed Specific Plan (for the "North Watt Avenue Corridor") is specifically identified in SACOG's 2025 Blueprint for future redevelopment of up to 7,200 dwelling units, with a range of housing types at densities that support transit. The proposed Specific Plan would provide a range of substantial new housing opportunities, particularly for smaller housing units, in an existing developed corridor with transportation options and jobs, and therefore would be consistent with population growth planned for in the County's 2030 General Plan and SACOG's 2025 Blueprint.

The potential physical environmental impacts from the growth envisioned in the Specific Plan Area are evaluated throughout Chapters 3 through 18, and Chapter 20, of this EIR.

IRREVERSIBLE ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGES

Section 15127 of the CEQA Guidelines requires an EIR to address significant irreversible environmental changes where the proposed project involves the adoption, amendment, or enactment of a plan, policy, or ordinance of a public agency. Specifically, the EIR must consider whether "uses of nonrenewable resources during the initial and continued phases of the project may be irreversible since a large commitment of such resources makes removal or nonuse thereafter unlikely" (CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.2[d]). The CEQA Guidelines discuss three categories of significant irreversible changes that should be considered, which are listed below.

- Changes in Land Use Which Commit Future Generations
- Consumption of Nonrenewable Resources
- Irreversible Damage from Environmental Accidents

There are several resources, both natural and built, that would be expended in the construction and operation of the proposed Specific Plan. These resources include the building materials used in the construction of future development under the proposed Specific Plan, and energy in the form of natural gas, petroleum products, and electricity consumed during construction and operation of residential and other land uses. Loss of these resources is considered irreversible because their reuse for some other purpose than Specific Plan buildout would be impossible or highly unlikely. Proposed urban infill and redevelopment under the proposed Specific Plan constitutes an irreversible and

irretrievable commitment of the land resource, thereby rendering land use for other purposes infeasible, except where existing open space resources would be preserved. For the same reason, urban infill development on currently undeveloped parcels would also result in an irreversible and irretrievable loss of plant and wildlife habitat area, because some areas would still be lost to development even after the implementation of mitigation measures to preserve habitat and open space where feasible and practicable. Additionally, although there are no known cultural or Tribal Cultural Resources within the Specific Plan Area, if such resources were encountered during construction and even with mitigation measures that would protect these resources to the maximum extent that is feasible and practicable, these resources could still be lost as a result of urban development; loss of cultural and tribal cultural resources is considered irreversible. Finally, the limited use of hazardous materials during project construction and operation would occur in compliance with all federal, state, and local regulations governing the use, transport, and handling of such materials. As a result, no irreversible damage from accidents is anticipated as a result of project implementation.

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22 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

EIR PREPARERS

County of Sacramento
Community Development Department
Planning and Environmental Review Division

Jessie Shen, Infill Coordinator and North Watt Avenue Specific Plan Project Manager

Julie Newton, Environmental Coordinator

Anastasia Shippey, Senior Planner

Michelle Nagao, Senior Planner

Kristen Hunter, Associate Planner

Alex Pretzer, Associate Planner

Cameron Shew, Principal Civil Engineer, Department of Transportation

EIR CONSULTANTS

AECOM
2020 L St, Suite 300
Sacramento, CA 95811

Matthew Gerken, Project Manager

Mary Nooristani, Planner

Wendy Copeland, Senior Environmental Scientist

Issa Mahmodi, Noise and Transportation Specialist

Chandra Miller, Senior Architectural Historian

Heather Miller, Architectural Historian

Suzanne McFerran, Senior Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Emissions Specialist

Alexandra Haisley, Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Emissions Specialist

Emily Applequist, Senior Biologist

Sarah Daniel, Biologist

Lisa Clement, Senior GIS Specialist

Rachel Leete, GIS Specialist

Ann Campbell, Senior Graphic Designer

Debby Jew, Document Preparation

Area West Environmental, Inc. – Biological Resources
6248 Main Avenue, Suite C
Orangevale, CA 95662
Becky Rozumowicz-Kodsuntie, Senior Biologist

23 RESPONSE TO COMMENTS

LIST OF COMMENTERS AND RESPONSES TO COMMENTS

This chapter of the Final EIR contains comment letters received during the public review period for the Draft EIR.

In conformance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15088(a), the County has prepared written responses to all comments that addressed environmental issues related to the Draft EIR. The focus of the responses to comments is on the disposition of significant environmental issues that are raised in the comments, as specified by Section 15088(c) of the CEQA Guidelines.

LIST OF COMMENTERS ON THE DRAFT EIR

Table 23-1 identifies a number for each comment letter received, the author of the comment letter, and the date received. Each comment letter is included in its entirety for decision maker consideration before each response.

Table 23-1 Comments Received on the Draft EIR

Letter #	Commenter	Date Received
Agencies		
1	Sacramento Area Sewer District, Zoe Wu	September 28, 2026
2	Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District, Carolyn Tran	September 25, 2026
3	Sacramento Metropolitan Fire District, Matt Reiger	September 29, 2026
4	Twin Rivers Unified School District, Mark Storace	September 25, 2026
Organization		
5	Sacramento Regional Transit, Sarah Poe	October 6, 2026
Individual		
6	Qian Xu	August 28, 2026

COMMENTS AND RESPONSES ON THE DRAFT EIR

Each comment letter is reproduced in its entirety and is followed by the response(s) to the letter. Where a commenter has provided multiple comments, each comment is indicated by a line bracket and an identifying number in the margin of the comment letter. The Final EIR considers comment letters and provides text changes, where appropriate, shown in strikethrough for deleted text and underline for corrected and/or clarified changed text.

AGENCIES

LETTER 1. SACRAMENTO AREA SEWER DISTRICT, ZOE WU, SEPTEMBER 28, 2026

Letter 1

SACRAMENTO AREA SEWER DISTRICT
SERVING YOU 24/7

10060 Goethe Road
Sacramento, CA 95827-3553
Tel 916.876.6000
Fax 916.876.6160
www.sacsewer.com

September 28, 2026

Julie Newton
Environmental Coordinator
Planning and Environmental Review
827 7th Street, Room 225,
Sacramento, CA 95814

Subject: **NOTICE OF PREPARATION OF A DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT FOR NORTH WATT AVENUE SPECIFIC PLAN**
APN: **N/A**
File No: **PLNP2023-00256**

Dear Ms. Newton,

The Sacramento Area Sewer District (SacSewer) has reviewed the subject document and has the following comments. 1-1

The North Watt Avenue Specific Plan (Specific Plan) identifies public infrastructure improvements needed to support new infill development, along with strategies to fund and implement these improvements in ways that can attract private investment in both existing properties and future infill projects.

The Specific Plan area encompasses approximately 705 acres along a 4-mile segment of Watt Avenue, north of Interstate-80 (I-80) to Antelope Road/U Street, within unincorporated Sacramento County. The project encompasses the existing North Watt Avenue Corridor Plan area and North Highlands Town Center Special Planning Area (SPA) with minor exclusions and new inclusions. 1-2

SacSewer is not a land-use authority and plans and designs its sewer systems using information from land-use authorities. SacSewer bases the projects identified within its planning documents on growth projections provided by these land-use authorities.

In March 2021, the SacSewer Board of Directors approved the most current SacSewer planning document, the 2020 System Capacity Plan Update (SCP). In February 2013, the SacSewer Board of Directors adopted the Interceptor Sequencing Study (ISS). The SCP and ISS are on the SacSewer website at System Capacity Plans - Sacramento Area Sewer District (sacsewer.com).

Customers receiving service from SacSewer are responsible for rates and fees outlined within the latest SacSewer ordinance. Fees for connecting to the sewer system recover the capital investment of sewer and treatment facilities that serve new customers. SacSewer does not guarantee sewer service 1-3

www.sacsewer.com

Board of Directors
Representing:
County of Sacramento | City of Citrus Heights
City of Elk Grove | City of Folsom
City of Rancho Cordova | City of Sacramento
City of West Sacramento | County of Yolo

Christoph Dobson
General Manager/District Engineer
Rosemary Clark
Director of Collection System Operations
Sonny Lunde
Director of EchoWater Operations
Mike Huot
Director of Policy & Planning
Matthew Doyle
Director of Internal Services
Masiku Tepa Banda
Director of Finance
Nicole Coleman
Director of Communications

or system capacity to the property until the property obtains proper permits to connect to the system and pays all facility impact (capacity) fees. Fees may also be applicable to re-developments. The SacSewer ordinances are on the SacSewer website at Ordinances - Sacramento Area Sewer District (sacsewer.com).

1-3 (Cont.)

As stated in the Environmental Impact Report, SacSewer has received a Level 1 Sewer Study for the North Watt Avenue Specific Plan. Specific future developments within the Specific Plan area may require additional public sewer facilities or upgrades to existing facilities for sewer service. As needed, project proponents may be required to prepare Level 2 or 3 sewer studies prior to submitting improvement plans.

1-4

If you have any questions regarding these comments, please call me at (916) 875-0283.

1-5

Sincerely,

Zoe Wu

Zoe Wu
SacSewer Development Services

LETTER 1 RESPONSE TO COMMENTS

1-1 The County appreciates the Sacramento Area Sewer District's (SacSewer) review of the Draft EIR. Specific responses to SacSewer comments are provided in responses 1-2 through 1-5, below.

1-2 The County appreciates that the 2020 System Capacity Plan Update is the most current SacSewer planning document, and that an Interceptor Sequencing Study was adopted in 2013. As noted in Draft EIR Chapter 18, "Utilities," (page 18-4), the analysis in the Draft EIR relies on the *Level 1 Sewer Study* prepared by Wood Rodgers in 2026, which incorporated information from both documents noted by the commenter.

1-3 The County understands that customers receiving service from SacSewer are responsible for rates and fees outlined within the latest SacSewer ordinance, and that SacSewer does not guarantee sewer service or system capacity to the property until the property obtains proper permits to connect to the system and pays all facility impact (capacity) fees. Fees would be applicable to site-specific projects as they are brought forward for development in the future.

1-4 The County agrees that specific future developments within the Specific Plan area may require additional public sewer facilities or upgrades to existing facilities for sewer service, and that as needed, project proponents may be required to prepare Level 2 or 3 sewer studies prior to submitting improvement plans.

1-5 The contact name and telephone number of the commenter are noted.

LETTER 2. SACRAMENTO METROPOLITAN AIR QUALITY MANAGEMENT DISTRICT, CAROLYN TRAN SEPTEMBER 25, 2026

SACRAMENTO METROPOLITAN AIR QUALITY MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

Letter 2

September 25, 2026 AQMD No: SAC202503794

Julie Newton, Environmental Coordinator
Planning and Environmental Review
827 7th Street, Room 225
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: North Watt Avenue Specific Plan – Draft Environmental Impact Report (PLNP2023-00256)

Dear Julie Newton:

Thank you for providing the Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District (Sac Metro Air District) with the opportunity to review the North Watt Avenue Specific Plan (NWASP) Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR). The plan encompasses 705-acres along a four mile segment of Watt Avenue, north of Interstate-80 to Antelope Road/U Street within unincorporated Sacramento County. NWASP also includes the existing North Watt Ave Corridor Plan area and North Highlands Town Center Special Planning Area with some exclusions and new inclusions. The plan provides a framework to accelerate infill development that will increase economic activity, improve transit, add housing near places of employment, and add new public spaces. 2-1

We offer the following comments for the benefit of air quality and public health considerations.

Mitigation Measure AQ-1b – Reduce Off-Road Equipment Exhaust-Related Emissions 2-2

AQ-1b addresses construction mitigation for off-road diesel-fueled equipment with engines larger than 50 horsepower. As proposed, the DEIR recommends mitigation by meeting or exceeding CARB Tier 4 Final emissions standards.

- The Sac Metro Air District recommends revising Mitigation Measure AQ-1b to incorporate our Enhanced On-Site Exhaust Control Guidance mitigation rather than the proposed CARB Tier 4 Final emission standards. This will allow for better project

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tracking. Alternatively, if the County elects to retain the proposed Tier 4 strategy, please provide an explanation and additional analysis demonstrating how the proposed measure would achieve equivalent or greater emission reductions than implementation of the District's Enhanced On-Site Exhaust Control mitigation.

2-2 (Cont)

Mitigation Measure AQ-4a – Construction-related toxic air contaminants (TAC): Use zero-emission construction equipment where commercially available

AQ-4a applies to construction activities within the plan area that are considered to be within 300 feet of specified sensitive receptors.

- Consider revising Mitigation Measure AQ-4a to require all applicable future development projects implement Sac Metro Air District's Enhanced On-Site Exhaust Control (see Recommendation for AQ-1b) mitigation to reduce construction-related TAC emissions. The mitigation measure should clearly establish these controls as a minimum construction requirement rather than a discretionary measure. For projects with potential health risk impacts to nearby sensitive receptors, additional project-specific analysis and mitigation should be discussed in coordination with the Sac Metro Air District to adequately reduce potential health risks.

