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# INITIAL STUDY

## **PROJECT TITLE**

The Ranch

## **LEAD AGENCY NAME AND ADDRESS**

City of Rancho Cordova  
2729 Prospect Park Drive  
Rancho Cordova, CA 95670

## **CONTACT PERSON AND PHONE NUMBER**

June Cowles, Senior Planner  
City of Rancho Cordova Planning Department  
(916) 851-8756

## **PROJECT SPONSOR'S NAME AND ADDRESS**

Olga Sciorelli  
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(916) 945-5362

## **PURPOSE OF THE INITIAL STUDY**

An Initial Study (IS) is a preliminary analysis which is prepared to determine the relative environmental impacts associated with a proposed project. It is designed as a measuring mechanism to determine if a project will have a significant adverse effect on the environment, thereby triggering the need to prepare an Environmental Impact Report (EIR). It also functions as an evidentiary document containing information which supports conclusions that the project will not have a significant environmental impact or that the impacts can be mitigated to a "Less Than Significant" or "No Impact" level.

This Initial Study has been prepared consistent with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines Section 15063, to determine if the proposed Ranch Project (project) may have a significant effect upon the environment. Based upon the findings and mitigation measures contained within this report, environmental impacts are significant enough to warrant the preparation of an EIR.

## **PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

See the Notice of Preparation for a description of the proposed project, including the project location, General Plan designation, zoning, project background, project characteristics, and required approvals.

## ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED

The environmental factors checked below would be potentially affected by this project, involving at least one impact that is a "Potentially Significant Impact" as indicated by the checklist on the following pages.

X	Aesthetics		Agriculture and Forest Resources	X	Air Quality
X	Biological Resources	X	Cultural Resources	X	Geology and Soils
X	Greenhouse Gasses	X	Hazards and Hazardous Materials	X	Hydrology and Water Quality
X	Land Use and Planning		Mineral Resources	X	Noise
X	Population and Housing	X	Public Services	X	Recreation
X	Transportation and Traffic	X	Tribal Cultural Resources	X	Utilities and Service Systems
X	Mandatory Findings of Significance				

## DETERMINATION

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

	I find that the proposed project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.
	I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because revisions in the project have been made by or agreed to by the project proponent. A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.
X	I find that the proposed project MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and an ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required.
	I find that the proposed project MAY have a "potentially significant impact" or "potentially significant unless mitigated" impact on the environment, but at least one effect 1) has been adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and 2) has been addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis as described on attached sheets. An ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required, but it must analyze only the effects that remain to be addressed.
	I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, because all potentially significant effects (a) have been analyzed adequately in an earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION pursuant to applicable standards, and (b) have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to that earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION, including revisions or mitigation measures that are imposed upon the proposed project, nothing further is required.

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Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

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## EVALUATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

In each area of potential impact listed in this section, there are one or more questions which assess the degree of potential environmental effect. A response is provided to each question using one of the four impact evaluation criteria described below. A discussion of the response is also included.

- **Potentially Significant Impact.** This response is appropriate when there is substantial evidence that an effect is significant. If there are one or more "Potentially Significant Impact" entries, upon completion of the Initial Study, an EIR is required.
- **Less than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated.** This response applies when the incorporation of mitigation measures has reduced an effect from "Potentially Significant Impact" to a "Less Than Significant Impact". The Lead Agency must describe the mitigation measures and briefly explain how they reduce the effect to a less than significant level.
- **Less than Significant Impact.** A less than significant impact is one which is deemed to have little or no adverse effect on the environment. Mitigation measures are, therefore, not necessary, although they may be recommended to further reduce a minor impact.
- **No Impact.** These issues were either identified as having no impact on the environment, or they are not relevant to the project.

# ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST

This section of the Initial Study incorporates the most current Appendix "G" Environmental Checklist Form, contained in the CEQA Guidelines. Impact questions and responses are included in both tabular and narrative formats for each of the 19 environmental topic areas.

## I. AESTHETICS -- WOULD THE PROJECT:

	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?	X			
b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?			X	
c) Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings?	X			
d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?	X			

### RESPONSES TO CHECKLIST QUESTIONS

**Responses a, c, d):** It has been determined that the potential impacts on aesthetics caused by the proposed project will require a more detailed analysis in the EIR. As such, the lead agency will examine each of the three potentially significant environmental issues listed in the checklist above in the EIR and will determine whether the proposed project will have a potentially significant impact on scenic vistas, the visual character of the site, and light and glare. At this point, a definitive impact conclusion for each of these environmental topics will not be made; rather, these three issues are considered *potentially significant* until a detailed analysis is prepared in the EIR.

