

The purpose of this EIR section is to identify the existing land use conditions on Project site and the surrounding areas, analyze the Project's consistency with relevant planning documents and policies, and recommend mitigation measures to avoid or minimize the significance of potential impacts.

Information in this section is based primarily on information provided by the Project applicant, site surveys conducted by De Novo Planning Group in 2018, ground and aerial photographs, and the following reference documents:

- *Rancho Cordova General Plan* (City of Rancho Cordova, Adopted June 26, 2006);
- Rancho Cordova General Plan Draft Environmental Impact Report (City of Rancho Cordova, March 2006);
- *City of Rancho Cordova Housing Element of the General Plan 2013-2021* (City of Rancho Cordova, Adopted December 16, 2013); and
- City of Rancho Cordova Zoning Code.

Comments were received during the public review period or scoping meeting for the Notice of Preparation regarding this topic from the following: County of Sacramento Municipal Services Agency (July 8, 2018), Sacramento Municipal Utility District (SMUD) (August 6, 2018), and Cordova Recreation & Park District (August 3, 2018). Each of the comments related to this topic are addressed within this section.

### 3.9.1 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

#### PROJECT SITE

The Project site consists of approximately 530 acres located in the Rancho Cordova city limits. The Project site is bound by existing single-family residential uses and Douglas Road to the north, vacant land and Grant Line Road to the east, vacant land and Kiefer Boulevard to the south, and Rancho Cordova Parkway, single family residential, and vacant land on the west.

The Project site is currently vacant and has been previously used for agricultural uses (cattle grazing). The topography of the site exhibits low relief topography with elevations ranging between 170 and 210 feet above mean sea level (MSL). The slopes throughout the site range from approximately zero to eight percent. The site is characterized by moderate rolling hills and areas of extensive flatlands, with wetlands, vernal pools, and seasonal drainage courses scattered throughout the site. A headwater tributary of Morrison Creek traverses the Project site, entering at the northeast corner and flowing generally to the southwest. A total of 21.53 acres of jurisdictional aquatic resources have been mapped with the Project site, including: 2.92 acres of depressional seasonal wetlands, 15.04 acres of vernal pools, 1.66 acres of riverine seasonal wetlands, 0.06 acres of riverine seasonal wet swales, 1.54 acres of intermittent drainages, and 0.30 acres of drainage basin outfalls.

The property is traversed by a 275-foot-wide utility easement occupied by a 230-kV Pacific Gas and Electric (PG&E) transmission line, one 230-kV SMUD transmission line, and one 69-kV SMUD sub-transmission line. No other public utilities (water, sewer, drainage) are located on site.

The Project's regional location is shown in Figure 2.0-1 and the Project area and site boundary are shown in Figure 2.0-2.

### SURROUNDING LAND USES

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The Project site is bound by the Sunridge Specific Plan to the north, east, and west, and by the SunCreek Specific Plan to the south and east. Land uses anticipated to the east and south of the Project site by the Sunridge Specific Plan and the SunCreek Specific Plan include low, medium, and high density residential uses, commercial mixed uses (retail, office, and retail professional), and neighborhood parks. Other land uses located nearby include new elementary, junior and senior high schools.

### 3.9.2 REGULATORY SETTING

#### STATE

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##### **Government Code**

California Government Code Section 65300 et seq. establishes the obligation of cities and counties to adopt and implement general plans. The general plan is a comprehensive, long-term, and general document that describes plans for the physical development of a jurisdiction and of any land outside its boundaries that, in the jurisdiction's judgment, bears relation to its planning. The general plan addresses a broad range of topics, including, at a minimum, land use, circulation, housing, conservation, open space, noise, and safety. In addressing these topics, the general plan identifies the goals, objectives, policies, principles, standards, and plan proposals that support the jurisdiction's vision for the area. The general plan is a long-range document that typically addresses the physical character of an area over a 20-year period. Although the general plan serves as a blueprint for future development and identifies the overall vision for the planning area, it remains general enough to allow for flexibility in the approach taken to achieve the plan's goals.

The State Zoning Law (California Government Code Section 65800 et seq.) establishes that zoning ordinances, which are laws that define allowable land uses within a specific district, are required to be consistent with the general plan and any applicable specific plans. When amendments to the general plan are made, corresponding changes in the zoning ordinance may be required within a reasonable time to ensure the land uses designated in the general plan would also be allowable by the zoning ordinance (Government Code, Section 65860, subd. [c]).