2-3

Table CC-1 (pg. 6-22): 2022 Scoping Plan Consistency Evaluation

The DEIR identifies the Transportation Electrification attribute as "Not Included," indicating that the Specific Plan does not include measures to address this Scoping Plan attribute. Transportation electrification is important for reducing transportation-related NOx and GHG emissions and supporting the transition to zero-emission vehicles.

- The Sac Metro Air District recommends that the County incorporate an alternative measure to advance transportation electrification, such as enhanced EV charging infrastructure or other zero-emission vehicle-supportive strategies or provide additional explanation demonstrating how this Scoping Plan attribute would otherwise be adequately addressed.

2-4

Mitigation Measure CC-1: Implement All-Electric Ready Design in New Mixed-Use and Non Residential Development

The Sac Metro Air District supports retaining all-electric-ready infrastructure as a climate change measure; however, pre-wiring alone does not provide a quantifiable or enforceable reduction in criteria pollutant emissions. As currently proposed, the plan does not achieve the required 15% reduction in NOx and VOCs. Additionally, the DEIR acknowledges that emission reductions associated with Mitigation Measure CC-1 are not quantified because the timing and extent of future installation of electric appliances are uncertain. Because of this the plan does not show how CC-1 will be enforced. One of the requirements of a qualified AQMP is that the plan needs to determine what the emission reduction target is

2-5

and apply quantifiable mitigation to demonstrate how that target has been reached. Please see the District's Guidance for Land Use Emissions Reductions 5.0.

- To demonstrate enforceability and compliance with the required NOx reductions, the District recommends requiring zero-NOx appliances as part of the project's Air Quality Mitigation Plan (AQMP). Where zero-NOx equipment is demonstrated to be infeasible, the AQMP should identify and quantify other enforceable mitigation sufficient to achieve the required emission reduction, which may include off-site mitigation or other equivalent emission reduction strategies.

2-5 (Cont)

If you have any questions, please contact me at ctran@airquality.org or (916) 704-0550 for further clarification.

2-6

Sincerely,

Carolyn Tran
Assistant Air Quality Planner | Analyst

c: Richard Muzzy – Program Supervisor, Sac Metro Air District

LETTER 2 RESPONSE TO COMMENTS

2-1 The County appreciates the review and input from the Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District (SMAQMD) and concurs with this summary of the proposed Specific Plan.

2-2 The SMAQMD Enhanced On-Site Exhaust Controls measure, as updated most recently in 2019 (SMAQMD 2019), provides guidance for project applicants to prepare and submit an emissions reduction plan to SMAQMD documenting project construction equipment information, including equipment type, horsepower rating, engine model year, and projected hours of use, and a demonstration that heavy-duty off-road equipment (50 horsepower or more) to be used 8 hours or more during the construction project will achieve a project-wide fleet-average 10 percent NO_X reduction compared to the most recent CARB fleet average. Draft EIR Mitigation Measure AQ-1b requires all construction contractor(s) for projects within the proposed Specific Plan Area and off-site improvements to ensure that off-road diesel-fueled equipment with engines larger than 50 horsepower meet or exceed CARB Tier 4 Final emissions standards.

As described in Chapter 4, "Air Quality," of the Draft EIR, unmitigated maximum daily construction NOx emissions were estimated using the California Emission Estimator Model (CalEEMod) default equipment fleet mix for an initial construction year of 2027. This default fleet mix represents the CARB average fleet mix by calendar year, as documented in Appendix C of the CalEEMod User Guide (CAPCOA 2026). As demonstrated by a comparison of unmitigated and mitigated maximum daily construction NO_X emissions (Table AQ-4 and Table AQ-5, respectively in Chapter 4, "Air Quality," of the Draft EIR), use of Tier 4 Final equipment, as required by Mitigation Measure AQ-1b, would achieve a reduction in NO_X emissions of 67 percent relative to the average fleet (i.e., unmitigated emissions). This level of reduction would exceed the SMAQMD Enhanced On-Site Exhaust Controls Guidance requirement for demonstrating a 10 percent reduction in NO_X emissions. Tier 4 Final construction equipment is currently considered the best available control technology for NO_X emissions reductions; as such, the proposed mitigation measure would achieve equivalent or greater emission reductions than implementation of SMAQMD's Enhanced On-Site Exhaust Controls. Furthermore, the nature and intent of project under the proposed Specific Plan is to implement cost-effective infill development and reduce regulatory and economic barriers to infill development. The proposed mitigation measure provides a more streamlined and consistent approach to emissions reductions without the need to prepare and implement a construction emissions reduction plan for each project under the proposed Specific Plan. Project tracking to ensure compliance with Mitigation Measure AQ-1b and incorporation of Tier 4 Final equipment would be achieved through the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP), as required by California Public Resources Code Section 21081.6.

Therefore, no additional mitigation is required and no change to the Draft EIR is needed.

2-3 Draft EIR Mitigation Measure AQ-4a requires projects to use zero-emissions off-road equipment, where commercially available, for projects that would be within 300 feet of sensitive receptors, would be greater than or equal to 3 acres, and have an existing electrical supply to the construction site.

As described in Response to Comment 2-2, the SMAQMD Enhanced On-Site Exhaust Controls require demonstration of NOx reductions and do not specifically discuss TAC emissions. However, the Enhanced On-Site Exhaust Controls for off-road equipment encourages the use of higher tier engines and, therefore, would have a co-benefit of reduced particulate exhaust (i.e., DPM) emissions. The use of Tier 4 Final equipment, as required by Draft EIR Mitigation Measure AQ-1b, would reduce maximum daily DPM emissions by 80 percent, as shown by the reduction in $PM_{2.5}$ exhaust emissions between the unmitigated and mitigated scenario (Table 2.1 of the mitigated construction CalEEMod output report included in Appendix AQ-1 of the Draft EIR). In addition to Mitigation Measure AQ-1b being required for Impact AQ-4 to reduce construction-related TACs, Mitigation Measures AQ-4a and AQ-4b for construction that is proximate to sensitive receptors (i.e., has elevated potential for localized health [e.g., TAC] impacts), require implementation of additional emissions reduction measures such as zero-emission construction equipment and maintaining staging areas away from sensitive receptors, consistent with additional SMAQMD CEQA Guidance recommendations.

Regarding coordination with SMAQMD, Mitigation Measure AQ-4a requires project applicant(s) to identify and implement feasible mitigation measures to reduce any potentially significant construction-related TAC impact and communicate with SMAQMD to identify measures to reduce exposure of sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations to levels consistent with thresholds recommended by the SMAQMD at the time the project is proposed. Therefore, the commenter's suggestion for projects with potential health risk impacts to nearby sensitive receptors to discuss additional project-specific analysis and mitigation in coordination with SMAQMD to adequately reduce potential health risks is addressed by the existing Draft EIR Mitigation Measure AQ-4a.

Furthermore, the nature of typical construction activities would primarily be development and redevelopment of vacant and underutilized properties in the Specific Plan Area, which is an existing developed area. As such, construction activities would generally not require large amounts of grading and heavy-duty equipment use over large construction sites, but would instead be conducted on relatively smaller parcels to construct infill development with the intent to increase efficiency in the built environment (meeting more modern building standards) and through transportation planning (overall reduced vehicle demand / vehicle miles traveled [VMT] per service population), aligning with regional plans for emissions reductions and addressing existing air quality concerns.

Therefore, no additional mitigation is required and no change to the Draft EIR is needed.

2-4 As described in the consistency evaluation with the Scoping Plan's Transportation Electrification Attribute in Table CC-1 of Chapter 6, Climate Change, of the Draft EIR (pp 6-22), future development projects under the proposed Specific Plan would comply with mandatory CALGreen (Title 24, Part 11) requirements related to the provision of EV charging infrastructure. CALGreen standards are anticipated to be increasingly stringent over time and projects proposed under the Specific Plan would be subject to CALGreen requirements, including those related to provision of EV charging infrastructure, in effect at the time of project application review.

The purpose of the proposed Specific Plan is to facilitate and expedite infill development and investment in the existing, urbanized North Watt Avenue commercial corridor. As discussed in Chapter 6, Climate Change, the Specific Plan Area and immediately surrounding areas have been identified by SACOG as a "Green Zone" under the Green Means Go program, where local jurisdictions will promote infill development, reduce regulatory and economic barriers to infill, and support new transportation options as part of the Green Means Go program in order to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and achieve the region's climate goals. Through the integrated land use and transportation planning achieved through the proposed Specific Plan, mobile source GHG emissions and criteria air pollutant emissions would be decreased by increasing the share of bicycle, walking, and transit use and by shortening vehicle trips. Therefore, the proposed Specific Plan results in direct VMT efficiencies achieved through infill development in areas where existing services and jobs are located. As detailed on pages 16-15, 16-16, and 16-31 through 16-36 of the EIR, the proposed Specific Plan is designed and located to promote and facilitate reinvestment in an existing developed area with transit service, with a focus on compact, transit-supportive residential development and complementary local-serving commercial development – all features that reduce vehicular travel demand. The proposed Specific Plan incorporates active transportation improvements designed to make walking and bicycling to destinations in the vicinity of the Specific Plan Area, including transit stations, safer and more attractive. Residential VMT per capita with the Specific Plan would be 25 percent lower than the region as whole. Non-residential under the Specific Plan is focused on neighborhood-serving and community-serving retail and commercial services that would allow existing and future residents to walk and bike to destinations or for vehicle trips to be shortened. These VMT efficiencies provide a relatively greater GHG emissions benefit than the provision of enhanced EV charging infrastructure. As outlined in CAPCOA's *Handbook for Analyzing Greenhouse Gas Emission Reductions, Assessing Climate Vulnerabilities, and Advancing Health and Equity* (CAPCOA 2024), which includes estimates of potential GHG emissions reductions associated with measures related to land use projects, infill development has the potential to provide up to a 30-percent reduction in GHG emissions from a project/site residential VMT (measure T-55 Infill Development), while providing EV charging infrastructure has the potential to provide up to an 11.9-percent reduction in GHG emissions from vehicles accessing a site (measure T-14 Provide Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure).

Therefore, emissions reductions based on the VMT efficiencies achieved through infill development under the proposed Specific Plan would be equivalent to or greater than emissions reductions achieved through provision of enhanced EV charging infrastructure and this Scoping Plan attribute is adequately addressed.

Additionally, as described in Table CC-1 in Chapter 6, "Climate Change," of the Draft EIR, implementation of voluntary standards for EV charging infrastructure within the Specific Plan Area would add costs to development projects during a time when development such as market-rate multi-family development is shown to be infeasible high construction costs relative to achievable rents (Keyser Marston 2026). Such projects are necessary for the proposed Specific Plan to achieve GHG emission reductions associated with compact, infill development in a low-VMT area, and for the County and other jurisdictions in the region to achieve GHG reduction targets (Sacramento County 2024).

No additional mitigation is required and no change to the Draft EIR is needed.

2-5 Sacramento County General Plan Policy AQ-4 requires submittal of an Air Quality Mitigation Plan (AQMP) to the County for developments that exceed thresholds of significance for ozone precursors (i.e., NO_X and VOCs) as adopted by SMAQMD. The related General Plan Implementation Measure outlines the ingredients of AQMP must address, including emission reduction measures that contribute towards reducing air pollution resulting from indirect sources (defined in the General Plan as a land use that generates or attracts mobile source activity) and a procedure to give credit for other measures required in a project that may also achieve a reduction in emissions. The proposed Specific Plan itself consists of many measures that would inherently reduce mobile source emissions. As described in Chapter 6, "Climate Change," of the Draft EIR, the proposed Specific Plan:

- would facilitate and expedite infill development and investment in the existing, urbanized North Watt Avenue commercial corridor;
- promotes higher-density, transit-supportive development with densities of up to 50 units per acre for the Mixed-Use Neighborhood Zone and 100 units per acre for the Mixed-Use Corridor Zone; and
- supports transit-oriented and pedestrian-friendly development along a major transportation corridor and in proximity to existing transit services.

The proposed Specific Plan promotes General Plan policies focused on reducing air pollutant emissions through appropriate location, mix, and density of development and supportive transportation network, including, from the Air Quality Element:

> Policy AQ-8: Promote mixed-use development and provide for increased development intensity along existing and proposed transit corridors to reduce the length and frequency of vehicle trips.

As discussed in the County's Air Quality Element, the focus of air quality efforts is on mobile-source emissions (Air Quality Element, page 1):

> "*Poor air quality in Sacramento County is largely a result of mobile source emissions. The existing transportation system encourages the use of the single-occupant automobile and does not emphasize efficient use of alternative modes of transit. Land uses in Sacramento County have been planned to accommodate the use of petroleum-fueled vehicles, instead of mass transit, or alternative transportation modes. Air quality planning can only achieve success through the implementation of land use and transportation policies that offer alternatives to automobile oriented development and promote infill development over urban expansion*."