The EIR will provide a discussion of viewsheds, proximity to scenic vistas, existing lighting standards, thresholds of significance, a consistency analysis, cumulative impact analysis, and a discussion of feasible mitigation measures that should be implemented to reduce impacts on aesthetics. The EIR will identify applicable General Plan policies that protect the visual values located along public roadways and surrounding land uses, and will also address the potential for the project to substantially impair the visual character of the project vicinity. The analysis will address any proposed design and landscaping plans developed by the applicant and provide a narrative description of the anticipated changes to the visual characteristics of the project site as a result of project implementation and the conversion of the existing on-site land uses. The analysis will also address potential impacts associated with light spillage onto adjacent properties during nighttime activities.

**Response b):** The project site is not located adjacent to or in the vicinity of a state scenic highway. The project would have no impact related to the potential to substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings, within a state scenic

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highway. Therefore, this impact would be *less than significant*. This issue will not be addressed further.

**II. AGRICULTURE AND FOREST RESOURCES -- WOULD THE PROJECT:**

	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
a) 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?			X	
b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?			X	
c) Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined in Public Resources Code section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code section 51104(g))?			X	
d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?			X	
e) 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?			X	

**RESPONSES TO CHECKLIST QUESTIONS**

**Responses a-e)** The majority of the project site is depicted on the California Department of Conservation’s Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP) as Grazing Land, with some portions of the site depicted as Urban and Built-Up Land. Grazing Land is suitable for the grazing of livestock and does not qualify as Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance.

As discussed previously, the project site is currently zoned AG-80 by the City. As part of the proposed project, the entire project site would be rezoned from AG-80 to SPA. According to the most recent (2015/2016) Sacramento County Williamson Act Map, the project site is not under a Williamson Act contract. Potential conflicts for future development to conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use were addressed in the Rancho Cordova General Plan EIR under Impact 4.2.2, which identified potential conflicts between urban uses and agricultural uses, as a significant and unavoidable impact and Impact 4.2.4, which identified cumulative impacts associated with conversion of agricultural lands and agricultural/urban interface conflicts as a cumulatively considerable contribution to a significant and unavoidable impact (City of Rancho Cordova General Plan Draft EIR, pages 4.2-20 -4.2-26). The project will be required to implement all applicable mitigation measures, General Plan policies, and General Plan actions identified as measures to reduce environmental effect of Impacts 4.2.2 and 4.2.4.

The project site is not forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code section 1222(g)) or timberland (as defined in Public Resources Code section 4526), and the site is not zoned for forest land. The proposed project would not conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land or

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timberland. The proposed project would not result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use. The proposed project does not involve 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.

Therefore, impacts associated with agricultural and forest resources would be *less than significant*. These issues will not be addressed further.

**III. AIR QUALITY -- WOULD THE PROJECT:**

	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?	X			
b) Violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation?	X			
c) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard (including releasing emissions which exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors)?	X			
d) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	X			
e) Create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people?	X			

**RESPONSES TO CHECKLIST QUESTIONS**

**Responses a-e):** It has been determined that the potential impacts on air quality caused by the proposed project will require a detailed analysis in the EIR. As such, the lead agency will examine each of the five potentially significant environmental issues listed in the checklist above in the EIR and will determine whether the proposed project has the potential to have a significant impact on air quality. At this point a definitive impact conclusion for each of these environmental topics will not be made, rather all are considered *potentially significant* until a detailed analysis is prepared in the EIR.

The EIR will include an air quality analysis that presents the methodology, thresholds of significance, an impact analysis, and a discussion of feasible mitigation measures that should be implemented to reduce impacts on air quality. The air quality analysis will address air quality impacts, including the potential for the project to:

- conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan;
- violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation;
- result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard (including releasing emissions which exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors);
- expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations; and/or
- create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people.