##### **California Public Utilities Commission General Order Number 95**

General Order Number 95 sets for the rules for overhead electric line construction in California. The purpose of the rules is to formulate, for the State of California, requirements for overhead line

design, construction, and maintenance, the application of which will ensure adequate service and secure safety to persons engaged in the construction, maintenance, operation or use of overhead lines and to the public in general. These rules apply to all overhead electrical supply and communication facilities that come within the jurisdiction of this Commission, located outside of buildings, including facilities that belong to non-electric utilities.

Section III summarizes the requirements for all lines, including: design, construction and maintenance; inspection; avoidance of conflicts and crossings; cooperation to avoid conflicts; joint use of poles; abandoned liens; general arrangement of liens; ground and neutrals; foreign attachments; vegetation management; pole clearance from railroad tracks; minimum clearances of wires above railroads, thoroughfares, buildings, etc.; minimum clearance of wires from other wires; and minimum clearances of wires from signs.

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## LOCAL

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### **SMUD Guide for Transmission Encroachment**

SMUD's Guide for Transmission Encroachment (SMUD Transmission Guide), dated January 2013, was developed to streamline SMUD's plan review process, minimize potential negative impacts to SMUD's transmission facilities and easements, and increase public safety around transmission lines. Since conditions and requirements may vary between corridors, the SMUD Transmission Guide may be supplemented with additional requirements for a specific area, as SMUD deems necessary. The SMUD Transmission Guide addresses development, trails and parks, grading, roads, drainage, fences, structures, and vegetation allowed within transmission corridors and includes requirements for access and clearances.

### **PG&E Electric & Gas Service Requirements 2017-2018**

The Pacific Gas and Electric (PG&E) Electric & Gas Service Requirements 2017-2018 (also-known-as the "Greenbook Manual") are designed to help applicants establish gas and electric service. By reading the mandates published in the manual, applicants will understand the steps required to apply for service and the legal and safety requirements driving those steps. PG&E provides the manual to all gas and electric applicants in an effort to ensure that the company can continue to deliver safe, uniform service. The manual is a collection of requirements and policies for establishing electric and gas service to new or remodeled installations. The Greenbook Manual restricts development and landscaping where PG&E transmission lines are located.

### **Sacramento Area Council of Governments**

The Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG) is an association of local governments from six counties and 22 cities within the Sacramento Region. The counties include El Dorado, Placer, Sacramento, Sutter, Yolo, and Yuba. SACOG is responsible for the preparation of, and updates to, the Metropolitan Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (MTP/SCS) for the region and the corresponding Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program (MTIP). The MTP/SCS

provides a 20-year transportation vision and corresponding list of projects. The MTIP identifies short-term projects (seven-year horizon) in more detail. The MTP/SCS was adopted by the SACOG board in 2016.

#### METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION PLAN/SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES STRATEGY

The MTP/SCS is a long-range plan that addresses land use, transportation improvements, air quality, and greenhouse gas emissions in the region. The MTP/SCS supports the Sacramento Region Blueprint, which implements smart growth principles, including housing choice, compact development, mixed-use development, natural resource conservation, use of existing assets, quality design and transportation choice. It also provides increased transportation options while reducing congestion, shortening commute times, and improving air quality. The plan is based on projections for growth in population, housing, and jobs. SACOG determines the regional growth projections by evaluating baseline data (existing housing units and employees, jobs/housing ratio, and percent of regional growth share for housing units and employees), historic reference data (based upon five- and ten-year residential building permit averages and historic county-level employment statistics), capacity data (General Plan data for each jurisdiction), and current MTP data about assumptions used in the most recent MTP/SCS.

### **Rancho Cordova General Plan**

The Rancho Cordova General Plan establishes a land use development pattern that would consist of a series of walkable neighborhoods, villages, and districts. The City envisions that development would provide a mix of housing, jobs, commercial activities and services that would be connected through a series of streets and contiguous open space areas. The General Plan is intended to reinvent the City as a regional destination, providing a full range of retail services and entertainment venues (Rancho Cordova 2006).