Directing as much development demand to infill locations, particularly regionally designated low-VMT locations, is critical for attainment planning and for the County to achieve its GHG targets (Sacramento County 2024).

As explained in the County's General Plan Land Use Element, "[l]ow-density, auto-oriented development on the urban fringe is not an inevitable byproduct of an increasing population [, but] sprawling and segregated…inefficient and unsustainable land uses are producing serious health, social, economic and environmental consequences… (Sacramento County 2022, Land Use Element pages 1-2). The General Plan is designed to "rectify this status quo" of lower-density, greenfield development, by marshalling County resources and communicating the County's intent "to concentrate a portion of expected growth into previously urbanized areas; to grow intensively rather than extensively; to invest in and revitalize existing communities; to build stronger, more connected and balanced neighborhoods; and to ensure protection of the County's invaluable natural resources from urban encroachment" (Sacramento County 2022, Land Use Element pages 1-2). The proposed Specific Plan implements this direction from the General Plan.

As outlined in the CAPCOA *Handbook for Analyzing Greenhouse Gas Emission Reductions, Assessing Climate Vulnerabilities, and Advancing Health and Equity* (CAPCOA 2024), compact, mixed-use, infill development that matches homes and destinations in proximity with a supportive transit, pedestrian, and bicycle network leads to emissions reductions due to the associated VMT reduction. For example, Providing Transit-Oriented Development has the potential for up to a 31-percent reduction in GHG emissions from project VMT (CAPCOA Measure T-3, Provide Transit-Oriented Development), and would be expected to result in similar ozone precursor emissions reductions as these reductions are linearly associated with a reduction in tailpipe/exhaust emissions. As outlined in the response to comment 2-4 above, infill development such as is proposed in the Specific Plan that allows

residents to access jobs and activities can achieve a GHG reduction of up to 30 percent (Measure T-55, page 224) and would similarly result in overall tailpipe emissions reductions and, therefore, a similar scale of ozone precursor emissions reductions. Therefore, because the inherent design of the proposed Specific Plan and location of the Specific Plan Area promotes development in a low-VMT area and places residential development proximate to employment and overall development proximate to transit, thereby increasing VMT efficiency and reducing related indirect source (i.e., mobile source) emissions per service population, the proposed Specific Plan implements the County General Plan implementation measure for reducing air pollutants and, the Specific Plan itself, serves as the AQMP.

As shown in Appendix B of the Draft EIR, annual mobile-source NO_X emissions are estimated to be 51 tons, or 0.007 tons per service population, for the Specific Plan buildout year (i.e., 2050), assuming the existing service population does not increase within the Specific Plan Area (i.e., service population of 6,962) and assuming no development occurs within the Specific Plan Area. This emissions rate accounts for future emissions reductions from increasingly stringent emissions standards and an increasingly cleaner vehicle fleet mix that would occur by the year 2050, but does not reflect the reductions in VMT per service population from the proposed Specific Plan. Applying the existing mobile source NO_X emissions per service population rate under existing conditions to the anticipated future service population under the proposed Specific Plan (35,044) would result in 258.3 tons of NO_X per year. This represents the level of NO_X emissions that would occur from Specific Plan land uses assuming VMT per service population continues at the same rate as existing conditions for the level of development anticipated under the proposed Specific Plan.

As shown in Appendix B, annual mobile-source NO_X emissions associated with Specific Plan buildout in 2050 are estimated to be 67 tons, or 0.002 tons per service population. This represents a 74-percent reduction in mobile source NO_X emissions under Specific Plan buildout (67 tons) compared to mobile source NO_X emissions that would occur under existing VMT rates (258.3 tons). The proposed Specific Plan provides for low-VMT development in an existing developed area with existing infrastructure that is already committed to urban development and satisfies the regional demand for growth. By directing development to the Specific Plan Area, and through the placement of compact housing near jobs and other destinations in an area with transit access and providing the opportunity for additional local serving retail and services, the County anticipates a 74-percent reduction in mobile-source NO_X emissions. Nonetheless, all-electric ready design is proposed as part of Mitigation Measure CC-1 above and beyond current building code requirements and would further reduce criteria air pollutant emissions over the lifetime of the proposed Specific Plan buildout as appliances are replaced with electric appliances. As outlined in Mitigation Measure CC-1, compliance with the measure will be verified by the County prior to the issuance of building permit(s).

No additional mitigation is required and no change to the Draft EIR is needed.

2-6 The County appreciates the review of the Draft EIR by SMAQMD, and will use the contact information provided for questions.

LETTER 3. SACRAMENTO METROPOLITAN FIRE DISTRICT, MATT REIGER, SEPTEMBER 29, 2026

Letter 3

From: PER-CEQA
To: Shippey, Anastasia; Shen, Jessie; Gerken, Matthew
Subject: FW: PLNP2023-00256
Date: Tuesday, September 29, 2026 1:42:26 PM
Attachments: image001.png

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FYI

Julie Newton, Environmental Coordinator
Planning and Environmental Review
827 7th Street, Room 225, Sacramento, CA 95814 | (916) 876-8502
www.per.saccounty.net
SACRAMENTO COUNTY

Planning and Environmental Review has several customer service options available and appointments can be made for most services. Please see our website at planning.saccounty.gov for the most current information on how to obtain services including office and public counter hours.

From: Rieger, Matthew <Rieger.Matthew@metrofire.ca.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, September 29, 2026 12:13 PM
To: PER-CEQA <CEQA@saccounty.net>
Subject: PLNP2023-00256

You don't often get email from rieger.matthew@metrofire.ca.gov. Learn why this is important

⚠ **EXTERNAL EMAIL: If** unknown sender, **do not** click links/attachments. ⚠
If you have concerns about this email, please report it via the Phish Alert button.

Metro Fire does not have any comments at this time. Once individual projects are scheduled to be built Metro Fire will have comments. 3-1

Matt Rieger
Fire Inspector II
Sacramento Metropolitan Fire District
10545 Armstrong Ave, #310, Mather, CA 95655

(916) 516-6106



Please note my working days are Tuesday through Friday 6:00 AM - 4:00 PM

LETTER 3 RESPONSE TO COMMENTS

3-1 The County is appreciative of the commenter's review. The County will coordinate further with the Sacramento Metropolitan Fire District (Sac Metro Fire) when individual development proposals are brought forward under the proposed Specific Plan.

LETTER 4. TWIN RIVERS UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT, MARK STORACE, SEPTEMBER 25, 2026

Letter 4

TwinRivers
UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

Board of Trustees

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President

Sascha Vogt
Vice President

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Emmanuel Amanfor
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Stacey E. Bastian
Member

Basim Elkarra
Member

Sharon Reichelt
Member

Superintendent

Tu Moua Carroz, Ed. D.

To inspire each student to extraordinary achievement every day!

September 25, 2026

Julie Newton, Environmental Coordinator
Sacramento County Planning and Environmental Review Division
827 7th Street, Room 225
Sacramento, CA 95814

Email: CEQA@saccounty.net

RE: TRUSD Comments – North Watt Avenue Specific Plan Draft EIR – PLNP2023-00256/SCH 2026010390

Twin Rivers Unified School District (TRUSD) appreciates the opportunity to review the North Watt Avenue Specific Plan Draft Environmental Impact Report. The District recognizes the benefits of community reinvestment and additional housing and seeks coordinated planning to ensure that school facilities and safe access to schools can accommodate future development. 4-1

TRUSD's principal concerns involve the range and consistency of development assumptions, the accuracy of school enrollment and capacity information, funding for additional facilities, and coordination as individual projects proceed. TRUSD requests responses to the following comments and corresponding revisions to the Final EIR where appropriate and, where appropriate, the Specific Plan.

1.) Will the County coordinate directly with TRUSD to verify and correct school names, grade configurations, attendance boundaries, enrollment, and capacity throughout the DEIR's text, tables, and maps? 4-2

Table PS-3 identifies 252 available seats at F.C. Joyce, which conflicts with the District's current determination that the campus is at capacity. Please revise this information and all conclusions that rely on it. Identify the dates and sources used for the revised school inventory.

2.) How will the revised analysis distinguish theoretical design capacity from the space actually available to accommodate students at each affected campus? 4-3

Physical Address: 5115 Dudley Blvd. | McClellan, CA 95652
Mailing Address: 3222 Winona Way | North Highlands, CA 95660
916.566.1660 | FAX: 916.566.1784 | www.trusd.net

TRUSD is updating functional capacity based on current programs, student needs, classroom assignments, and the space those programs require. Rooms used for special education, intervention, specialized instruction, and student support cannot automatically be counted as available general education classrooms.

Please coordinate with the District on the best available campus data. Where updated calculations remain in progress, disclose that limitation and evaluate a reasonable range of available capacity rather than presenting unverified design capacity as usable seats. Please also avoid assuming that capacity elsewhere in the District is available to serve this development without evaluating attendance boundaries, program compatibility, and transportation.

4-3 (Cont)

3.) Will the County update the school analysis to consider TRUSD's March 25, 2026 Development Impact Fee Justification Study, replacing reliance on the 2016 study where appropriate, and confirm the District's adopted fee rates and effective dates?

4-4

Please work with TRUSD and its study preparer to determine which student-generation assumptions are appropriate for the housing anticipated in this Specific Plan. The 2026 study uses an aggregate districtwide yield and explains that it cannot distinguish single-family from multifamily student yields. Its existing housing-stock assumptions therefore require evaluation before application to this corridor's proposed housing mix.

Please also resolve the study's Table 5 grade-label overlap "Elementary (TK–8)" and "Middle (7–8)"—before using those factors so students are neither omitted nor counted twice.

4-5

4.) What assumptions produce the range of 2,100–7,260 dwelling units and 3,600–19,600 residents, and which assumptions should public service providers use for planning?

Please provide a transparent comparison of lower, expected, and higher growth scenarios showing housing units, housing types, bedroom mix, occupancy assumptions, population, and resulting student generation. Explain whether the lower and upper housing and population estimates represent matching scenarios.

Please also reconcile the differing population assumptions used across the population, fire protection, police, and solid waste analyses. If different assumptions serve different analytical purposes, explain those differences and demonstrate that school planning does not omit a reasonably foreseeable growth scenario.

5.) Is 7,260 additional dwelling units an enforceable development limit, an anticipated buildout estimate, or solely an environmental analysis assumption?

Please explain how the proposed density ranges, floor-area-ratio provisions, and other applicable development allowances relate to the analyzed maximum. Identify how the County will track approved and constructed development, recognize changes in housing mix or occupancy, and determine when additional environmental review is necessary.

4-6

How will TRUSD receive timely notice when proposed development differs materially from the assumptions used to forecast enrollment?

4-7

6.) Which TRUSD campuses would serve the projected students, and how many students could arrive at each campus during each development phase?

Please provide a parcel-level or development-area forecast tied to verified district and school attendance boundaries, with low, expected, and high enrollment scenarios by grade span. Include anticipated housing occupancy dates and explain the allocation of units between TRUSD and San Juan USD.

4-8

Please evaluate concentrated early development near individual schools, particularly F.C. Joyce, rather than assuming that growth will occur evenly throughout the corridor or over the full buildout period. Distinguish Specific Plan enrollment from other growth already expected to affect the same campuses. 4-9

7.) Will the County recalculate the projected school capacity deficit using verified campus capacities and consistent grade spans? 4-10

The stated 1,291-seat deficit appears to subtract pooled elementary and middle school capacity from combined elementary and middle school student generation, but the resulting deficit is characterized as elementary school demand. Please explain how middle school students can be accommodated without using the same seats also assumed available to elementary students. 4-11

Please also reconcile the Village Middle School row in Table PS-3: enrollment of 138 and design capacity of 653 do not produce the listed remaining capacity of 190. Revise the underlying inputs, calculations, and downstream conclusions as appropriate. 4-12

8.) What evidence supports the assumption that portable classrooms, permanent additions, or attendance-boundary changes can accommodate the projected enrollment?

Please identify which campuses could feasibly expand and distinguish potential options from District-approved projects. Address available land, existing program uses, utilities, restrooms, food service, play space, accessibility, bus and vehicle circulation, and construction while schools remain occupied.

Has the County evaluated whether land may be needed for future educational facilities, whether suitable sites are available, and whether redevelopment could eliminate those opportunities? Please coordinate these planning questions with TRUSD rather than assuming campus expansion or boundary changes are available solutions. 4-13

9.) Will the Final EIR distinguish its reliance on statutory school fees for its CEQA conclusion from the practical question of whether sufficient funding and school facilities will be available when students arrive?