*IV. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES -- WOULD THE PROJECT:*

	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
a) 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 the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	X			
b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Game or US Fish and Wildlife Service?	X			
c) Have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?	X			
d) 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?	X			
e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?	X			
f) Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?	X			

*RESPONSES TO CHECKLIST QUESTIONS*

**Responses a-f):** Based on the documented special status species, sensitive natural communities, wetlands, and other biological resources in the region, it has been determined that the potential impacts on biological resources resulting from the proposed project will require a detailed analysis. As such, the lead agency will examine each of the environmental issues listed in the checklist above in the EIR and will determine whether the proposed project has the potential to have a significant impact on biological resources. At this point a definitive impact conclusion for each of these environmental topics will not be made, rather all are considered *potentially significant* until a detailed analysis is prepared in the EIR.

The EIR will provide a summary of local biological resources, including descriptions and mapping of plant communities, the associated plant and wildlife species, and sensitive biological resources known to occur, or with the potential to occur in the project vicinity. The analysis will identify applicable thresholds of significance, provide an impact analysis, and, if necessary, discuss feasible mitigation

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measures that should be implemented to reduce impacts on biological resources and to ensure compliance with federal and state regulations.

*V. CULTURAL RESOURCES -- WOULD THE PROJECT:*

	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in CEQA Guidelines §15064.5?	X			
b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to CEQA Guidelines §15064.5?	X			
c) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?	X			
d) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?	X			

*RESPONSES TO CHECKLIST QUESTIONS*

**Responses a-d):** Based on known historical and archaeological resources in the region, and the potential for undocumented underground cultural resources in the region, it has been determined that the potential impacts on cultural resources caused by the proposed project will require analysis in the EIR. As such, the lead agency will examine each of the four environmental issues listed in the checklist above in the EIR and will determine whether the proposed project has the potential to have a significant impact on cultural resources. At this point a definitive impact conclusion for each of these environmental topics will not be made, rather all are considered *potentially significant* until a detailed analysis is prepared in the EIR.

The EIR will include an overview of the prehistory and history of the area, the potential for surface and subsurface cultural resources to be found in the area, the types of cultural resources that may be expected to be found, a review of existing regulations and policies that protect cultural resources, an impact analysis, and mitigation that should be implemented in order to reduce potential impacts to cultural resources.

**VI. GEOLOGY AND SOILS -- WOULD THE PROJECT:**

	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
a) Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:				
i) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.	X			
ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?	X			
iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?	X			
iv) Landslides?	X			
b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?	X			
c) 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?	X			
d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial risks to life or property?	X			
e) 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?				X

**RESPONSES TO CHECKLIST QUESTIONS**

**Responses a)i, a)ii, a)iii, a)iv, b, c, d):** It has been determined that the potential impacts from geology and soils will require a detailed analysis in the EIR. As such, the lead agency will examine each of the seven potentially significant environmental issues listed in the checklist above in the EIR and will determine whether the proposed project has the potential to have a significant impact associated with geology and soils. At this point, a definitive impact conclusion for each of these environmental topics will not be made, rather all are considered *potentially significant* until a detailed analysis is prepared in the EIR.

The EIR will include a review of existing geotechnical reports, published documents, aerial photos, geologic maps and other geological and geotechnical literature pertaining to the site and surrounding area to aid in evaluating geologic resources and geologic hazards that may be present. The EIR will include a description of the applicable regulatory setting, a description of the existing geologic and soils

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conditions on and around the project site, an evaluation of geologic hazards, a description of the nature and general engineering characteristics of the subsurface conditions within the project site. This section of the EIR will identify applicable thresholds of significance, provide an impact analysis, and, if necessary, discuss feasible mitigation measures that should be implemented to reduce impacts associated with geology and soils.

**Response e):** The proposed project would connect to the municipal sewer system for wastewater disposal. Septic tanks or septic systems are not proposed as part of the project. As such, *no impact* would occur. This CEQA topic is not relevant to the proposed project and does not require further analysis.

*VII. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS -- WOULD THE PROJECT:*

	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?	X			
b) Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gasses?	X			

*RESPONSES TO CHECKLIST QUESTIONS*

**Responses a), b):** Implementation of the proposed project could generate greenhouse gases (GHGs) from a variety of sources, including but not limited to vehicle trips, vehicle idling, electricity consumption, water use, and solid waste generation. It has been determined that the potential impacts from GHG emissions by the proposed project will require a detailed analysis in the EIR. As such, the lead agency will examine each of the environmental issues listed in the checklist above in the EIR and will determine whether the proposed project has the potential to have a significant impact from GHG emissions. At this point a definitive impact conclusion for each of these environmental topics will not be made, rather all are considered *potentially significant* until a detailed analysis is prepared in the EIR.