#### GENERAL PLAN LAND USE MAP

The Land Use Map portrays the anticipated uses of land in and around Rancho Cordova through land use designations. The General Plan Land Use Map designates the Project site as Planning Area (General Plan Figure LU-5). The Planning Area figure (General Plan Figure LU-6) identifies the Project site as within the SunCreek/Preserve Planning Area. As shown on General Plan Figure LU-28, the Project site is envisioned as a Residential-Mixed Density (R-MD) community served by a Local Town Center (LTC) and Parks & Open Space (P/OS) uses with portions of the site preserved as Natural Resources (NR). The General Plan land uses surrounding the site include: Low Density Residential (LDR), Medium Density Residential (MDR), P/OS, Commercial Mixed Use (CMU), and Public/Quasi-Public (P/QP) to the north; Planning Area (SunCreek/Preserve Planning Area), LDR, MDR, CMU, P/OS, and P/QP to the east, Planning Area (SunCreek/Preserve Planning Area) to the south; and NR, LDR, P/QP, and High Density Residential (HDR) to the west. The General Plan land use designations for the Project site and surrounding lands are described as follows:

**Low Density Residential.** The LDR category represents the traditional single-family neighborhood with a majority of single-family detached homes. This is the predominant land use category of the City's neighborhoods.

**Medium Density Residential.** The MDR category is generally characterized by small lot single-family detached, single-family attached (e.g., town homes, condominiums, brownstones), and small apartment complexes. Medium Density development is often found as part of a village development.

**High Density Residential.** The HDR is the most urban residential category available. The predominant style of development is larger multi-family housing complexes, including apartments and condominiums. Vertical mixed-use projects with residential use are typically developed in the high-density category. Parking for these facilities is usually provided in traditional surface lots located around the complex. At higher densities, parking may be in a parking structure or underground.

**Commercial Mixed Use.** The CMU category encourages the integration of retail and service commercial uses with office and/or residential uses. In mixed-use projects, commercial use is the predominant use on the ground floor. Parking for mixed-use projects may be combined or separated, depending on the characteristics of the project. This listing may also include hospitals and other public/quasi-public uses

**Public/Quasi-Public.** The P/QP category covers a variety of public and other land uses, including land owned by the City and other public agencies. Possible uses include civic buildings; schools, colleges, and universities; religious institutions; hospitals; museums; cemeteries; and others. Most buildings in this category are high profile and prominent within the community. In order to meet future community needs, new development projects should include public/quasi-public sites for future, undetermined uses.

**Local Town Center.** The LTC category provides retail services, restaurant, and entertainment uses within a district as described in the City's building block concept. Typical uses include a combination of general retail, restaurant, office, and residential uses. This category may also include large retail stores, lodging, entertainment, public/quasi-public, and indoor and outdoor recreational facilities. Residential densities are medium to high in nature. Development is pedestrian friendly with gathering places for both daytime and nighttime activities

**Residential-Mixed Density.** The R-MD designation is intended to include the range of densities associated with typical neighborhood development.

**Commercial Mixed Use.** The CMU category encourages the integration of retail and service commercial uses with office and/or residential uses. In mixed-use projects, commercial use is the predominant use on the ground floor. Parking for mixed-use projects may be combined or separated, depending on the characteristics of the project. This listing may also include hospitals and other public/quasi-public uses.

**Parks and Open Space.** Land within the P/OS category is designed to be used for both active and passive recreational activities, such as parks, lakes, golf courses, and trails. Typically, parklands are under the jurisdiction of the Cordova Recreation and Park District; however, they may be commercial recreational facilities that are principally oriented toward outdoor uses. Typically, public open space lands will be administered by the City, but may be held in either public or private ownership. Land within this category may also be used for detention basins, creek ways, and other more passive uses when collocated next to active recreational uses or when open spaces serve two uses, such as a ball field in the summer and a detention basin in the winter.

**Natural Resources.** Land within the NR category is set aside as natural habitat and typically has no urban development on it. Often, open space trails will be sited adjacent to NR areas.

**SunCreek/Preserve Planning Area.** The General Plan indicates that the SunCreek Specific Plan was adopted for the southern portion and the Preserve at Sunridge application (now The Ranch) covers the northern portion of the SunCreek/Preserve Planning Area. This Planning Area would contain a mix of low, medium and high density residential units in a series of approximately 12 walkable neighborhoods served by local and community parks, neighborhood and village centers, schools and other public/quasi-public uses. The Planning Area includes a local town center development south of the intersection of Chrysanthy Boulevard and Rancho Cordova Parkway. The adopted and proposed plans also call for two or three commercial mixed-use developments, which are located along the major roadways of the Planning Area and facilitate use of the area's transit system. Actual location and opportunities for additional retail in the Project area will be determined with subsequent land planning. The Planning Area will also contain wetland preserves and creek/drainage corridors and provide connections to the City's open space and trail system, as well as a site for a combined high school and middle school campus. The General Plan also identifies conceptual circulation and transit plans for this area, as well as constraints associated with the aquatic resources present in the Planning Area.