The 2026 fee study identifies a districtwide school facility cost impact of $37.19 per residential square foot compared with a maximum residential fee of $5.38 per square foot. These are districtwide study figures, not a calculated North Watt funding gap, but they demonstrate that developer fees alone do not cover the study's estimated facility costs.

Please acknowledge this limitation and identify opportunities for coordinated facility planning and legally available funding partnerships. Do not assume that future state funding, bonds, or other uncommitted sources will be available or timely. 4-14

10.) How will construction noise be evaluated and controlled when students are in class, testing, receiving specialized services, or using outdoor instructional and recreation areas? 4-15

The DEIR identifies anticipated development approximately 40 feet from F.C. Joyce and describes substantial construction noise. However, NOI-1 specifically addresses nighttime construction. Please explain the basis for concluding that daytime construction will not significantly affect nearby occupied schools. 4-16

Please evaluate actual distances to classrooms and outdoor areas, equipment, duration, and overlapping or successive construction projects. Identify enforceable daytime protections, including advance coordination with TRUSD, barriers, equipment and staging locations, scheduling of particularly disruptive work outside instructional periods where feasible, monitoring thresholds, and required corrective action. Include summer school and before- and after-school programs. 4-17

11.) Which school buildings and outdoor spaces could experience construction vibration or increased traffic noise, and what school-specific evaluation supports the impact conclusions? 4-18

Please distinguish potential building damage from vibration that disrupts instruction or specialized programs. Where warranted, require preconstruction condition documentation, vibration monitoring, protective measures, and a process for responding to exceedances or damage. 4-19

For operational noise, please identify the affected campuses and evaluate exposure during school use, explaining how the roadway noise analysis applies to classrooms and outdoor learning areas. 4-20

12.) How will the County protect students from construction dust and diesel emissions from smaller projects, simultaneous projects, and repeated redevelopment near the same campus? 4-21

AQ-4a and AQ-4b contain three-acre and 300-foot applicability criteria, and AQ-4a also includes electricity and equipment-availability provisions. Please explain the evidence supporting these criteria and how potential school exposure will be evaluated when a project does not qualify for these additional measures. 4-22

Please identify when school-specific screening or a health risk assessment will be required, how combined construction exposure will be considered, and who will verify compliance. Address equipment staging, truck idling, dust monitoring where warranted, school air intakes, outdoor activity areas, and prompt corrective action.

13.) What school-specific analysis will verify safe walking and bicycling routes, crossings, bus access, accessible routes, and drop-off and pick-up circulation as redevelopment proceeds? 4-23

Please identify necessary improvements, funding responsibility, and delivery timing, including how safe routes will be provided if corridor improvements are incomplete when housing becomes occupied.

Construction traffic and detour plans should address school arrival and dismissal, truck routes, access for students with disabilities, and uninterrupted emergency access. Please coordinate with TRUSD on evacuation, bus loading, and family reunification needs rather than relying solely on general roadway standards or private-vehicle evacuation assumptions. 4-24

14.) How will site investigation, demolition, and remediation requirements protect students and staff at nearby campuses from contaminated dust, asbestos, vapors, and other potential releases?

Please explain how the required site assessments and health and safety plans address off-site school exposure, in addition to construction-worker protection. Identify notification procedures, appropriate monitoring, response thresholds, and responsibilities if previously unknown contamination is discovered. 4-25

Where future school sites or expansion areas are considered, please coordinate early environmental suitability screening with TRUSD before relying on those properties as potential capacity solutions.

15.) Will the County establish a formal process for notifying and consulting TRUSD about residential development, infrastructure work, and construction near schools, including projects using subsequent streamlined review?

The District requests early referral of relevant applications; advance notice of construction within one-quarter mile of a campus; access to applicable noise, air-quality, remediation, and traffic plans; and regular updates on approved units, construction, and anticipated occupancy. 4-26

Please identify the responsible County department, timing of notification, compliance-monitoring responsibilities, a designated contact authorized to resolve problems, and the mechanism for requiring corrective action. Explain how these protections will apply across multiple projects and contractors.

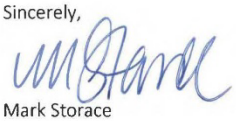
Please also reconcile the DEIR's references to a 20-year development period with the 25-year period discussed in the cumulative school analysis. 4-27

16.) Does the recreation analysis assume additional community use of District facilities or count school property toward future park needs? If so, please identify the property, existing agreements, and assumptions regarding availability, security, maintenance, scheduling, and cost. Additional access to District property should not be assumed without District agreement. 4-28

Please also clarify the historical-resource discussion concerning the former Fruitvale School/F.C. Joyce campus, provide the underlying evaluation, and explain whether adjacent development could affect that resource or create considerations relevant to future campus improvements. 4-29

Please direct all replies to Mark Storace, Executive Director General Services, mark.storace@trusd.net, and to Kristi Hawks, Manager Facilities Planning, kristi.hawks@trusd.net. 4-30

Sincerely,



Mark Storace
Executive Director General Services
Twin Rivers Unified School District
(916) 566-1600 ext 36211

LETTER 4 RESPONSE TO COMMENTS

4-1 The County appreciates that the Twin Rivers Unified School District (District) recognizes the benefits of community reinvestment and additional housing in the North Watt Avenue Specific Plan Area. The proposed project is a Specific Plan, which includes assumptions for infill development within the Specific Plan Area over an approximately 20-year period. The Specific Plan Area was already designed and zoned for development prior to the proposed Specific Plan, and in a way, for development that could have been even more intense compared to the proposed Specific Plan. However, since the original planning and zoning instruments for area were established between 2008 and 2012, the County has not seen the intended pedestrian-oriented and transit-supportive mixed-use development emerge. The proposed Specific Plan does not authorize development that had not already been planned and zoned, but rather is focused more on eliminating regulatory barriers and reducing up-front overall development costs so that the original vision for the area can be realized.

Responses to the specific issues raised by the District, including the range and consistency of development assumptions, the accuracy of school enrollment and capacity information, funding for additional facilities, and coordination as individual projects proceed, are provided in responses 4-2 through 4-30, below.

4-2 For purposes of the EIR, the District's School Facilities Master Plan, as well as attendance boundaries shown on the District's website, and information available from the California Department of Education's DataQuest site (cited throughout Draft EIR Chapter 14, "Public Services"), were used to provide basic information as to the school names, grade configurations, attendance boundaries, enrollment, and capacity. As noted on Draft EIR page 4-17, the sources used for the information presented in Table PS-3 related to the design capacity of each school are the District's *Long-Range Facility Master Plan Updated – October 2021, Facility Assessment* (prepared by PBK Architects in 2021), and the attendance by grade for each school as reported to the California Department of Education for the 2024-2025 school year (available at the DataQuest website). Full citations for all sources used throughout the Draft EIR are provided in Chapter 21, "Bibliography." The District has not provided revised data for either the attendance or the design capacity of the F.C. Joyce school for revision in Table PS-3. Nevertheless, the County appreciates the District's comment that the school is at capacity, and a footnote regarding this has been added to PS-3.

4-3 The proposed project analyzed in the EIR is a Specific Plan, which includes development assumptions over an approximately 20-year timeframe. When future development proposals are submitted under the proposed Specific Plan, the County will review for compliance with applicable standards, including collection of school impact fees. The entire Specific Plan Area had been planned and zoned for development previous to the proposed Specific Plan, including essentially the same allowable land uses and allowable development density and intensity. The proposed Specific Plan is a technical update to the prior land use plans addressing

the two key barriers to development in this corridor: (1) the regulatory hurdles of the development process embedded in the prior plans, and (2) the critical gaps in utility capacity/infrastructure to support development that are undefined. The purpose of the North Watt Avenue Specific Plan is to: implement the County's General Plan for this corridor, and to accelerate infill development that will increase local economic activity, improve transit ridership, add housing near jobs and services, and create new public gathering spaces; to remove regulatory constraints to infill development; and identify public infrastructure improvements needed to support new infill development, along with strategies to fund and implement these improvements in ways that can attract private investment in both existing properties and future infill projects. Therefore, no changes to the Draft EIR to distinguish what the District has characterized as "theoretical design capacity" from the "space actually available to accommodate students at each affected campus in the future" are required. Furthermore, it would not be possible for the County to make these types of determinations, which instead would fall within the purview of the District.

4-4 The proposed project analyzed in the Draft EIR is a Specific Plan, which development assumptions that are used in the analysis reported throughout the EIR. These development assumptions are not County policy – the assumptions are for analytical purposes only. Full implementation of the 2030 General Plan and the proposed North Watt Avenue Specific Plan may involve less development compared to these assumptions, but to the extent that future projects are within the development envelope created by these assumptions, environmental review will be streamlined. This EIR analyzes the "worst case scenario" (i.e., maximum buildout anticipated for the Specific Plan Area) for potential environmental impacts. When future development proposals are brought forward, the current District rates that are in effect at that time, including the detailed calculations as to exactly how those rates apply to different types of development, would be used. The information presented in the Draft EIR regarding the current rates is provided for informational purposes to explain how school fees are collected to fund schools and school services, and has been provided at a sufficient level of detail for general understanding. As stated on Draft EIR page 14-14 in the discussion of school fees, "It should be noted that the amount of developer impact fees changes over time as costs increase." No revisions to the Draft EIR are necessary.

4-5 Please see response to comment 4-3, above. When future development proposals are brought forward, the current District student yield rates that are in effect at the time would be used. With regard to the commenter's request to resolve the apparent overlap among schools that serve both elementary and middle school students, there is not an overlap. The number of elementary and middle school students has been estimated and used for calculation purposes. (Note that Table PS-5 cited by the commenter is related to Sac Metro Fire, and therefore the County assumes the commenter is referring to Table PS-3.) The County has made a good faith effort to present the most current publicly available data in the Draft EIR regarding the District's schools. The comment does not provide any data nor does

it request any specific revisions to the information presented in the tables in Chapter 14, “Public Services.”

4-6 The assumptions used to produce the number of dwelling units and residents used throughout the Draft EIR are explained in Draft EIR Chapter 2, “Project Description.” The same assumptions apply to all topic areas of the Draft EIR, including fire and police. As noted in Chapter 2 of the Draft EIR, “Project Description,” the County “has prepared a detailed set of development assumptions that have been used in the analysis... Full implementation of the 2030 General Plan and the proposed North Watt Avenue Specific Plan may involve less development compared to these assumptions… This EIR analyzes the “worst case scenario” (i.e., maximum buildout anticipated for the Specific Plan Area) for potential environmental impacts.” Because the project is Specific Plan that envisions development that could occur over a 20-year timeframe on a variety of different sites within the North Watt Avenue Specific Plan area, proposed density ranges, floor-area-ratio provisions, and other development issues would be handled on a case-by-case basis as each development proposal is brought forward. The analytical assumption of 7,260 new dwelling units is not an enforceable development limit, but as the commenter suggests, is purely an analytical assumption, which, as noted, represents a very ambitious growth scenario for this corridor. Future development applications under the proposed Specific Plan would be evaluated for consistency with allowable density and/or intensity, allowable land use, and compliance with development and design standards. The County tracks building permits and occupancy permits through an electronic records system, and provides data updates to different agencies and organizations, including summaries of changes in housing resources and conditions as a part of the General Plan Housing Element update process. In terms of when additional environmental review is necessary, it is the County’s intent to avoid or limit the need for additional environmental review as a part of the strategy to encourage and hasten infill development along this “Green Means Go” corridor where the County and region have recognized the multiple benefits of infill development. However, if future development proposals or public infrastructure improvements within the Specific Plan Area would require discretionary approval by the County and could have potentially significant environmental impacts that were not evaluated in the EIR, in general, the County may conclude that additional environmental review is necessary.

4-7 Please see response to comment 4-3, above. TRUSD is one of (and will continue to be) the reviewing agencies for new entitlement projects. For subsequent development projects in the Specific Plan Area that require discretionary planning permits, such as use permits or special development permits to deviate from development standards, the typical development review process would be followed. This includes notifications to partner agencies, like the school district, to review the proposed development project to provide comment and/or conditions of approval to be placed on the discretionary planning permits.

4-8 The exact school campuses that would be used to serve new students within the Specific Plan Area would be determined by the District when development proposals are brought forward in the future. Because the project is Specific Plan that envisions development that could occur over a 20-year timeframe on a variety of different sites within the North Watt Avenue Specific Plan Area, the parcel-level or development-area forecast tied to verified district and school attendance boundaries, with low, expected, and high enrollment scenarios by grade span along with housing occupancy dates and the allocation of units between school districts, as requested by the commenter, is not required nor would it be possible to provide such information at this time. Please see also response to comment 4-3, above. The Specific Plan does not have phases in the same way that "greenfield"/new development proposals might have phases that are linked to the extension of infrastructure since the entire Specific Plan Area is developed and has access to existing infrastructure. While the County is hopeful that many or most of the vacant and underutilized properties within the Specific Plan Area will develop and provide additional housing opportunities, as well as job opportunities and economic development opportunities, nearly all of the properties within the Specific Plan Area are privately owned. The County has no direct control over the ordering of future development proposals or the character or scale of such applications, with the exception of the standards included in the proposed Specific Plan. Please see also the response to comment 4-6.