**VIII. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS -- WOULD THE PROJECT:**

	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?	X			
b) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?	X			
c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?	X			
d) Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?	X			
e) 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, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?			X	
f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?			X	
g) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	X			
h) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wildlands?	X			

**RESPONSES TO CHECKLIST QUESTIONS**

**Responses a-d, g-h):** It has been determined that the potential impacts from hazards and/or hazardous materials by the proposed project will require a detailed analysis in the EIR. As such, the lead agency will examine each of the six potentially significant environmental issues listed in the checklist above in the EIR and will determine whether the proposed project has the potential to have a significant impact from hazards and/or hazardous materials. At this point a definitive impact conclusion for each of these environmental topics will not be made, rather all are considered *potentially significant* until a detailed analysis is prepared in the EIR.

The EIR will include a review of existing environmental site assessments and any other relevant studies for the project site to obtain a historical record of environmental conditions. The analysis will also include a review of recent records and aerial photographs. A site reconnaissance will be performed to

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observe the site and potential areas of interest. Information on the current and historical use of the properties will be gathered, and the potential for project implementation to introduce hazardous materials to and from the area during construction and operation. This section will identify applicable thresholds of significance, provide an impact analysis, and, if necessary, discuss feasible mitigation measures that should be implemented to reduce impacts associated with hazards and hazardous materials.

**Responses e-f):** The project site is not located within an airport land use plan, nor within two miles of a public airport or private airstrip. The project site is located approximately four miles from the center of Mather Airport, a major, county-owned facility. Mather Airport is primarily used by air cargo carriers and general aviation (small, private aircraft). Mather Airport is also a major maintenance facility and houses the California Department of Forestry administrative and maintenance facilities. All air traffic arriving and departing Mather Airport is generally routed along a path more than 2.5 miles north of the project area. The proposed project is outside the airport's clear zone, approach-departure zone, and overflight zone, as indicated on the current Comprehensive Land Use Plan (CLUP) for Mather Airport (Airport Land Use Commission, 1997). Therefore, the proposed project would not result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the area.

Given that the project site is located outside the existing and proposed CLUP boundaries, implementation would not conflict with operations of this airport facility. Therefore, impacts associated with airports and private air strips would be *less than significant*. As such, these CEQA topics are not relevant to the proposed project and do not require further analysis. These issues will not be addressed further.



*IX. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY -- WOULD THE PROJECT:*

	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements?	X			
b) Substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level (e.g., the production rate of pre-existing nearby wells would drop to a level which would not support existing land uses or planned uses for which permits have been granted)?	X			
c) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, in a manner which would result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site?	X			
d) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site?	X			
e) 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?	X			
f) Otherwise substantially degrade water quality?	X			
g) Place housing within a 100-year flood hazard area as mapped on a federal Flood Hazard Boundary or Flood Insurance Rate Map or other flood hazard delineation map?			X	
h) Place within a 100-year flood hazard area structures which would impede or redirect flood flows?			X	
i) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving flooding, including flooding as a result of the failure of a levee or dam?			X	
j) Inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow?			X	

*RESPONSES TO CHECKLIST QUESTIONS*

**Responses a-f):** It has been determined that the potential impacts on water quality, groundwater supplies, drainage, and runoff caused by the proposed project will require a detailed analysis in the EIR. As such, the lead agency will examine each of the six potentially significant environmental issues listed in the checklist above in the EIR and will determine whether the proposed project has the potential to have a significant impact on hydrology and water quality. At this point a definitive impact conclusion

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for each of these environmental topics will not be made, rather all are considered *potentially significant* until a detailed analysis is prepared in the EIR.

The EIR will evaluate the potential construction and operational impacts of the proposed project on water quality. This section will describe the surface drainage patterns of the project site and adjoining areas, and identify surface water quality in the project site based on existing and available data. This section will identify impaired water bodies, listed pursuant to Section 303(d) of the federal Clean Water Act, in the vicinity of the project site. Conformity of the proposed project to water quality regulations will also be discussed. Mitigation measures will be developed to incorporate best management practices (BMPs), consistent with the requirements of the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board to reduce the potential for site runoff.

This EIR will identify applicable thresholds of significance, provide an impact analysis, and, if necessary, discuss feasible mitigation measures that should be implemented to reduce impacts associated with hydrology and water quality.

