

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requires an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) to evaluate a project's effects in relationship to broader changes occurring, or that are foreseeable to occur, in the surrounding environment. Accordingly, this chapter presents discussion of CEQA-mandated analysis for cumulative impacts and irreversible impacts associated with Project. As described below, this section also includes an analysis of the Project's growth inducing impacts.

4.1 CUMULATIVE SETTING AND IMPACT ANALYSIS

INTRODUCTION

CEQA requires that an EIR contain an assessment of the cumulative impacts that could be associated with the Project. According to CEQA Guidelines Section 15130(a), "an EIR shall discuss cumulative impacts of a project when the project's incremental effect is cumulatively considerable." "Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of an individual project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects other current projects, and probable future projects (as defined by Section 15130). As defined in CEQA Guidelines Section 15355, a cumulative impact consists of an impact that is created as a result of the combination of the project evaluated in the EIR together with other projects causing related impacts. A cumulative impact occurs from:

...the change in the environment which results from the incremental impact of the project when added to other closely related past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects. Cumulative impacts can result from individually minor but collectively significant projects taking place over a period of time.

In addition, Section 15130(b) identifies that the following three elements are necessary for an adequate cumulative analysis:

- 1) Either:
 - (A) A list of past, present, and probable future projects producing related or cumulative impacts, including, if necessary, those projects outside the control of the agency; or,
 - (B) A summary of projections contained in an adopted general plan or related planning document, or in a prior environmental document which has been adopted or certified, which described or evaluated regional or area wide conditions contributing to the cumulative impact. Any such planning document shall be referenced and made available to the public at a location specified by the lead agency.
- 2) A summary of the expected environmental effects to be produced by those projects with specific reference to additional information stating where that information is available; and

- 3) A reasonable analysis of the cumulative impacts of the relevant projects. An EIR shall examine reasonable, feasible options for mitigating or avoiding the project's contribution to any significant cumulative effects.

Where a lead agency is examining a project with an incremental effect that is not "cumulatively considerable," a lead agency need not consider that effect significant, but shall briefly describe its basis for concluding that the incremental effect is not cumulatively considerable.

CUMULATIVE SETTING

The cumulative analysis for this EIR is based primarily on the Rancho Cordova General Plan (June 2006) and the Rancho Cordova General Plan EIR (March 2006), consistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15130(b)(1)(B). The Rancho Cordova General Plan anticipated regional growth based on land use plans and development projects throughout the region, as described in Table 4.0-1 of the General Plan EIR. Growth anticipated by the General Plan EIR in the City's Planning Area included projects totaling approximately 25,538 acres, including approximately 15,039 acres of residential uses, 2,760 acres of commercial uses, and a range of town center, employment-generating, park, recreation, and public/quasi-public uses. Residential growth under the General Plan was anticipated to accommodate 68,413 single family and multifamily dwelling units.

The General Plan EIR further anticipated growth associated with the Sacramento Region Blueprint, which included growth of the population from 2.0 million to 3.8 million people, job increases from 921,000 to 1.9 million jobs, and housing increases from 713,000 to 1.5 million housing units through 2050 in the Sacramento region. Additional growth associated with Sacramento County, El Dorado County, Placer County, and the cities of Sacramento, Folsom, Rancho Cordova, Citrus Heights, Roseville, and Rocklin was anticipated as reflected in land use plans, as well as a 3,584-acre annexation of the Folsom Sphere of Influence. The Rancho Cordova General Plan considered two planning horizons: a 25-year (2030) and a full buildout (estimated at 2050) horizon. Since adoption of the General Plan, the City has grown in accordance with the vision of the General Plan. While the General Plan has been amended from time to time, the amendments have not required any amendments to the General Plan EIR, nor have any supplemental or subsequent EIRs been required to address changes to the General Plan. The General Plan EIR is an appropriate document to address the Project's contribution to cumulative impacts in the context of the General Plan's contribution to cumulative impacts, as provided by CEQA Guidelines Section 15130(b)(1)(B).