4-9 Because the project is a Specific Plan that envisions development that could occur over a 20-year timeframe on a variety of different sites within the North Watt Avenue Specific Plan area, an evaluation of concentrated early development near individual schools, or an attempt to distinguish Specific Plan enrollment from other growth already expected to affect the same campuses, is not required nor would it be possible at this time. Please see also response to comment 4-3, above.

4-10 The District has not provided any specific data request changes to the Draft EIR; therefore, no changes can be made. As noted in Table PS-3, the calculations are estimates based on publicly available data. Please see also response to comment 4-2, above.

4-11 The commenter is correct: a deficiency in existing school capacity results in a demand for additional school facility space. The County appreciates the concern raised by the commenter; however, the analysis in Draft EIR Chapter 14, "Public Services," does not assume that the same seats would be used for both elementary and middle school students. Because the information was not publicly available as to the exact capacity of elementary and middle school students, estimates were made for each that were subtracted from the total. Thus, there is no overlap and no double-counting of seats. The County further notes that the District has not provided any formula for calculation that it believes should be used, nor any specific data, indicating that specific numeric changes should be made to this information. As noted in Table PS-3, the data presented are estimates based on publicly available information. No changes to the Draft EIR are required. Please see also the response to comment 4-3, above.

4-12 The County appreciates the District's comment regarding the estimated remaining capacity for the Village Middle School. The math error in this row of Table PS-3 has been corrected as shown in the Final EIR such that the estimated remaining capacity is 515 students rather than 190 students. In addition, the statement regarding the total estimated remaining student capacity on Draft EIR page 14-17, in the next to last paragraph, has been changed from 1,069 elementary and middle school students to 1,394 students. These revisions do not change the impact analysis or the conclusions in the Draft EIR.

4-13 The first paragraph under the heading "Impact Conclusion" on Draft EIR page 14-18 states, "The additional elementary students above existing capacity (which could be up to approximately 1,291 students in Twin Rivers USD) could potentially be accommodated in portable classrooms on the existing school campus, through construction of additional permanent classrooms, through changes in enrollment boundaries, or other strategy determined by the respective school district." Portable classrooms, permanent additions, and attendance boundary changes (which allow students to attend schools with more capacity) are methods that are commonly used by school districts in the state to accommodate increased enrollment. The methods to accommodate additional students would be determined by the District.

The County is not in a position to be able to identify which District campuses could feasibly expand, distinguishing potential options from District-approved projects, and addressing available land, existing program uses, utilities, restrooms, food service, play space, accessibility, bus and vehicle circulation, and construction while schools remain occupied, as requested by the commenter. As noted previously, the proposed Specific Plan does not change the development assumptions, planning, or zoning compared to the previous planning and zoning as related to housing capacity or development assumptions. Rather, the proposed Specific Plan is a technical update to the prior land use plans addressing the two key barriers to development in this corridor: (1) the regulatory hurdles of the development process embedded in the prior plans, and (2) the critical gaps in utility capacity/infrastructure to support development that are undefined. The purpose of the North Watt Avenue Specific Plan is to: implement the County's General Plan for this corridor, and to accelerate infill development that will increase local economic activity, improve transit ridership, add housing near jobs and services, and create new public gathering spaces; to remove regulatory constraints to infill development; and identify public infrastructure improvements needed to support new infill development, along with strategies to fund and implement these improvements in ways that can attract private investment in both existing properties and future infill projects. As noted in the April 2012 North Watt Avenue Corridor Plan EIR, Table PD-4, page 2-15, the previous planning and zoning for the Specific Plan Area also supported a development assumption of 7,200 new dwelling units, which is essentially the same as the maximum development assumption used in the 2026 EIR of 7,260 new dwelling units (Sacramento County 2012). Rather than changing the amount of assumed development, this proposed Specific Plan is focused on removing regulatory barriers to infill development and

decreasing the overall cost of development in order to accelerate investment in this area. To the extent that existing (pre proposed Specific Plan) County plans and zoning were used for the District's 2021 Long-Range Facility Master Plan, there would not be any need for revision.

Similarly, the County is not positioned to evaluate whether land may be needed for future educational facilities, whether suitable sites are available, what sites the District may be pursuing or considering, and whether redevelopment within the Specific Plan could eliminate those opportunities. The Draft EIR evaluates whether the existing schools may, or may not, have capacity to accommodate the projected additional students in the Specific Plan Area based on publicly available data. Please see also response to comment 4-3, above.

4-14 Based on the maximum development assumption for the Specific Plan, the existing Twin Rivers USD schools could accommodate all of the projected new middle and high school students in the Specific Plan Area at full buildout, and the existing capacity could accommodate some of the elementary school students in the short term. As development occurs within the Specific Plan Area, developer impact fees would be collected, and the school districts may pursue a range of options for school capacity based on the timing of development, evolving student generation rates, demographic changes, and other factors. Pursuant to SB 50, future project applicants would be required to pay all applicable school impact fees. See also the response to comment 4-4, above. As stated on Draft EIR page 14-18, "The California Legislature has declared that payment of the applicable school impact fee is deemed to be full and adequate mitigation under CEQA for impacts on school facilities (California Government Code Section 65996)." Therefore, the Draft EIR appropriately concludes (page 14-18) that the impact regarding school facilities would be less than significant. Please see also response to comment 4-13, above.

4-15 The comment asks about construction noise during times when students are in class or using outdoor instruction and recreation areas. In terms of how the County will evaluate construction-related noise, please see pages 12-27 through 12-32 of the Draft EIR and the responses to comments 4-16 and 4-17. As detailed in the Draft EIR, consistent with Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, the focus of the noise evaluation is whether noise levels attributable to the proposed Specific Plan would be consistent with the County's standards. While construction noise would temporarily elevate noise levels, in recognition of the need for infrastructure improvements, new housing, new construction, maintenance of buildings and infrastructure, and repairs to buildings and infrastructure, the County's Noise Ordinance exempts temporary construction noise-generating activities occurring during the daytime. While daytime hours are generally less noise-sensitive compared to nighttime, the County recognizes that this relationship is the opposite for school sites. While there are no public schools within the Specific Plan Area, the Joyce TK-8 School is located at 6050 Watt Avenue, adjacent to the Specific Plan Area. Please see also the response to comment 4-16.

4-16 Regarding daytime construction noise effects on F.C. Joyce School, the Draft EIR evaluates construction noise under Impact NOI-1 (see Draft EIR, pages 12-29 through 12-33). Based on the site information, the nearest potential development area is a relatively small, approximately 31,200-square-foot parcel north of F.C. Joyce School, approximately 50 feet from the nearest school building. The size of this nearby parcel means that the development potential would be limited, and that any construction period would be relatively short in duration, and would not involve extensive excavation or foundation work, which would produce relatively high noise levels. Potential development areas west of the school would be approximately 150 feet away, as measured at the closest point. The properties south of the school are owned by the North Highlands Recreation and Park District and are not expected to have demolition or new construction as a part of implementation of the proposed Specific Plan.

Using the Draft EIR's construction noise assumptions, typical construction activities could generate approximately 85 dBA L_{eq} at 50 feet and 75 dBA Leq at 150 feet, before accounting for shielding. These levels could temporarily interfere with classroom instruction and outdoor activities. Actual exposure would depend on construction equipment, operating duration, location, and intervening buildings or barriers.

Construction on the small northern parcel is expected to involve conventional site preparation, grading, utility installation, building construction, and paving. Pile driving is not anticipated. Construction would be temporary, although the specific duration and sequencing would depend on subsequent development proposals. Simultaneous or successive construction activities could extend the period of exposure.

To further address the District's concerns, the County has included in Final EIR a new mitigation measure, Mitigation Measure NOI-1b, requiring actions to reduce noise exposure for schools.

These requirements will include advance coordination with Twin Rivers USD, equipment and staging setbacks where feasible, maintenance of equipment noise controls, temporary barriers, and scheduling of particularly disruptive activities outside instructional periods, where feasible.

4-17 Regarding the actual distances and anticipated temporary construction noise levels, please see the response to comment 4-16 and the analysis under Impact NOI-1 in the EIR. Regarding overlapping construction projects, the F.C. Joyce School is not in an area with large vacant or underutilized sites where construction is anticipated to occur on multiple adjacent sites simultaneously. Regarding actions to reduce temporary construction noise that could affect the F.C. Joyce School, please see the response to comment 4-16.

4-18 The comment requests clarification of potential construction vibration effects on school buildings and instructional activities, including the distinction between

vibration-related structural damage and disturbance to building occupants. The Draft EIR evaluates construction-generated groundborne vibration under Impact NOI-2. The analysis considers vibration generated by construction equipment, including vibratory rollers and impact pile drivers, and evaluates potential structural damage and human disturbance using separate performance criteria.

Based on the available site information, the nearest potential development parcel north of F.C. Joyce School is approximately 50 feet from the closest school building, while potential development west of the school would be approximately 150 feet away at the closest point. As noted previously, the property to the north of the school is relatively small and therefore, any construction would be limited both in duration and the intensity of excavation and site preparation work, which would generate the highest noise levels and potential for vibration. As also noted previously, the school is not in a location with large, underutilized or vacant properties where the County anticipates extensive construction activities.

As described in the Draft EIR, vibratory roller operation could generate approximately 0.074 inch per second peak particle velocity (PPV) and 85 vibration decibels (VdB) at 50 feet. At 100 feet, predicted levels decrease to approximately 0.03 inch per second PPV and 76 VdB, and at 200 feet to approximately 0.009 inch per second PPV and 67 VdB. At approximately 50 feet, predicted vibratory roller vibration would be below the Draft EIR's structural damage criteria for typical buildings but could exceed the applicable human-response criteria for occupied nonresidential buildings, depending on the frequency of vibration events. Consequently, vibration could be perceptible or disruptive to instructional activities even where structural damage is not anticipated. The Draft EIR identifies human-response criteria of 75 VdB for frequent events, 78 VdB for occasional events, and 83 VdB for infrequent events. The predicted 85 VdB at 50 feet would exceed these criteria, indicating that vibration could temporarily interfere with classroom instruction, testing, or specialized educational activities if vibratory rollers operate at this distance.

Mitigation Measure NOI-2 requires preparation and implementation of a vibration control plan for projects proposing pile driving within 291 feet or vibratory roller operation within 135 feet of an existing building. The measure establishes performance standards for structural damage and human response and requires appropriate equipment setbacks, limitations, vibration monitoring, and additional feasible measures where necessary to achieve the specified standards.

Accordingly, if vibratory rollers are required within approximately 50 feet of F.C. Joyce School, the requirements of Mitigation Measure NOI-2 would apply. The vibration control plan would consider the proposed construction methods, equipment characteristics, distance to existing buildings, soil conditions, and building construction. Monitoring and adjustments to construction methods would be required as specified in the mitigation measure. Where monitoring indicates that the applicable vibration performance standards would be exceeded, construction methods or equipment operations would need to be adjusted to reduce vibration

exposure. Such adjustments could include increasing equipment setbacks, using smaller or lower-vibration equipment, or modifying the frequency and duration of vibration-generating activities. These requirements would also address potential vibration disturbance during school operations.

The construction methods for future development have not been determined. If pile driving is proposed within the distances specified in Mitigation Measure NOI-2, the applicable vibration control and monitoring requirements would apply. Based on the scale of development anticipated under the proposed Specific Plan, the County does not anticipate that pile driving would be employed.

Regarding operational traffic noise, the Draft EIR evaluates operational roadway traffic noise under Impact NOI-3. The analysis uses traffic volumes developed through the current regional travel demand model and the FHWA Highway Traffic Noise Prediction Model to evaluate existing and future traffic noise conditions on roadway segments within and surrounding the Specific Plan Area. Since the proposed Specific Plan would build out over multiple decades, the analysis focuses on a comparison between 2050 Cumulative No Project and 2050 Cumulative Plus Project conditions to identify changes in roadway noise attributable to implementation of the proposed Specific Plan.