**Responses g-j):** The project site is not located within a 100-year flood hazard area. The project site is located within Flood Zone X, which is not within the 100-year flood zone as shown on the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) number 06067C0240H.

The project site is not located within a dam inundation area. The proposed project would not expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving flooding as a result of the failure of a levee or dam. The project site is not anticipated to be inundated by a tsunami because it is located elevations ranging between 170 and 210 feet above MSL and is approximately 70 miles away from the Pacific Ocean which is the closest ocean waterbody. The project site is not anticipated to be inundated by a seiche because it is not located in close proximity to a water body capable of creating a seiche.

A mudflow is a category of landslide that is associated with heavy saturation of soils and sometimes is associated with seismicity. Factors such as the geological conditions, drainage, slope, vegetation, and others directly affect the potential for mudflow. The City's General Plan EIR does not identify mudslides as a topic of concern. Additionally, no steep areas that would have the potential to generate mudflows during operation would be created.

Therefore, impacts associated with flooding, dam inundation, and inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow would be *less than significant*. These issues will not be addressed further.

*X. LAND USE AND PLANNING -- WOULD THE PROJECT:*

	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
a) Physically divide an established community?			X	
b) Conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to the general plan, specific plan, local coastal program, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?	X			
c) Conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan?	X			

*RESPONSES TO CHECKLIST QUESTIONS*

**Response a):** The proposed project includes development of residential, commercial, parks, and open space uses, including a natural resource preserve. The site is currently undeveloped and surrounded by existing and planned residential and other urban uses. The proposed project is consistent with the surrounding uses and would not physically divide an established community. Therefore, impacts associated with division of an established community would be *less than significant*. This issue will not be addressed further.

**Responses b-c):** It has been determined that the potential land use and planning impacts caused by the proposed project will require a detailed analysis in the EIR. As such, the lead agency will examine each of the two potentially significant environmental issues in the EIR and will determine whether the proposed project has the potential to have a significant impact. At this point a definitive impact conclusion for each of these environmental topics will not be made, rather all are considered *potentially significant* until a detailed analysis is prepared in the EIR.

The EIR will include a detailed discussion of the project as it relates to the existing General Plan, Zoning Code, and other local regulations. The local, regional, state, and federal jurisdictions potentially affected by the project will be identified, as well as their respective plans, policies, laws, and regulations, and potentially sensitive land uses. The proposed project will be evaluated for consistency with the City of Rancho Cordova General Plan, the Zoning Ordinance, and other local planning documents. This section of the EIR will identify thresholds of significance, provide an impact analysis, and, if necessary, discuss of feasible mitigation measures that should be implemented to ensure consistency applicable land use plans, policies, and regulations and to address potential conflicts with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan.

*XI. MINERAL RESOURCES -- WOULD THE PROJECT:*

	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
a) 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?				X
b) 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?				X

*RESPONSES TO CHECKLIST QUESTIONS*

**Responses a-b):** The California Division of Mines and Geology does not designate the project site or surrounding vicinity as a high quality resource area or a mineral resources zone. The project site is not designated as a locally-important mineral resource recovery site by the City. Given that no known mineral resources are located in the vicinity of the project site, implementation of the proposed project would not result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource or of a locally-important mineral resource recovery site. Therefore, there would be *no impact* regarding mineral resources. These issues will not be addressed further.

*XII. NOISE -- WOULD THE PROJECT RESULT IN:*

	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
a) Exposure of persons to or generation of noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?	X			
b) Exposure of persons to or generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?	X			
c) A substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?	X			
d) A substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?	X			
e) 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, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?			X	
f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?			X	

*RESPONSES TO CHECKLIST QUESTIONS*

**Responses a-d):** Based on existing and projected noise levels along roadways, and the potential for noise generated during project construction and operational activities, it has been determined that the potential impacts from noise caused by the proposed project will require a detailed analysis in the EIR. As such, the lead agency will examine each of the four potentially significant environmental issues listed in the checklist above in the EIR and will determine whether the proposed project has the potential to have a significant impact from noise. At this point a definitive impact conclusion for each of these environmental topics will not be made, rather all are considered *potentially significant* until a detailed analysis is prepared in the EIR.