The 2016 Metropolitan Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (2016 MTP/SCS) was adopted by the Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG) in 2016. The 2016 MTP/SCS is the most recently adopted SACOG document, which addresses regional planning for transportation, sustainability, and growth, and the General Plan is the City's most recently adopted citywide land use document. The 2016 MTP/SCS EIR anticipated development of an additional 47,563 acres of land and an increase of approximately 811,000 people, 285,000 new housing units, and 439,000 new employees in the region, which includes El Dorado, Placer, Sacramento, Sutter, Yolo, and Yuba Counties, exclusive of the Tahoe Basin.

CUMULATIVE EFFECTS OF THE PROJECT

Cumulative Impacts Addressed by a General Plan for Which an EIR Was Certified

The CEQA Guidelines provide multiple provisions for streamlining the environmental review of subsequent projects that are 1) consistent with the development density established by existing zoning, community plan, or general plan policies for which an EIR was certified, as described by CEQA Guidelines Section 15183, or 2) later projects consistent with the program, plan, policy, or ordinance for which an EIR was prepared, as described by CEQA Guidelines Section 15152. The Project is consistent with the City's General Plan and is allowed to limit this Draft EIR's analysis of cumulative impacts as provided by both CEQA Guidelines Section 15183 and CEQA Guidelines Section 15152.

CEQA GUIDELINES SECTION 15152: TIERING

As described under CEQA Guidelines Section 15152(a), "Tiering" refers to using the analysis of general matters contained in a broader EIR (such as one prepared for a general plan) with later EIRs and negative declarations on narrower projects; incorporating by reference the general discussions from the broader EIR; and concentrating the later EIR or negative declaration solely on the issues specific to the later project." CEQA Guidelines Section 15152(d) provides the following direction regarding limiting analysis of a later project, where an EIR has already been prepared and certified for a program, plan, policy, or ordinance consistent with the requirements of Section 15152:

Where an EIR has been prepared and certified for a program, plan, policy, or ordinance consistent with the requirements of this section, any lead agency for a later project pursuant to or consistent with the program, plan, policy, or ordinance should limit the EIR or negative declaration on the later project to effects which:

- (1) Were not examined as significant effects on the environment in the prior EIR; or*
- (2) Are susceptible to substantial reduction or avoidance by the choice of specific revisions in the project, by the imposition of conditions, or other means.*

CEQA GUIDELINES SECTION 15183: PROJECTS CONSISTENT WITH A COMMUNITY PLAN OR ZONING

Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15183, projects which are consistent with the development density established by existing zoning, community plan, or general plan policies for which an EIR was certified shall not require additional environmental review, except as might be necessary to examine whether there are project-specific significant effects which are peculiar to the project or its site. This streamlines the review of such projects and reduces the need to prepare repetitive environmental studies.

This Draft EIR is required to analyze the Project's contribution to cumulative impacts under a limited set of circumstances as identified in CEQA Guidelines Section 15183(b), which states:

4.0 OTHER CEQA-REQUIRED TOPICS

In approving a project meeting the requirements of this section, a public agency shall limit its examination of environmental effects to those which the agency determines, in an initial study or other analysis:

- 1) Are peculiar to the project or the parcel on which the project would be located,*
- 2) Were not analyzed as significant effects in a prior EIR on the zoning action, general plan or community plan with which the project is consistent,*
- 3) Are potentially significant off-site impacts and cumulative impacts which were not discussed in the prior EIR prepared for the general plan, community plan or zoning action, or*
- 4) Are previously identified significant effects which, as a result of substantial new information which was not known at the time the EIR was certified, are determined to have a more severe adverse impact than discussed in the prior EIR.*

CUMULATIVE IMPACTS ADDRESSED BY THE GENERAL PLAN EIR

The Project was considered in the Rancho Cordova General Plan and General Plan EIR (referred to as The Preserve at Sunridge in Table 4.0 of the General Plan EIR), as discussed in Section 3.9, Land Use. The Rancho Cordova General Plan EIR addressed a full range of cumulative impacts, as discussed below, but did not address cumulative impacts associated with greenhouse gases and climate change or tribal cultural resources. At the time the General Plan EIR was written, the Tribal Cultural Resources section of Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines did not exist as a standalone section. Additionally, recent case law and state legislation has resulted in a need to revisit the greenhouse gases and climate change cumulative analysis. As such, this chapter includes a cumulative analysis for tribal cultural resources and greenhouse gases and climate change that would result from development of the Project. Further, in order to refine the cumulative analyses associated with noise and transportation that is included in the General Plan EIR, Sections 3.10, Noise, and 3.13, Transportation and Circulation, include detailed cumulative analyses for the Project.