#### GENERAL PLAN LAND USE POLICIES

General Plan goals and policies applicable to environmental issues associated with land use are summarized below. General Plan policies associated with specific environmental topics (aesthetics, air quality, biological resources, cultural resources, geology/soils, hazards, hydrology/water quality, housing, noise, parks, public services, transportation, utilities, etc.) are discussed in the relevant chapters of this EIR and a summary of the Project's consistency with General Plan policies and actions applicable to this individual development Project is summarized in Appendix G.

#### **Goal LU.1: Achieve a balanced and integrated land use pattern throughout the community.**

**Policy LU.1.1:** Utilize and maintain the Land Use Map to designate the location and extent of each land use designation within the Planning Area.

**Policy LU.1.3:** Maintain a strong jobs-housing ratio, with a diverse job base and corresponding housing stock, within the Planning Area. Improve the relationship and proximity of jobs to housing and commercial services.

**Policy LU.1.4:** Promote high quality, efficient, and cohesive land utilization that minimizes negative impacts (e.g., traffic congestion and visual blight) and environmental hazards (e.g. flood, soil instability) on adjacent neighborhoods and infrastructure and preserve existing and future residential neighborhoods from encroachment of incompatible activities and land uses.

**Policy LU.1.5:** Maintain consistency between the land use categories of this General Plan and the City Zoning Code.

**Policy LU.1.6:** Ensure adequate provisions for development of civic uses (public/quasi-public uses).

**Policy LU.1.7:** Promote higher density and intensity land uses that support transit within one-half mile of major transit stations. Development should be pedestrian- and transit-friendly with direct connections to transit. Large, expansive parking fields that separate the retail from the station are prohibited.

**Policy LU.1.8:** While agricultural uses are anticipated to be phased out within the City limits, the City recognizes the right of these uses to continue as long as their individual owners/farmers desire.

**Goal LU.2: Establish growth patterns based on smart growth principles and the City building blocks concept.**

**Policy LU.2.1:** Ensure future land use and growth within the Planning Area adheres to the City's nine smart growth principles, as described in this Element.

**Policy LU.2.2:** Promote new development and redevelopment in accordance with the building blocks concepts of neighborhoods, villages, and districts.

**Policy LU.2.3:** Encourage the clustering of similar uses into areas or districts that have common needs and that are compatible with one another, in order to maximize their efficiency and identity for Rancho Cordova. Uses to consider clustering include the following:

- Entertainment area (Performing Arts Center, local theaters, and studios);
- Sports/recreation facilities (e.g. bowling alleys and major sports facilities);
- Hospitals and other care facilities;
- Youth activity centers;
- Amphitheatres; and
- Regional shopping opportunities.

**Policy LU.2.4:** Use Community Plans, Specific Plans, and development projects to promote pedestrian movement via direct, safe, and pleasant routes that connect destinations inside and outside the plan or project area.

**Policy LU.2.5:** Phase growth based on infrastructure capacity, infrastructure financing, and the timing of the design, approval/permitting, and construction of transportation facilities and other infrastructure.

**Policy LU.2.6:** Discourage the over concentration of retail shopping facilities in a single location in order to ensure neighborhood services are distributed and integrated into the City's neighborhoods and that market demand is met without diminish the viability of nearby commercial properties with the same customer base.

**Policy LU.2.7:** Promote sustainable development that reduces the impact of projects on energy, water, and transportation systems. Encourage sustainable development to occur in ways that complement the built form.

**Goal LU.6: Ensure development of the Planning Areas consistent with the City's vision.**

**Policy LU.6.2:** Ensure subsequent detailed land planning for those Planning Areas with Conceptual Land Plans.

### **City of Rancho Cordova Zoning Code**

The Project site is currently zoned Agricultural 80 (AG80) by the Rancho Cordova Zoning Map. The Project is requesting a rezone to The Ranch Special Planning Area (SPA).