The EIR will identify the noise level standards contained in the City of Rancho Cordova General Plan Noise Element which are applicable to this project, as well as any germane state and federal standards. A noise study will be conducted and will include continuous (24-hour) and short-term noise measurements on the project site and in the project vicinity in order to quantify existing ambient noise levels from existing noise sources. The noise study will provide an estimate of existing traffic noise levels adjacent to the project-area roadways through application of accepted traffic noise prediction methodologies. Any significant noise sources other than local traffic within the project site will be identified and quantified through noise level measurements. The noise study will identify all significant noise impacts due to and upon development of the proposed project. The noise study will determine the land use compatibility of proposed uses as it may affect existing noise sensitive receptors in the project

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site. An assessment of construction noise impacts and potential mitigation measures will also be provided. The study will present appropriate and practical recommendations for noise control aimed at reducing any noise impacts. The EIR will identify applicable thresholds of significance, provide an impact analysis, and, if necessary, discuss feasible mitigation measures that should be implemented to reduce impacts associated with noise.

**Responses e-f):** As discussed previously, the project site is located approximately four miles from the center of Mather Airport. The proposed project is outside all measured noise contours as indicated on the current CLUP for Mather Airport (Airport Land Use Commission, 1997). Additionally, there are no private airstrips within the vicinity of the project site. Therefore, impacts associated with airports and private air strips would be *less than significant*. These issues will not be addressed further.

*XIII. POPULATION AND HOUSING -- WOULD THE PROJECT:*

	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
a) Induce substantial 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)?	X			
b) Displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?				X
c) Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?				X

*RESPONSES TO CHECKLIST QUESTIONS*

**Response a):** It has been determined that the potential population and housing impacts caused by the proposed project will require a detailed analysis in the EIR. As such, the lead agency will examine this environmental issue in the EIR and will determine whether the proposed project has the potential to have a significant impact. At this point a definitive impact conclusion for each of these environmental topics will not be made, rather all are considered *potentially significant* until a detailed analysis is prepared in the EIR.

The EIR will include a detailed discussion of the project characteristics as they relate to the existing General Plan Housing Element, and other local regulations. The local, regional, state, and federal jurisdictions potentially affected by the project will be identified, as well as their respective plans, policies, laws, and regulations, and potentially sensitive land uses. The proposed project will be evaluated for consistency the City of Rancho Cordova General Plan, the Zoning Ordinance, and other local planning documents. Planned development and housing and population trends in the region will be identified based on currently available plans. The EIR will provide an analysis of the project’s potential to induce substantial population growth including the thresholds of significance, an impact analysis, and, if necessary, feasible mitigation measures that should be implemented.

**Responses b-c):** The project site is currently undeveloped and does not contain housing. The proposed project would not displace housing or people. There is *no impact*, and these topics will not be further addressed in the EIR.

*XIV. PUBLIC SERVICES*

	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
a) Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, 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 any of the public services:				
Fire protection?	X			
Police protection?	X			
Schools?	X			
Parks?	X			

*RESPONSES TO CHECKLIST QUESTIONS*

**Response a):** Implementation of the proposed project would result in increased demand for police, fire protection, schools, parks, and other public facilities in the area. It has been determined that the potential impacts from increased demands on public services caused by the proposed project will require a detailed analysis in the EIR. As such, the lead agency will examine each of these environmental issues listed in the checklist above in the EIR and will determine whether the proposed project has the potential to have a substantial adverse physical impact associated with public services. At this point, a definitive impact conclusion for each of these environmental topics will not be made, rather all are considered *potentially significant* until a detailed analysis is prepared in the EIR.

During the preparation of the EIR, the public service providers will be consulted in order to determine existing service levels in the project area. This would include documentation regarding existing staff levels, equipment and facilities, current service capacity, existing service boundaries, and planned service expansions. Master plans from such public service providers and City policies, programs, and standards associated with the provision of public services will be described in the EIR. The EIR analysis will identify the thresholds of significance, provide an impact analysis, and, if necessary, discuss feasible mitigation measures that should be implemented reduce environmental impacts associated with public services.



*XV. RECREATION*

	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
a) Would the project 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?	X			
b) Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?	X			

*RESPONSES TO CHECKLIST QUESTIONS*

**Responses a-b):** Implementation of the proposed project would result in increased demand for parks, and other recreational facilities in the area. It has been determined that the potential impacts from increased demands to recreation facilities caused by the proposed project will require a detailed analysis in the EIR. As such, the lead agency will examine each of these environmental issues listed in the checklist above in the EIR, and will determine whether the proposed project has the potential to have a significant impact on recreational facilities. At this point a definitive impact conclusion for each of these environmental topics will not be made, rather all are considered *potentially significant* until a detailed analysis is prepared in the EIR.