The Project does not have any peculiar or unique components that would result in a contribution to cumulative impacts that would be greater than those analyzed for the Project site as part of the General Plan EIR; the Project proposes fewer residential units and comparable developed acreage when compared to the assumptions for the Project site evaluated in the General Plan EIR. The Rancho Cordova General Plan EIR determined that implementation of the General Plan, including buildout of the General Plan Planning Area, would result in the following cumulatively considerable and less than cumulatively considerable cumulative impacts:

- **Cumulative Land Use Effects.** Impact 4.1.5: When considered with existing, proposed, planned and approved development in the region, implementation of the Rancho Cordova General Plan has the potential to contribute to cumulative land use conditions in the region that result in significant impacts to the physical environment. This is considered a cumulatively considerable impact.

- **Cumulative Impacts to Agricultural Resources.** Impact 4.2.4: Implementation of the General Plan Land Use Map Book, along with other proposed development in Sacramento County, would contribute to the additional conversion of important farmland to other uses and may increase agriculture/urban interface conflicts. This is a cumulatively considerable impact.
- **Cumulative Population and Housing Increases.** Impact 4.3.3: Buildout in the planning area, under the General Plan Land Use Map, would include substantial population, housing unit and employment increases. This is considered a cumulatively considerable impact.
- **Cumulative Hazards and Health Risks.** Impact 4.4.5: Persons could be exposed to contaminated soil or groundwater during development of previously contaminated sites or sites undergoing remediation. Implementation of the General Plan policies and action items as well as existing regulatory requirements and standards would reduce impacts so that they are considered less than cumulatively considerable.
- **Cumulative Traffic Impacts on Local Roadways and State Highways.** Impact 4.5.6: When considered with existing, proposed, planned and approved development in the region, implementation of the Rancho Cordova General Plan would contribute to cumulative traffic volumes in the region that result in significant impacts to level of service and operations. This is considered a cumulatively considerable impact.
- **Cumulative Transit System.** Impact 4.5.7: Implementation of the General Plan would contribute to the cumulative demand for public transit service (e.g., bus and light rail service). The General Plan's contribution is considered less than cumulatively considerable.
- **Cumulative Bicycle and Pedestrian System.** Impact 4.5.8: Implementation of the proposed General Plan would contribute to cumulative demands for pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure. The General Plan's contribution is considered less than cumulatively considerable.
- **Cumulative Regional Air Quality Impacts.** Impact 4.6.6: Implementation of the proposed General Plan along with potential development of the Planning Area would exacerbate existing regional problems with ozone and particulate matter. The General Plan's contribution to these conditions is considered cumulatively considerable.
- **Cumulative Traffic Noise.** Impact 4.7.6: Implementation of the General Plan, in combination with regional growth and traffic conditions (pass-through traffic), would increase transportation noise along area roadways. This would be a cumulatively considerable impact.
- **Cumulative Stationary Noise.** Impact 4.7.7: Implementation of the General Plan, in combination with regional growth in surrounding communities outside of the Planning Area, would increase stationary noise. This is considered a cumulatively considerable impact.
- **Cumulative Airport Noise.** Impact 4.7.8: Implementation of the General Plan, in combination with regional growth in the Planning Area and surrounding communities, would subject more noise-sensitive land uses to airport noise. This is considered a less than cumulatively considerable impact.