#### **SPECIAL PLANNING AREA**

A special planning area is a land use zone and implementing document that allows for the development of unique and imaginative projects that are otherwise not possible under the current provisions of the zoning code or to protect unique environmental, historic, architectural, and other features that require special consideration. A special planning area may be adopted to accomplish the following:

- A. Protect a unique environmental, historical, architectural, or other significant site feature that cannot be adequately protected by adoption of another land use zone.
- B. Allow the development of an exceptional project design that cannot be built under an existing zoning district or due to constraints of existing development standards.

The council may approve or approve with conditions an application for a special planning area after finding all of the following. If the council does not make all of these findings, the special planning area shall not be approved.

- A. The proposed special planning area is consistent with the goals, policies, and objectives of the General Plan.



- B. The proposed special planning area meets the requirements set forth in Chapter 23.149.
- C. The special planning area is needed because the project is not possible under the existing zoning requirements.

### SunCreek Specific Plan

The SunCreek Specific Plan land uses adjacent to the Project site include: High Density Residential (HDR), Medium Density Residential (MDR), Village Center (VC), Public/Quasi-Public (P/QP), Wetland, Wetland Buffer/Trail/Open Space, and Detention Basin to the east; and Low Density Residential (LDR), MDR, HDR, VC, Wetland Buffer/Trail/Open Space, and Wetland to the south. The SunCreek Specific Plan land use designations for the surrounding lands are described as follows:

**Low Density Residential.** The LDR category includes dwelling units in configurations up to six dwelling units per gross acre (exclusive of open space and adjacent collector streets). The density range allows substantial flexibility in selecting dwelling unit types and parcel configurations to suit particular site conditions and housing needs.

**Medium Density Residential.** The MDR category will provide a mix of housing types and densities ranging from 6.1 to 12 dwelling units per gross acre. MDR includes single-family homes, duplexes and half-plexes, court housing, garden apartments, townhouses and condominiums. The most typical housing type will be small lot single-family detached, single-family attached (e.g., town homes, condominiums, brownstones), and small apartment complexes. The density range allows substantial flexibility in selecting dwelling unit types and parcel configurations to suit particular site conditions and housing needs.

**High Density Residential.** The HDR development includes apartments and condominiums at densities of 26 to 40 dwelling units per acre. In order to be compliant with current state law regarding Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) requirements ensuring the availability of adequate high density zoned land, all High Density Residential acres in the SunCreek Specific plan area are designated as RHNA acres. The builder/developer must receive written authorization from the City to build at densities less than 26 units to the acre. With this authorization, High Density development may achieve as low as 18.1 dwelling units per acre where sites are constrained by size, configuration, access, parking standards, open space standards and other factors reflecting the actual market for multi-family housing.

**Village Center.** The VC category provides retail services, restaurant, entertainment and office employment uses as described in the City's building block concept. The VC areas serve the daily shopping needs of residents and may include small- and medium-size grocery stores, drug stores, restaurants, banks, and other similar uses. Development is pedestrian friendly with gathering places for both daytime and nighttime activities.

**Public/Quasi-Public.** The P/QP category includes a variety of public and other land uses, including land owned by the City and other public agencies. Possible uses include civic buildings; schools, colleges, and universities; religious institutions; hospitals; museums; cemeteries; and others.

Note that the SunCreek Specific Plan does not contain descriptions for the Wetland Buffer/Trail/Open Space and Wetland land use categories as these areas are permanent open space which do not allow for urban development.

### **South Sacramento Habitat Conservation Plan**

The South Sacramento County Habitat Conservation Plan (SSHCP) is a regional effort that provides development and infrastructure projects with streamlined, predictable federal and state permitting processes while creating a Preserve System to protect habitat, open space, and agricultural lands. The SSHCP allows project proponents within the SSHCP Area to simplify and expedite the state and federal Endangered Species Act (ESAs) permitting process. In addition to streamlining the ESAs permitting processes, a separate but parallel multi-tiered permitting program has been developed to streamline Clean Water Act Section 404 and 401 permitting process and a Master Streambed Alteration Agreement will be prepared to address Section 1602 of the California Fish and Game Code. The SSHCP allows Sacramento County (the County), the City of Rancho Cordova, City of Galt, Sacramento County Water Agency, and the Southeast Connector Joint Powers Authority (collectively referred to as the Plan Permittees) to receive an Incidental Take Permit (ITP) for activities and projects they conduct. In addition, the three local Land Use Authority Permittees (the County, Galt, and Rancho Cordova) have the ability to extend incidental take coverage provided by the SSHCP ITPs to activities and projects implemented by Third-Party Project Proponents that are under the jurisdiction of that Land Use Authority Permittee. This will allow Third-Party Project Proponents to avoid the extensive negotiation and processing currently required to obtain individual project permits under the CESA from the CDFW and project ESA compliance from the USFWS.