During the preparation of the EIR, the recreational facilities and services will be analyzed to determine existing service levels in the project area. This would include documentation regarding existing and future facility needs, current service capacity, and planned service expansions. City policies, programs, and standards associated with the provision of public services will be presented in the EIR.

The EIR will identify thresholds of significance, provide an impact analysis, and discuss of feasible mitigation measures that should be implemented reduce impacts associated with recreation.

*XVI. TRANSPORTATION AND TRAFFIC -- WOULD THE PROJECT:*

	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
a) Conflict with an applicable plan, ordinance or policy establishing measures of effectiveness for the performance of the circulation system, taking into account all modes of transportation including mass transit and non-motorized travel and relevant components of the circulation system, including but not limited to intersections, streets, highways and freeways, pedestrian and bicycle paths, and mass transit?	X			
b) Conflict with an applicable congestion management program, including, but not limited to level of service standards and travel demand measures, or other standards established by the county congestion management agency for designated roads or highways?	X			
c) Result in a change in air traffic patterns, including either an increase in traffic levels or a change in location that results in substantial safety risks?			X	
d) Substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?	X			
e) Result in inadequate emergency access?	X			
f) Conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs regarding public transit, bicycle, or pedestrian facilities, or otherwise decrease the performance or safety of such facilities?	X			

*RESPONSES TO CHECKLIST QUESTIONS*

**Responses a-b, d-f):** The proposed project includes the development of uses that will increase traffic on existing and planned roadways. The circulation design includes roadway improvements intended to accommodate traffic patterns in the area. Based on existing and projected traffic volume levels along roadways, it has been determined that the potential traffic impacts caused by the proposed project will require a detailed analysis in the EIR. As such, the EIR will examine each of the five potentially significant environmental issues listed in the checklist above and will determine whether the proposed project has the potential to have a significant impact from traffic. At this point a definitive impact conclusion for each of these environmental topics will not be made, rather all are considered *potentially significant* until a detailed analysis is conducted in the EIR.

The EIR will describe existing and future traffic conditions and will identify the trips that will be generated by the project and the projected distribution of those trips on the roadway system. The EIR will analyze traffic impacts associated with the project under existing and cumulative conditions. Potential impacts associated with site access and on-site circulation will also be addressed in the EIR. The EIR will identify applicable thresholds of significance, provide an impact analysis, and discuss feasible mitigation measures that should be implemented reduce impacts associated with transportation/traffic.

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**Responses b-c):** The proposed project does not include airport or airstrip facilities and is not located adjacent to an airport or airstrip. As noted previously, the proposed project is outside the airport's clear zone, approach-departure zone, and overflight zone, as indicated on the current CLUP for Mather Airport (Airport Land Use Commission, 1997). The proposed project does not include towers or other elevated structures. The proposed project would not result in a change in air traffic patterns, including either an increase in traffic levels or a change in location that results in substantial safety risks. This impact would be *less than significant*. This issue will not be addressed further.

*XVII. TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES*

	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code Section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is:				
a) Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code Section 5020.1(k)?	X			
b) 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 Public Resources Code Section 5024.1? In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resources to a California Native American tribe.	X			

*RESPONSES TO CHECKLIST QUESTIONS*

**Responses a-b):** Based on known historical, cultural, tribal, and archaeological resources in the region, and the potential for undocumented underground cultural resources in the region, it has been determined that the potential impacts on tribal cultural resources will require analysis in the EIR. As such, the lead agency will examine the two environmental issues listed in the checklist above in the EIR and will determine whether the proposed project has the potential to have a significant impact on tribal cultural resources. At this point a definitive impact conclusion for each of these environmental topics will not be made, rather all are considered *potentially significant* until a detailed analysis is prepared in the EIR.

The EIR will include an overview of the prehistory and history of the area, the potential for surface and subsurface tribal cultural resources to be found in the area, the types of tribal cultural resources that may be expected to be found, the results of consultation with Native American tribes, a review of existing regulations and policies that protect tribal cultural resources, an impact analysis, and, if necessary, identification of mitigation that should be implemented in order to reduce potential impacts to tribal cultural resources.