School-related properties in the vicinity of the Specific Plan Area include Pacific Career & Technology High School, Vineland Preschool, F.C. Joyce TK–8 School, and the Murchison Center campus of Twin Rivers Adult School. Based on the locations of these campuses relative to the modeled roadway network, there could be an increase in noise levels:

- F.C. Joyce TK–8 School, 100 feet east of Watt Avenue, Modeled Roadway Segment 87: Watt Avenue, Don Julio Boulevard to I Street; 1 dBA increase (please see minor revision to the Final EIR in Table NOI-15, page 12-41)

- Pacific Career & Technology High School, 400 feet west of Don Julio Boulevard, Segment 17: Don Julio Boulevard, Watt Avenue to Walerga Road, 1 dBA increase

- Vineland Preschool, 2,200 feet south of Elkhorn Boulevard, Segment 25: Elkhorn Boulevard, 16th Street to 32nd Street, 1 dBA increase

- Murchison Center, Twin Rivers Adult School, 500 feet west of Watt Avenue, Segment 86: Watt Avenue, A Street to Don Julio Boulevard, 1 dBA increase

- Murchison Center, Twin Rivers Adult School, 50 feet north of James Way/A Street Segment 9: A Street, Skvarla Avenue to Watt Avenue; Segment 54: James Way, Dudley Boulevard to Skvarla Avenue, 11 dBA increase on each segment

The results indicate that the Specific Plan-related increases along the identified roadway segments nearest F.C. Joyce School, Pacific Career & Technology High School, and Vineland Preschool would range from 0 to 1 dBA. These changes would generally be imperceptible and would not represent a substantial increase in roadway traffic noise at these school locations.

At the Murchison Center, however, the estimated increases along A Street and James Way would be approximately 11 dBA. These increases are substantial and are identified in the Draft EIR's Impact NOI-3 analysis. The campus is approximately 50 feet north of James Way/A Street, although intervening buildings and the location of individual classrooms and outdoor areas would influence actual exposure. Therefore, the modeled roadway noise increases should not be interpreted as equivalent increases in total ambient noise at every location within the campus.

The Draft EIR's roadway noise modeling evaluates traffic noise changes along affected roadway segments rather than predicting noise levels at individual classroom façades or outdoor instructional areas. The modeled results assume acoustically hard ground conditions and do not account for localized shielding from buildings, walls, or other barriers.

Traffic noise exposure at school facilities depends on their proximity to affected roadways, the orientation of occupied classrooms and outdoor areas, and intervening shielding. Outdoor instructional and recreational areas may be directly exposed to roadway traffic noise, while building façades generally provide attenuation for interior classroom areas. Actual interior noise levels would depend on building construction and window conditions.

All four campuses have intervening buildings or other developed areas between at least portions of the school facilities and the modeled roadways. These features may reduce traffic noise exposure compared with the unshielded reference conditions presented in the EIR. In particular, Vineland Preschool is approximately 2,200 feet from Elkhorn Boulevard, with substantial intervening development, making a substantial Specific Plan-related traffic noise effect from that roadway unlikely.

Implementation of the Specific Plan would result in varying traffic noise changes across the study roadway network. Some roadway segments would experience increases of 3 dB or more, and a smaller number would experience increases of 5 dB or more compared with the 2050 No Project condition. The Draft EIR identifies the potential for substantial operational traffic noise increases at affected noise-sensitive land uses.

The school-specific review confirms that the roadway noise increases relevant to F.C. Joyce School, Pacific Career & Technology High School, and Vineland Preschool would be relatively minor. In contrast, the Murchison Center is adjacent

to roadway segments with substantial predicted increases, consistent with the potentially significant traffic noise effects identified under Impact NOI-3.

4-19 Please see the response to comment 4-18.

4-20 Please see the response to comment 4-18.

4-21 Development scenarios for buildout of the proposed Specific Plan identified likely parcels for new and redevelopment. Development and redevelopment would be limited in the vicinity of schools. As noted previously, one relatively small property identified for possible redevelopment would be proximate to the closest school as identified in Draft EIR Plate PS-2, F.C. Joyce School, and this parcel would require temporary demolition activities and limited site preparation and grading because the site is already developed. Other potential parcels identified for development or redevelopment would be more than 150 feet from the closest school and nearly all of the potential redevelopment sites are 500 feet or more from the school. Health risks are localized such that simultaneous projects would not result in compounding effects on the same campus. Redevelopment would not occur at distances proximate to the same campus repeatedly.

Draft EIR Mitigation Measure AQ-1a would require implementation of SMAQMD's Basic Construction Emission Control Practices, including watering exposed surfaces twice per day, covering haul trucks, and minimizing idling to 2 minutes. Draft EIR Mitigation Measure AQ-1b would require construction equipment greater than 50 horsepower to meet or exceed CARB Tier 4 Final emissions standards, which would result in reductions in diesel exhaust emissions. As described in Chapter 4, "Air Quality," of the Draft EIR (p. 4-24), SMAQMD's Basic Construction Emission Controls Practices are required to be implemented to apply the non-zero thresholds of significance for PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$; therefore, the unmitigated construction emissions presented in Table AQ-4 account for quantifiable reductions in fugitive dust associated with watering exposed surfaces twice daily as required by the Basic Construction Emission Controls Practices and Mitigation Measure AQ-1a. Additionally, as noted in Chapter 4, "Air Quality," of the Draft EIR, the use of Tier 4 Final equipment, as required by Mitigation Measure AQ-1b, would reduce $PM_{2.5}$ exhaust (i.e., DPM) emissions by 80 percent. Furthermore, Mitigation Measures AQ-4a and AQ-4b are included specifically to address health risk impacts and include additional requirements for projects meeting certain criteria to use zero-emissions construction equipment, locate staging yards away from sensitive receptors, and conduct a site-specific health risk assessment where required as outlined in Mitigation Measure AQ-4b. Implementation of these mitigation measures would protect students from construction dust and diesel exhaust emissions.

4-22 As cited in Chapter 4, "Air Quality," of the Draft EIR, screening tables developed by the Bay Area Air District based on conservative construction assumptions demonstrate that residential and commercial construction projects would result in less-than-significant health risks at distances of approximately 100 meters (330

feet) for project sites smaller than approximately 3 acres (Bay Area Air District 2010). Although this guidance is from a neighboring air district, it is based on detailed scientific analysis and is applicable to informing appropriate screening considerations for the proposed project, including potential health risks to sensitive receptors such as schools. Therefore, as explained on page 4-43 in the Draft EIR, projects meeting these criteria would result in less-than-significant health risks.

Draft EIR Mitigation Measure AQ-4b outlines when a project would be required to conduct a health risk assessment. As detailed in Mitigation Measure AQ-4b, projects meeting certain criteria would be required to implement additional measures to reduce exposure to construction-related TAC emissions, compliance with which is required to be demonstrated prior to approval of subsequent Planning reviews. If a project cannot implement the required measures, a site-specific construction health risk assessment would be required to be prepared and submitted to the County, accompanying any application for subsequent Planning reviews.

Any required site-specific health risk assessment would be conducted in accordance with SMAQMD guidance and would be required to demonstrate that project health risks would be below thresholds (i.e., 10.0 in a million cancer risk and 1.0 hazard index [chronic or acute] non-cancer risk). Projects with health risks below these thresholds would result in less-than-significant impacts related to exposure of sensitive receptors to substantial TAC concentrations. Additionally, as described in RTC 4-21, health risks are generally localized and development near schools under the proposed Specific Plan is limited.

Equipment staging would not be a primary source of emissions. Truck idling would be subject to state regulations that set limitations on the duration of idling (i.e., 5 minutes). Fugitive dust would be limited through implementation of fugitive dust control measures as required by Mitigation Measure AQ-1a. Health risk assessments assume no reduction in concentration from windows being closed or air filters in HVAC systems. Therefore, any health risk assessment would present potential health risks from direct exposure to sensitive receptors at school buildings or outdoor areas, which is a conservative representation, as most noise-sensitive receptors would be inside during the majority of school hours.

The analysis provides opportunities for preemptive corrective actions to address potential health risks prior to the start of construction. Should a site-specific health risk assessment identify potential impacts, additional measures would be required to reduce the impact to a less-than-significant level. Agreed upon feasible mitigation actions shall be documented as a project condition of approval and incorporated on applicable construction demolition and grading plans. Projects under the proposed Specific Plan would be required to be implemented in accordance with the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program.

4-23 As discussed in Chapter 3 of the proposed Specific Plan, the County's Active Transportation Plan (ATP) identifies pedestrian intersection safety enhancement,

sidewalk gap, and bicycle facility recommendations, and assigns priority to these recommendations. Private property development would be required to dedicate public right-of-way or easements for ATP recommendations involving properties proposed for development. For other ATP recommendations, construction of would generally be undertaken by the County using grants or other sources of funding. The transportation improvements identified in the proposed Specific Plan primarily consist of multimodal corridor improvements, access management, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, transit-supportive streetscape improvements, and intersection refinements. They do not include substantial additions of new general-purpose roadway capacity. The proposed transportation improvements emphasize complete streets principles, transit-supportive design, bicycle and pedestrian connectivity, and access consolidation rather than new vehicular roadway capacity. As identified in the County's Local Roadway Safety Plan, unsafe speed is the most important factor in crashes in Sacramento County. Traffic calming strategies can be incorporated into street design (i.e., narrower vehicle lanes, presence of on-street parking, etc.), or an improvement added to streets and intersections. Traffic calming features are typically initiated by neighbors through the County's Neighborhood Traffic Management Program (NTMP) petition process or required as part of private property development when potential issues are anticipated. Within the Specific Plan Area, traffic calming features may be implemented on minor roadways (local or residential streets) where safety concerns, excessive vehicle speeds, or crossing-related multimodal safety issues exist. As discussed in Chapter 5 of the proposed Specific Plan, the County will fund or pursue funding opportunities for certain improvements to meet County Improvement Standards for functional classifications designated within the Specific Plan Area, based on available funding. Improvements consistent with the Re-Imagine North Watt Corridor Plan's Hybrid Urban Boulevard Alternative and recommendations from the County's Active Transportation Plan will be pursued through grant funding or other funding sources separate from private property. The County may establish a financing strategy and direct revenue from to fund backbone transportation improvements.

4-24 Buildout of development consistent with the proposed Specific Plan would occur incrementally over an approximately 20-year period. Construction activities could temporarily affect sidewalk and bicycle facilities, require temporary traffic control, and, if necessary, require temporary relocation of transit stops. Temporary disruptions could include detours, narrowed travel paths, or relocation of transit stops. These conditions would be temporary and phased. All work within Sacramento County rights-of-way requires encroachment permits and compliance with applicable Sacramento County Improvement Standards. Temporary traffic control plans must maintain safe and accessible routes for pedestrians and bicyclists and provide appropriate detours when facilities are temporarily closed. Construction activities would be subject to temporary traffic control and access management requirements to maintain vehicular, transit, bicycle, pedestrian, and emergency access during construction. Per Section 12-4.02 of the County Standard Construction Specifications, the preparation and implementation of a traffic control plan would be required for all construction work performed within the

road right-of-way that modifies vehicular, bicycle, and/or pedestrian traffic patterns. The County will coordinate in advance with Twin Rivers USD if future Watt Avenue improvements would affect any access points.

4-25 Regarding actions to protect students and staff from hazardous materials, in Chapter 9 of the Draft EIR, the County has recommended a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment if Site #18 is developed - 6013 Watt Avenue. Phase I Environmental Site Assessments investigate a property's current and historical uses to identify potential or existing environmental contamination issues and whether any additional analysis or remediation would be required as a part of demolition and development, including actions not only to protect on-site construction workers, but also surrounding people and properties. Existing regulations and how they protect public health and environmental health are detailed throughout Chapter 9 of the Draft EIR.

The County anticipates construction of new development projects and infrastructure improvements throughout the Specific Plan Area, which would involve storage, use, transport, and disposal of small quantities of hazardous materials such as fuels, oils and lubricants, paints and paint thinners, glues, and cleaning fluids, but these are not acutely hazardous materials and the use, transport, and storage of hazardous materials is tightly regulated in California, including under California Health and Safety Code, Division 20, Chapter 6.5, Articles 6.5, 6.6, and 13, California Vehicle Code (CCR Title 13); California State Fire Marshal Regulations (CCR Title 19); U.S. Department of Transportation regulations (Title 49 Code of Federal Regulations); U.S. EPA regulations (Title 40 Code of Federal Regulations); and 22 Cal. Code Regs. Section 66260.10 et seq.). Existing or new facilities that would use hazardous materials during operation within the Specific Plan Area (such as gas stations, dry cleaners, and the existing industrial uses) would be required to obtain permits and comply with appropriate regulatory agency standards designed to avoid hazardous waste releases and protect the public health. Regulated activities would be managed by the Sacramento County Environmental Management Department, and commercial and office workplaces would be required to comply with Cal/OSHA regulations. Future development projects under the proposed Specific Plan that would disturb more than one acre of land, most development projects under the proposed Specific Plan would be required by law to prepare and implement a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan, which would include spill prevention and contingency measures. The proposed Specific Plan is focused on residential development, parks, and small commercial and office development, and does not propose uses that would involve the use, storage, or transport of large amounts or acutely hazardous materials. Businesses that use larger quantities of hazardous materials are required by California Health and Safety Code Chapter 6.95 to prepare and implement a hazardous materials business plan.