The SSHCP Area (317,655 acres) is located in the southern portion of Sacramento County. The SSHCP Area includes portions of unincorporated Sacramento County, Galt, and the southern half of Rancho Cordova.

The SSHCP Conservation Strategy mitigates to the maximum extent practicable the impacts of Covered Activities, including all direct and indirect impacts on Covered Species and their habitats. The SSHCP Conservation Strategy provides for conservation of 28 Covered Species and 17 land cover types, avoids or minimizes impacts of Covered Activities, mitigates for the impacts of Covered Activities on the Covered Species and their habitats on the basis of species and habitat needs, provides a regional approach to the mitigation of impacts and the conservation of species and their habitats, protects wetlands and waters of the Plan Area, conserves natural communities in the Plan Area, and provides take authorization for the 28 Covered Species, with the exception that direct injury or mortality of white-tailed kite and greater sandhill crane is not covered by the ITP and the SSHCP plans for full avoidance and protection of all slender Orcutt grass and Sacramento Orcutt grass occurrences.

The SSHCP includes Avoidance and Minimization Measures (AMMs) as conditions on Covered Activities. Each condition contains several AMMs that are intended to eliminate or reduce direct or indirect effects to species that could result from implementation of a Covered Activity. In addition,

the SSHCP provides species-specific take and avoidance measures to avoid or minimize effects of Covered Activities on specific SSHCP Covered Species. Species-specific AMMs include species surveys, preconstruction surveys, and construction monitoring.

The Rancho Cordova City Council adopted the SSHCP in October 2018.

### 3.9.3 IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

#### THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

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Consistent with Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, the Project will have a significant impact on land use and planning if it will:

- Physically divide an established community; and/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.

As discussed in the Initial Study, the 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 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.

#### IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

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##### **Impact 3.9-1: Implementation of the Project would not conflict with an applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the Project adopted to avoid or mitigate an environmental effect (Less than Significant with Mitigation)**

###### RANCHO CORDOVA GENERAL PLAN

The Rancho Cordova General Plan currently designates the Project site as the SunCreek/Preserve Planning Area. As part of the Project, the applicant is requesting a General Plan Amendment to establish specific General Plan land use designations, LDR, MDR, HDR, C, P/OS, and NR in order to implement the General Plan's land use concept for the Project's portion of the SunCreek/Preserve Planning Area.

The LDR category in the General Plan establishes a density of between 2.1 and 6.0 dwelling units per acre. At a density of approximately 3.50 units per acre (112 units on 31.98 acres), the proposed low density portion of the Project complies with the City's existing General Plan LDR levels. The MDR category in the General Plan establishes a density of between 6.1 and 18.0 dwelling units per acre. At a density of approximately 6.34 units per acre (1,360 units on 214.36 acres), the proposed medium density portion of the Project complies with the City's existing General Plan MDR levels. The HDR category in the General Plan establishes a density of between 18.0 and 40.0 dwelling units

per acre. At a density of approximately 30.0 units per acre (253 units on 8.43 acres), the proposed high density portion of the Project complies with the City's existing General Plan HDR designation.

In evaluating the proposed General Plan amendments for potential environmental impacts related to consistency with land use plans, policies, and regulations, several General Plan policies must be examined for consistency.

The Project is consistent with General Plan policies related to land use, including those identified above under the Regulatory Setting. The Project is consistent with Land Use Policy LU.1.3 by providing a town center job base and corresponding housing stock in proximity to commercial services. The proposed development keeps with the building block concepts of neighborhoods, villages, and districts consistent with Goal LU UD.1 and Policy UD.1.1. The Project is also consistent with Economic Development Policy ED.1.8 and Housing Policies H.1.1 and H.1.3 as the Project would provide a mix of residential unit types and sizes. The Project does not propose growth beyond the areas envisioned for urbanization on the Rancho Cordova General Plan Land Use Map and is consistent with the capacity of the site envisioned by the General Plan (a maximum of 9,263 dwelling units and 1,331 employees in the 1,762-acre planning area).