*XVIII. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS -- WOULD THE PROJECT:*

	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
a) Exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board?	X			
b) Require or result in the construction of new water or wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?	X			
c) Require or result in the construction of new storm water drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?	X			
d) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources, or are new or expanded entitlements needed?	X			
e) Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the projects projected demand in addition to the providers existing commitments?	X			
f) Be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the projects solid waste disposal needs?	X			
g) Comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste?	X			

*RESPONSES TO CHECKLIST QUESTIONS*

**Responses a-g):** Implementation of the proposed project would result in increased demands for utilities to serve the project. As such, the EIR will examine each of the seven environmental issues listed in the checklist above and will determine whether the proposed project has the potential to have a significant impact to utilities and service systems. At this point a definitive impact conclusion for each of these environmental topics will not be made, rather all are considered *potentially significant* until a detailed analysis is prepared in the EIR.

The EIR will analyze wastewater, water, and storm drainage infrastructure, as well as other utilities (i.e. solid waste, gas, electric, etc.), that are needed to serve the proposed project. The wastewater assessment will include a discussion of the proposed collection and conveyance system, treatment methods and capacity at the treatment plants, disposal location(s) and methods, and the potential for recycled water use for irrigation. The EIR will analyze the impacts associated with on-site construction of the conveyance system, including temporary impacts associated with the construction phase. The proposed infrastructure will be presented. The EIR will provide a discussion of the wastewater treatment plant that will serve the project, including current demand and capacity at the plant. The

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analysis will discuss the proposed wastewater infrastructure, disposal methods and location, including environmental impacts and permit requirements associated with disposal of treated wastewater.

The storm drainage analysis will include a discussion of the proposed drainage collection system including impacts associated with on-site construction of the storm drainage system. The EIR will identify permit requirements and, if necessary, mitigation needed to minimize and/or avoid significant impacts will be described.

The EIR will identify the proposed water supply infrastructure and water demand, identify applicable thresholds of significance and permit requirements, analyze the impacts associated with construction and operation of the water system, and, if necessary, mitigation needed to minimize and/or avoid significant impacts will be described.

The EIR will also address solid waste collection and disposal services for the proposed project. This will include an assessment of the existing landfill capacity, the project's solid waste generation, and whether there is sufficient capacity to meet the project demands. The project's potential to result in impacts associated with solid waste will be analyzed and, if necessary, mitigation needed to minimize and/or avoid significant impacts will be described.

*XVIV. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE*

	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
a) Does the project have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?	X			
b) Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? (“Cumulatively considerable” means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects)?	X			
c) Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	X			

*RESPONSES TO CHECKLIST QUESTIONS*

**Responses a, c):** It has been determined that the potential for the proposed project to: degrade the quality of the environment; substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species; cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels; threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community; reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal; eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory; or adversely affect human beings will require more detailed analysis in an EIR. As such, the EIR will examine each of these environmental issues and will determine whether the proposed project has the potential to have a significant impact on these environmental issues. At this point a definitive impact conclusion for each of these environmental topics will not be made, rather all are considered *potentially significant* until a detailed analysis is prepared in the EIR.

**Response b):** The Draft EIR will address cumulative impacts, including *potentially significant* cumulative impacts associated with the following:

- aesthetics;
- air quality;
- biological resources;
- cultural resources;
- geology and soils;
- greenhouse gas emissions;
- hazards and hazardous materials;
- hydrology and water quality;

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- land use and planning;
  - noise;
  - population and housing;
  - public services;
  - recreation;
  - transportation and traffic;
  - tribal cultural resources; and
  - utilities and service systems.

As discussed previously, implementation of the proposed project would not result in conversion Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance, and would not conflict with a Williamson Act contract. The project site is not forest land or timberland. Potential cumulative impacts associated with agricultural and forestry resources were adequately addressed in the Rancho Cordova General Plan EIR as previously described. Cumulative impacts associated with agricultural and forestry resources will not be addressed further.

As discussed previously, implementation of the proposed project would not result in the loss of a high quality resource area or a mineral resources zone and would thus not have a considerable contribution to cumulative impacts associated with mineral resources. Cumulative impacts associated with mineral resources will not be addressed further.



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## REFERENCES

- City of Rancho Cordova. Rancho Cordova General Plan. Adopted June 26, 2006.
- City of Rancho Cordova. Rancho Cordova General Plan Draft Environmental Impact Report. March 2006.
- Sacramento Area Council of Governments, Airport Land Use Commission. Mather Airport Comprehensive Land Use Plan. May 1997.