Asbestos and lead-based paint could be encountered during demolition activities. Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District Rule 902 requires that an asbestos survey be conducted by a Certified Asbestos Consultant, and an

Asbestos Renovation/Demolition Survey & Notification Form be completed Contractors handling the demolition of structures within the Specific Plan Area that have more than 100 square feet or 100 lineal feet of lead-based paint are required to comply with 8 CCR Section 1532.1 (Cal/OSHA's Lead in Construction Standard), which addresses the demolition, removal, cleanup, transportation, storage, and disposal of lead-containing material.

Excavation and earthmoving activities associated with Watt Avenue improvements, other transportation improvements, or other infrastructure improvements adjacent to the Union Pacific Railroad line could encounter buried pipelines resulting in accidental rupture or leaks, which could cause a hazard. However, Sacramento County Standard Construction Specifications require verification through field surveys and the use of service alert services the locations of all utilities that may be buried and that could be affected by excavation and construction activities so that they may be clearly marked and avoided.

Implementation of Mitigation Measures AQ-1a and AQ-1b would require implementation of emission control practices that would reduce the level of diesel particulate matter emitted by construction equipment, including for construction near schools. Implementation of Mitigation Measure AQ-4b would require future projects to reduce potential construction-related health risks. With implementation of Mitigation Measures AQ-1a, AQ-1b, potential toxic air contaminant emissions from construction-related activities, particularly diesel particulate emissions, would be further reduced. Mitigation Measure AQ-4a would require the use of zero-emission construction equipment where commercially available would require future projects of greater than 3 acres that would include construction activities within 300 feet of sensitive receptors to incorporate actions that would further reduce potential exposure of sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations, such as requiring the establishment of staging areas as far from sensitive receptors as possible and the use of the most current and cleanest available equipment where non-electric equipment is proposed to be used.

Regarding the comment on future school sites, the County is not in a position to conduct school site facilities planning activities.

4-26 As provided in response to comment 4-7, for subsequent development projects in the Specific Plan Area that require discretionary planning permits, the school district will be notified to review and provide comment and/or suggested conditions of approval. As noted in the response to comment 4-16, the County has included in Final EIR a new mitigation measure, Mitigation Measure NOI-1b, requiring actions to reduce noise exposure for schools, including advance coordination with Twin Rivers USD when construction is proposed within 200 feet of the edge of an occupied school classroom building. With regard to the requested access to applicable noise, air-quality, remediation, and traffic plans, please see Chapter 12 of the EIR for details on noise, Chapter 4 of the EIR for details on air quality, Chapter 9 of the EIR for details on hazardous materials, and Chapter 16 of the EIR for details on transportation. With regard to the responsible parties, timing, and

enforcement of mitigation measures required by the EIR, please see the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program, under separate cover. Compliance with mitigation measures is verified through the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program process. In addition, the County's Standard Construction Specifications have notification requirements that are separate from notification required by EIR mitigation measures.

4-27 The cumulative school discussion in Chapter 20 of the EIR has been revised to 20 to 25 years rather than 25 years.

4-28 Regarding the commenter's question on what the recreation analysis assumes, please refer to Chapter 15 of the EIR, "Recreation." As noted, Oakdale Park is approximately 500 feet east of the southern portion of the Specific Plan Area, between Myrtle Avenue and Winona Way and is adjacent to, and part of the Oakdale Elementary School campus, and is available for public use through a Joint Use Agreement with the Twin Rivers Unified School District. Similar to school facilities, the County is primarily not charged with providing local parks and recreational facilities, and instead coordinates with recreation and park districts. The Specific Plan Area is primarily served by the North Highlands Recreation and Park District, though the southern portion of the Specific Plan Area south of Roseville Road is within the Arcade Creek Recreation and Park District. Both park districts have a goal of 5 acres of parkland for every 1,000 people. Within the existing Specific Plan Area, including Freedom Park and Ruth Inman Park, both operated by the North Highlands Recreation and Park District, a total of approximately 7 acres of parkland for every 1,000 residents is currently available. The Specific Plan Area has approximately 124 acres of local-serving parks within 3 miles, including neighborhood parks, some linear parkland, one shared use facility with a school, sports fields, and one or more parks that may be considered community parks based on their size. Existing and future residential development within the Specific Plan Area also benefits from access to regional parks, including Gibson Ranch Regional Park, Cherry Island Golf Course, Cherry Island Sports Complex, and Dry Creek Parkway. While the County is not responsible for local park and recreational facilities in general, recreational amenities for future new residents could include improvements to creek corridors for trails, passive recreational space and, where appropriate, naturalized drainage and/or restoration; enhanced safe and convenient pedestrian and bicycle access to destinations, including parks by implementing the recommendations in the Sacramento County Active Transportation Plan; coordination with park and school districts or other public agencies on new joint-use opportunities; coordination with the park districts to add parks in focus areas that are identified in the park district master plans; implementation of Specific Plan open space design standards, including new publicly accessible private open space areas. The Specific Plan would pursue an approach that plans for access to a variety of recreational opportunities, reduces up-front costs for development, reflects the presence of existing local and regional park space, and credits open space provided as a part of developments. While the analysis does not depend on additional community use of District facilities, there are joint-use agreements in place, and where new joint-

use agreements would have mutual benefits, the County would support the development of such agreements. As noted in General Plan Policy PF-31, “Schools shall be planned adjacent to neighborhood parks whenever possible and designed to promote joint use of appropriate facilities.”

4-29 Regarding the historical resources research related to the Fruitvale Elementary School (now F. C. Joyce Elementary), previous analysis detailed in Chapter 7 of the EIR found the school property eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources under Criterion 1 “for the role it played in the educational development of North Highlands.” The school is not within the Specific Plan Area, as noted in this chapter, and the proposed Specific Plan does not include any actions that would affect the school site or its historical significance. Regarding the commenter’s reference to future campus improvements, the County does not have an opinion as to whether future District campus improvements would have any historical resources impacts pursuant to CEQA.

4-30 The County will use the provided contact information to share the Final EIR.

ORGANIZATION

Letter 5

SACRAMENTO REGIONAL TRANSIT
EST. 1973

October 6, 2026

Julie Newton, Environmental Coordinator

Planning and Environmental Review Division

827 7th Street, Room 225

Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Sacramento Regional Transit District Comments on the North Watt Avenue Specific Plan and Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR)

Dear Ms. Newton,

Thank you for the opportunity to review the North Watt Avenue Specific Plan (Specific Plan) and its Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR). The Sacramento Regional Transit District (SacRT) operates multiple bus routes and many bus stops along this approximately four-mile corridor, as well as the Watt/I-80 light rail station, one of our high-ridership stations. The corridor is therefore very important to our riders and operations. 5-1

SacRT supports the DEIR and has no specific comments on it. Our review of the Specific Plan did generate the comments, questions, and suggestions below, organized by Specific Plan section. We appreciate the Specific Plan's use of SacRT's High-Capacity Bus Study (HCBS) and Bus Stop Improvement Plan (BSIP) as source documents and its emphasis on infrastructure to support potential future bus rapid transit (BRT) and near-term bus stop improvements. 5-2

Land Use & Urban Design

1. Mixed-Use Corridor (MU-C) definition. The MU-C description refers to high-density development, mixed uses, and safe and convenient bicycle and pedestrian access. SacRT requests that the definition be modified to read "bike/ped/*transit* access." Transit is addressed elsewhere in the Specific Plan, but it should also appear in the MU-C definition, given the number of routes, bus stops, and the Watt/I-80 light rail station along the corridor. 5-3

2. Drive-throughs. The Specific Plan prohibits drive-throughs between a building and the public right-of-way and moves them farther from the sidewalk and potential bus stops; however, it does 5-4

Administrative Office
1102 Q Street, Suite 3000, Sacramento, CA 95811

Human Resources
2810 O Street, Sacramento, CA 95816

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not discourage them. Because most of the corridor is designated for transit-oriented development (TOD), SacRT requests that the Specific Plan add TOD language consistent with existing land use policies, plans, and regulations, which prohibit drive-throughs within one-quarter mile of existing or planned high-frequency transit (service every 15 minutes or better). Within the Plan area, the Blue Line at Watt/I-80 light rail station meets this definition. We welcome the County's thoughts on this approach.

5-4 (Cont.)

3. MU-C density and intensity. The Specific Plan proposes a minimum density of 12 and maximum of 100 dwelling units per acre, and a minimum floor area ratio (FAR) of 0.3 and maximum of 3.0. SacRT encourages the County to consider whether higher minimums are appropriate in areas near the Watt/I-80 light rail station with its high-frequency transit service, since density supports ridership.

5-5

4. Tree shade at bus stops. The Landscape Standards describe when, where, and how landscaping is required. SacRT requests that tree shade be provided with new bus stop construction and when existing bus stops are rehabilitated or improved, where feasible. Species and placement should be selected so they do not impact the stop, accessibility, or transit operations, and SacRT would be glad to assist with that coordination.

5-6

Circulation & Public Realm Design

5. Accessible boarding under the 'Hybrid Urban Boulevard'. We appreciate that North Watt Avenue is designated as a "Smart Growth Street", with crossings, lighting, wayfinding, and street furniture. The Specific Plan refers to the Re-Imagine Watt Avenue Plan's 'Hybrid Urban Boulevard' alternative: six lanes with center medians, and 5- to 8-foot sidewalks separated from travel lanes by a landscape strip and a bike lane. SacRT asks how accessible bus boarding is intended to be provided under this design. We anticipate that stops would need to be reconstructed over the landscape strip with conflict striping in the bike lane, and request clarification of how the County envisions this being designed, funded, and implemented. We recommend that the County and SacRT coordinate on bus stop design as the project advances.

5-7

6. Bus Stop Improvement Plan (BSIP) recommendations. The Specific Plan states that BSIP stop improvements will be undertaken by SacRT; however, some of the Watt Avenue BSIP recommendations include pedestrian crossing improvements, which would need to be undertaken by the County. We request that the Specific Plan clarify this.

5-8

7. Traffic calming. Some traffic calming features may pose issues for transit operations and safe maneuvering of 40-foot buses; therefore, SacRT requests that the Traffic Calming section add language such as "*coordination with SacRT in designing traffic calming measures to ensure no*

5-9

SACRAMENTO REGIONAL TRANSIT EST. 1973

impacts to service operations and transit reliability." This task may help to alleviate calming features that would potentially create hazards for transit operations. 5-9 (Cont.)

Implementation

8. Impact fee program. SacRT supports the proposal to coordinate with other agencies to establish and administer a North Watt Avenue Specific Plan impact fee program, which could fund transportation, water, sewer, and other infrastructure. 5-10

9. Hybrid Urban Boulevard funding. The Specific Plan identifies a planning-level cost of $126 million and relies on grants and other sources, along with the Active Transportation Plan recommendations. SacRT asks the County to confirm that this estimate includes bus stop reconstruction and accessible boarding improvements, and to coordinate with SacRT on grant strategies where there are shared benefits. 5-11

10. Joint development. SacRT appreciates and supports the County's commitment to pursue joint development opportunities in ways that do not increase construction costs or reduce the number of housing units. 5-12

Thank you again for considering these comments. SacRT looks forward to continued coordination with the County on North Watt Avenue. Please contact me at spoe@sacrt.com with any questions. 5-13

Sincerely,

Sarah Poe

Sarah Poe

Senior Planner, SacRT

Sacramento Regional Transit District

Administrative Office
1102 Q Street, Suite 3000, Sacramento, CA 95811

Human Resources
2810 O Street, Sacramento, CA 95816

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LETTER 5. SACRAMENTO REGIONAL TRANSIT, SARAH POE OCTOBER 6, 2026

5-1 The County appreciates review of the Draft EIR by the Sacramento Regional Transit District (SacRT) and the comments provided. The County understands the importance of this corridor to SacRT riders and operations.

5-2 The County acknowledges that SacRT does not have any comments on the Draft EIR, and therefore, the County's responses here are for planning and coordination purposes, and do not relate to the adequacy of the EIR. The County encourages additional coordination and communication regarding the future of the Specific Plan Area.

5-3 The County will make the requested change to the definition of the Mixed-Use Corridor Zoning District to read, "bike/ped/**transit** access."

5-4 The County does not believe it is appropriate for this corridor at this time to prohibit drive-throughs.

5-5 The County appreciates this comment. The County has set the minimum densities and intensities to be supportive of transit service, but also to encourage investment and catalyze additional development in the Specific Plan Area. The County understands that higher densities are generally more supportive of transit service, and broadly encourages higher-density development near transit in the unincorporated area. However, the revisions to existing zoning standards for this area are also designed to expedite investment and development within the Specific Plan Area since the existing zoning standards were adopted in 2008 and 2012, including changes to allowable density and development intensity.