The Project is consistent with Natural Resources goals, policies, and actions that implement Goals NR.1, NR.2, and NR.3 which aim to protect special-status species and habitat in accordance with state and federal law and preserve and maintain creek corridors and wetland preserves with useable buffer zones throughout the new development areas as feasible. The Project would preserve approximately 199.5 acres as a wetland preserve that would be deeded to a third-party conservation entity. The Project includes approximately 14.8 acres of existing aquatic resources, including 1.85 acres of depressional seasonal wetlands, 9.97 acres of vernal pools, 1.15 acres of riverine seasonal wetlands, 1.53 acres of intermittent drainages, and 0.30 acres of drainage basin outfalls. The wetland preserve runs the length of the Project and would provide for connectivity with lands designated to be preserved as Natural Resources as shown on General Plan Figure LU-5. The Project applicant would incorporate protections for the preservation of wetland resources within the preserve, including preserve fencing, long-term funding and management of the preserve in perpetuity, and protection of the preserve from drainage and runoff generated from development areas through the construction of several detention basins throughout the site.

Land Use Policy LU.2.3 states that the clustering of similar uses into areas or districts that have common needs and that are compatible with one another should be encouraged, in order to maximize their efficiency and identity for Rancho Cordova. The Project includes clustered residential and mixed use areas in order to maintain the important aquatic and open space resources on the Project site.

The proposed general plan amendment will ensure the Project's consistency with the City's General Plan requirements. This is considered a ***less than significant*** impact and no mitigation is required.

### ZONING CODE

Current zoning for the Project site is AG80. The applicant is requesting a rezone to SPA. The Ranch SPA zoning will establish development standards and design guidelines to ensure quality and consistency in the design and implementation of the Project. The SPA document is regulatory in nature and will serve as zoning for the Project site. Development plans, subdivision maps, and site plans for the Project must be consistent with both the SPA and the City of Rancho Cordova General Plan. With the requested rezone and required SPA consistency, the Project would be consistent with the City's Zoning Code and this impact would be ***less than significant***.

### METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION PLAN/SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES STRATEGY

The MTP/SCS provides a long-term regional plan for growth that is intended to address transportation, growth, air quality, and sustainability in the region. As discussed under Impact 3.6-3, the Project is designated with the Developing Community place type and is referred to as the "Ranch at Sunridge" in the MTP/SCS. The Project is consistent with the general uses envisioned for the site in the MTP/SCS. The proposed average net residential density (10 units/acre) meets SACOG's MTP/SCS consistency requirements, which include the requirement that projects located in a Developing Community meet or exceed the average net density described for the specific Development Community, as it exceeds with the average net density of 7 units/acre described for the the Ranch at Sunridge (MTP/SCS Appendix E-3, p. 137). The area proposed for residential development is less than initial plans for the site due to significant preservation of open space and wetland resources, which is consistent with the environmental principles of the SCS. Employment-generating uses include the proposed senior clubhouse, commercial parcel, multi-family parcels, and parks and recreation uses, and are consistent with the commercial and public uses envisioned by the MTP/SCS (MTP/SCS Appendix E-3, p. 137). A SPA Handbook has been prepared for the Project, which acts in a similar capacity to a Specific Plan, and is consistent with the MTP/SCS. The Project provides for a high level of bicycle and pedestrian connectivity throughout the Project site, including non-auto connections to the parks, open space, and trails features of the Project. An open space and wetland preserve area is provided, preserving wetlands and aquatic resources on the site. A range of housing types (including single family market rate and senior units at a range of densities and lot sizes, senior congregate care units, and multifamily units) will serve a broad spectrum of households. As described in Sections 3.2, Air Quality, 3.6, Greenhouse Gases and Energy, and 3.13, Transportation and Circulation, of this Draft EIR, comprehensive features and measures are provided by the Project to reduce GHG emissions, including use of renewable energy for the residential component of the Project, an EV charging network, and use of energy-efficient and water-conserving building and design practices. The Project does not conflict with the MTP/SCS. This is considered a ***less than significant*** impact and no mitigation is required.

### ELECTRICAL TRANSMISSION LINE REGULATIONS

The applicable electrical transmission line regulations include the NESC, General Order Number 95, PGE's Electric & Gas Service Requirements, and the SMUD Transmission Guide. The property is traversed by a 275-foot-wide utility easement occupied by a 230-kV PG&E transmission line, one 230-kV SMUD transmission line, and one 69-kV SMUD sub-transmission line. The lines run from the

northeastern portion of the site to the southwestern portion of the site. See Figure 2.0-4 in Chapter 2.0 for the site plan which shows the easement. The majority of the proposed urban uses would not be located in the immediate vicinity of these transmission lines because the proposed preserve, open space, or park areas would be located within the utility easement area.

The Project would provide underground electrical infrastructure. SMUD and PG&E would continue to be responsible for the operation and maintenance of the current transmission lines, consistent with the NESC and General Order Number 95. The development of the proposed underground facilities would be completed consistent with PG&E's Electric & Gas Service Requirements and SMUD's Transmission Guide.

The Project includes various open space features that would be located under the existing SMUD and PG&E transmission lines. SMUD considers pedestrian trails, bicycle trails, equestrian trails, and recreational parks and sports fields to be acceptable secondary uses within its transmission easements provided that these improvements are designed and constructed so as not to impact SMUD's ability to enjoy its full rights within its easement. The SMUD Transmission Guide addresses development, trails and parks, grading, roads, parking, drainage, fences, structures, and vegetation allowed within transmission corridors and includes requirements for access and clearances. Once the proposed electrical infrastructure is developed, SMUD would be allowed access to the facilities for operation and maintenance. The PG&E's Electric & Gas Service Requirements does not allow trees to be planted within the transmission line right-of-way, but does allow grass and shrubs, as well as small trees outside of the right-of-way. The Project applicant would be responsible for ensuring that development of the facilities, including providing appropriate fencing, structures, and vegetation, is completed consistent with the SMUD Transmission Guide and the PG&E Electric & Gas Service Requirements. A tree planting plan and/or park plan has not been completed for the Project. Mitigation Measure 3.9-1 requires compliance with the requirements for the SMUD Transmission Guide to ensure that the proposed park and landscaped areas comply with the requirements. With implementation of Mitigation Measure 3.9-1, the Project would be consistent with the applicable electrical transmission line regulations.

#### PLANS, POLICIES, AND REGULATIONS ADOPTED TO ADDRESS OTHER IMPACTS

The Project's consistency with applicable federal, state, and local plans, policies, and regulations associated with aesthetics, air quality, biological resources, cultural and tribal cultural resources, geology and soils, greenhouse gases and energy, hazards and hazardous materials, hydrology and water quality, noise, public services and recreation, transportation and circulation, and utilities are addressed in the respective sections of this Draft EIR.

#### CONCLUSION

Overall, the Project would be consistent with the land use plans, policies, and regulations adopted to address environmental impacts, including the Rancho Cordova General Plan, the City's Zoning Code, and the MTP/SCS. However, mitigation would be required to ensure the Project is consistent with the SMUD Transmission Guide and the PG&E Electric and Gas Service Requirements. With implementation of Mitigation Measure 3.9-1, the Project will have a *less than significant* impact.

## MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

**Mitigation Measure 3.9-1:** *The proposed open space areas located under the SMUD transmission line that traverses the site shall be designed and maintained in accordance with SMUD's Guide for Transmission Encroachment. According to the Guide, certain improvements, for safety and liability reasons, are typically not allowed within transmission corridors. These include, but not limited to the following:*

- *Buildings or structures;*
- *Covered parking;*
- *Excavation, elevation or grade changes;*
- *Light Standards over 15' tall;*
- *Parallel Utilities;*
- *Playground Equipment;*
- *Stockpiling of materials;*
- *Storage of combustibles;*
- *Swimming pools, spas, gazebos, etc.;*
- *Tall tree species (over 15' at maturity);*
- *Trash enclosures; and*
- *Water Detention and/or Retention Basins.*

*The proposed open space areas located under the PG&E transmission line that traverses the site shall be designed and maintained in accordance with the PG&E Electric and Gas Service Requirements.*

*Future improvement plans that include the transmission lines shall be consistent with the items outlined in Chapter 5, Trails and Parks, of the Guide, as well as other applicable Chapters. This requirement shall be noted on the Project improvement plans, subject to review and approval by the City of Rancho Cordova.*

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