5-6 The bus turnouts will be constructed by either private development frontage improvements or with a future County capital project. In either case, the County anticipates that the shelter itself and amenities for bus stops would be the responsibility of SacRT to provide. The County will coordinate with SacRT to potentially include trees for shading where site conditions make this possible. There may be right-of-way constraints or other built environment constraints, not every bus stop may have a planter of sufficient width to be able to include shade trees. As noted in the proposed Specific Plan and Draft EIR, within the Specific Plan Area, North Watt Avenue is designated by the County's General Plan as a Smart Growth Street which requires "features such as shade trees and plantings, well designed benches and other street furniture, trash receptacles, news racks, outdoor dining experiences, entertainment, public art, pedestrian scaled lighting fixtures, wayfinding signage, bicycle racks and other amenities as appropriate" (General Plan Circulation Element Policy CI-70). The County anticipates that improvements to Watt Avenue will include landscape plans, and the County will coordinate with SacRT to determine feasible locations for shade trees in proximity to existing and proposed bus stops.

5-7 The County appreciates the inquiry regarding the Hybrid Urban Boulevard. At this time, the County's intent would be to construct standard bus pullouts at the far side of intersections. The bikeway separation and planter would not begin until past the bus stop, allowing for accessible boarding from the sidewalk. The County notes that these are conceptual plans and may change as the design effort progresses.

5-8 The County appreciates SacRT seeking clarity on this matter and agrees that pedestrian crossing improvements would be the County's responsibility. New text has been added to the Specific Plan: "Bus stop improvements within the Specific Plan Area would be undertaken by SacRT. Improvements that include a pedestrian crossing component would be coordinated with the County."

5-9 Traffic calming features are not envisioned for North Watt Avenue, but may be appropriate on collector roadways and other streets within the Specific Plan Area. It is not expected that traffic calming features would be implemented on any roadway serviced by SacRT buses, but the County will coordinate any traffic-calming measures with SacRT.

5-10 The County is appreciative of SacRT's support for an impact fee program for the North Watt Avenue Specific Plan to fund transportation, water, sewer, and other infrastructure. The County's intent for this program would be to establish funding and financing strategies that could reduce up-front costs to development as one way to encourage infill development along the corridor.

5-11 The County appreciates SacRT's inquiry here. The cost estimates are included in Appendix O of the final Re-Imagine North Watt Corridor Plan, and include hard costs (roadway, drainage, electrical), right-of-way acquisition costs, and soft costs (PA/ED, PS&E, real estate, and construction management). The hard costs for roadway do include the cost to construct an accessible bus turnout (pavement, curb, sidewalk) and a $30,000 allowance per stop for basic amenities.

5-12 The County appreciates SacRT's support for the potential joint development opportunities and encourages coordination with Planning and Environmental Review staff on this concept.

5-13 The County appreciates SacRT's review and will use the provided contact information for further correspondence.

INDIVIDUAL

LETTER 6. QIAN XU, AUGUST 28, 2026

Letter 6

Outlook

FW: Formal Comments – Draft EIR for North Watt Avenue Specific Plan (PLNP2023-00256 / SCH No. 2026010390)

From Shen. Jessie [redacted]
Date Fri 8/28/2026 5:35 PM
To Gerken, Matthew <matthew.gerken@aecom.com>

[redacted]

[redacted]

Dear Ms. Newton,

I am one of the property owners of three contiguous parcels located within the North Watt Avenue Specific Plan area:

APN 240-0011-016
APN 240-0011-017
APN 240-0011-032

The three parcels are under common ownership, comprise approximately **0.82 acre**, and currently function together as one commercial property along Watt Avenue near Winona Way.

I am submitting the following as **formal comments on the Draft EIR for the North Watt Avenue Specific Plan (PLNP2023-00256 / SCH No. 2026010390).**

Please confirm receipt of these comments and confirm that they will be included in the administrative record for the Draft EIR.

I support the County's efforts to encourage appropriate infill development, housing production, economic reinvestment, and infrastructure improvements along the North Watt Avenue corridor.

After reviewing the Draft EIR and its supporting infrastructure studies, however, I would appreciate clarification regarding several parcel-specific environmental and infrastructure assumptions that could materially affect the future redevelopment of this property.

6-1

1. APN 240-0011-016 and the Assumed Redevelopment Parcels

Based on my review of the supporting infrastructure studies, APNs 240-0011-017 and 240-0011-032 appear to be included in certain assumed redevelopment scenarios, while **APN 240-0011-016**—the largest of the three parcels and the parcel containing the principal existing commercial improvements—does not appear to be treated in the same manner.

Please explain the methodology used to select the assumed redevelopment parcels and why APN 240-0011-016 was not included in those assumptions.

In particular, please clarify whether the omission of APN 240-0011-016 is solely an environmental and infrastructure modeling assumption, rather than an indication that the parcel is expected to remain in its existing condition or be subject to a lower redevelopment intensity.

Please also confirm that the omission of APN 240-0011-016 from an assumed redevelopment scenario does not, by itself, reduce or limit the development rights, permitted density, FAR, or redevelopment potential otherwise provided to the parcel under the final Specific Plan.

6-2

2. Unified Redevelopment and EIR Coverage

APNs 240-0011-016, 240-0011-017, and 240-0011-032 are contiguous, under common ownership, and currently function as a single property.

6-3

If these parcels are subsequently redeveloped together as one approximately **0.82-acre development site** at an intensity permitted by the final Specific Plan, would such redevelopment generally fall within the development envelope analyzed by the Specific Plan EIR?

In particular, would APN 240-0011-016's apparent omission from certain parcel-level redevelopment assumptions affect a future project's ability to rely on, tier from, or otherwise receive CEQA streamlining based on the Specific Plan EIR?

Please identify what additional project-level CEQA or environmental analysis the County currently anticipates could be required for a project that is otherwise consistent with the adopted Specific Plan.

6-3 (Cont)

3. Domestic Water and Fire-Flow Analysis

The Domestic Water Study identifies future water-system improvements associated with fire-flow capacity within portions of the Specific Plan area.

Please clarify whether redevelopment of APNs 240-0011-016, 240-0011-017, and 240-0011-032 together, at an intensity permitted by the final Specific Plan, has been adequately accounted for in the water and fire-flow analysis.

6-4

If additional water-main, hydrant, fire-flow, or related improvements would be required to support redevelopment of the unified property, please clarify whether those improvements would be considered:

- Project-specific improvements;
- Regional/backbone infrastructure; or
- Improvements for which an individual redevelopment project would be responsible only for a proportional fair-share contribution.

4. Sewer Capacity

Please clarify whether redevelopment of the entire approximately **0.82-acre property** at an intensity permitted by the final Specific Plan would remain within the sewer assumptions analyzed in the Draft EIR and supporting Sewer Study.

6-5

If additional project-specific sewer capacity, hydraulic, or downstream system analysis would be required, please identify the anticipated requirements.

5. Stormwater and Drainage

Please similarly clarify whether redevelopment of the entire property is adequately represented within the Draft EIR and Master Drainage Study assumptions.

If future redevelopment would require project-specific stormwater, drainage, detention, or hydraulic analysis, please identify the anticipated requirements.

For a relatively small infill property, I would also appreciate clarification as to whether future development could participate in regional or shared drainage improvements rather than being required to accommodate broader regional infrastructure needs entirely on-site.

6-6

6. Infrastructure Financing

6-7

Where water, sewer, drainage, transportation, or other infrastructure improvements provide benefits to multiple properties or to the broader North Watt corridor, I encourage the County to consider an equitable financing mechanism that does not require the first property owner to redevelop to bear disproportionate up-front costs.

Please clarify whether the environmental analysis assumes the use of any fair-share program, impact-fee program, reimbursement mechanism, infrastructure financing district, grant funding, or other financing mechanism for identified backbone infrastructure.

6-7 (Cont)

7. Responses to Comments

To the extent these comments raise issues concerning the adequacy of the Draft EIR's project description, redevelopment assumptions, infrastructure assumptions, or environmental analysis, I respectfully request that these issues also be addressed in the County's **Responses to Comments in the Final EIR**.

If another County division is responsible for any portion of these questions, I would appreciate it if the relevant questions could be forwarded to the appropriate staff while these comments remain part of the Draft EIR administrative record.

I have separately contacted North Watt Avenue Specific Plan staff regarding parcel-specific zoning and development standards, and Sacramento County Department of Transportation staff regarding right-of-way and access associated with the Watt Avenue Complete Streets project.

Thank you very much for your time and assistance. I appreciate the County's consideration of these comments and look forward to reviewing the County's responses.

6-8

Sincerely,

Qian Xu
916-217-4978
chinsu1101@gmail.com

X Y Solution LLC
Property Owner
APNs 240-0011-016, 240-0011-017 & 240-0011-032

LETTER 6 RESPONSE TO COMMENTS

6-1 Responses to all comments received by the County during the public comment period are provided in this Final EIR. The County appreciates the support expressed by the commenter regarding the County's efforts to encourage appropriate infill development, housing production, economic reinvestment, and infrastructure improvements along the North Watt Avenue corridor. Responses to specific issues raised by the commenter are provided in responses 6-2 through 6-8, below.

6-2 The commenter is correct that development assumptions were made for analytical purposes, but do not represent regulatory requirements. If, in the County's detailed development assumptions, a particular parcel was not assumed for development, but then later was proposed for development, this does not mean that the EIR cannot be used directly for such a development application or that the infrastructure master planning accompanying the proposed Specific Plan is any less relevant.

6-3 To the commenter's question about development assumptions, please see the response to comment 6-2. To the commenter's question about what project-level CEQA review would be for projects that are consistent with a future adopted Specific Plan, in general, at this time, the County does not anticipate that any additional CEQA review would be required, but this would depend on the nature and location of such a future development proposal, among other details.

6-4 The County intentionally set ambitious development assumptions in order to ensure environmental coverage for future development projects and adequately inform the water, sewer, drainage, and transportation planning that accompanied the Specific Plan. This is true for the specific properties in question – the County assumed development in the area in question sufficient to inform both the environmental analysis and also the infrastructure improvements identified in the proposed Specific Plan. As detailed in Chapter 4 of the proposed Specific Plan, private property development is generally required to connect to the water system, to provide adequate fire flow and hydraulic pressure, and to comply with standards. For sanitary sewer, improvements are generally required to connect to the sewer system. For storm drainage, private property development would be required to connect to the drainage system and implement site-specific drainage improvements and incorporate stormwater management practices consistent with regional and local requirements.

6-5 Regarding whether development assumptions would be sufficient in relation to sewer capacity, please refer to the response to comment 6-4.

6-6 Regarding whether development assumptions would be sufficient in relation to drainage, please refer to the response to comment 6-4. Regarding whether project-specific stormwater, drainage, detention, or hydraulic analysis would be required, this would depend on the nature of the proposed project. Regarding shared drainage improvements, the County appreciates the suggestion, and would

support a shared drainage approach that can meet County and applicable regional standards. Applicants are highly encouraged to contact and coordinate with the County Department of Water Resources' Drainage Division, including in advance of a development application. Please use the following email address for such coordination: wrstudysubmittals@saccounty.gov. Projects within the Specific Plan Area may be subject to the provisions of the Sacramento County Department of Water Resources Drainage Improvement Standards, Floodplain Management Ordinance, and the Sacramento Region Stormwater Quality Design Manual. If a project would increase the impervious area, propose changes to grading in a Federal Emergency Management Agency or local floodplain/floodway, change, redirect, or modify existing drainage patterns, or would have adverse impacts up or downstream of the site, then a Level 2 or Level 3 drainage study may be required. Additional unforeseen or site-specific issues may also require a drainage study. If a Drainage Study is required by the Sacramento County Department of Water Resources, applicants would generally be required to provide a technically sufficient drainage study in compliance with Sacramento County Department of Water Resources Drainage Study Requirements. An approved, technically sufficient, drainage study must be provided to deem the application complete.

6-7 Regarding the commenter's suggestion that the first property owner in an area should not bear disproportionate up-front costs, the County has been coordinating with infrastructure service providers on this topic, and is developing a financing strategy with the goal of reducing overall up-front development costs to help encourage infill development consistent with the proposed Specific Plan. Regarding whether the environmental analysis assumes any specific financing or funding approach, in general, no, the environmental analysis is focused on the adverse physical environmental impacts of infrastructure improvements rather than the financing or funding of such improvements.

6-8 The County has responded to each comment. Please see the responses to comments 6-1 through 6-7. Relevant comments are being considered by the appropriate County departments and divisions. The County appreciates the detailed review and comments.