- **Cumulative Geologic and Soils.** Impact 4.8.6: Implementation of the General Plan, in combination with existing, planned, proposed and reasonably foreseeable development, would not contribute to cumulative geologic and soil impacts, as the impacts would be site-specific and not additive in character. Thus, the General Plan's contribution would be less than cumulatively considerable.
- **Cumulative Mineral Resources.** Impact 4.8.7: Implementation of the General Plan, together with past, present and probable future projects in the area, would result in a cumulatively significant loss of mineral resources in the region. The General Plan's incremental contribution to the loss of mineral resources is cumulatively considerable.
- **Cumulative Water Quality.** Impact 4.9.5: Implementation of the General Plan and potential development of the Planning Area would include substantial grading, site preparation, and an increase in urbanized development. Increased development would contribute to cumulative water quality impacts and is considered cumulatively considerable.
- **Cumulative Flood Hazards.** Impact 4.9.6: Implementation of the General Plan would increase impervious surfaces and alter drainage conditions and rates in the Planning Area, which could contribute to cumulative flood conditions along the American River, Sacramento River, Cosumnes River, and local waterways. However, the General Plan contains adequate General Plan policies and action items that address drainage and flooding issues. This is considered a less than cumulatively considerable impact.
- **Cumulative Water Supply.** Impact 4.9.7: Implementation of the General Plan would contribute to an increased demand for water supply requiring increased groundwater production and the use of surface water supplies that could result in significant environmental impacts. This is considered a cumulatively considerable impact.
- **Cumulative Biological Resources.** Impact 4.10.8: Implementation of the General Plan, together with past, present, and probable future projects in the Planning Area and larger regional context would result in a cumulatively significant loss of biological resources in the region. The General Plan's incremental contribution to this significant cumulative impact is cumulatively considerable.
- **Prehistoric Resources, Historic Resources, and Human Remains.** Impact 4.11.3: Adoption of the Rancho Cordova General Plan along with foreseeable development in the region could result in the disturbance of cultural resources (i.e., prehistoric sites, historic sites, and isolated artifacts and features) and human remains. This contribution is considered cumulatively considerable.
- **Cumulative Paleontological Resources.** Impact 4.11.4: Adoption of the Rancho Cordova General Plan along with any foreseeable development in the region could result in the potential disturbance of paleontological resources (i.e., fossils and fossil formations). This is considered a less than cumulatively considerable impact.
- **Cumulative Fire Protection and Emergency Medical Services.** Impact 4.12.1.2: Implementation of the General Plan in combination with other reasonably foreseeable development (based on Sacramento County, and the cities of Folsom, Elk Grove, Citrus Heights, Galt, Lodi, and Sacramento General Plans land use projections), would increase

the population within the Sacramento Metropolitan Fire District service area, requiring additional fire and emergency medical services and related facilities. The City's contribution to the need for expanded fire protection services is considered less than cumulatively considerable.

- **Cumulative Design-Related Safety Concerns.** Impact 4.12.2.3: Implementation of the General Plan and other reasonably foreseeable development in southeastern Sacramento County (based on Sacramento County land use projections) would increase the population within the Planning Area and surrounding area and would require additional law enforcement services and related facilities under cumulative conditions. This is a less than cumulatively considerable impact.
- **Cumulative Water Service.** Impact 4.12.3.2 Implementation of the General Plan would contribute to the need for additional treatment capacity, storage capacity, and other conveyance facilities to meet cumulative water demands with SCWA, GSWC and Cal-Am. The General Plan's contribution would be cumulatively considerable.
- **Cumulative Wastewater Conveyance and Treatment.** Impact 4.12.4.2: Implementation of the General Plan, in addition to other reasonably foreseeable development in eastern Sacramento County (based on the land use projections established in the Sacramento County General Plan), would substantially increase in wastewater flows and require additional infrastructure and treatment capacity that would result in a physical effect on the environment. This is considered cumulatively considerable.
- **Cumulative Solid Waste Service.** Impact 4.12.5.2: The General Plan, in addition to proposed and approved projects in the region area, would generate solid waste that would require expanded collection and disposal services. The General Plan's contribution would be less than cumulatively considerable.
- **Cumulative Public Schools.** Impact 4.12.6.2: Implementation of the General Plan in combination with other reasonably foreseeable development (based on General Plan land use projections for Sacramento County, Folsom, and Elk Grove) proposed in eastern Sacramento County would result in a cumulative increase in student enrollment and require additional schools and related facilities to accommodate the growth. This is a less than cumulatively considerable impact.
- **Cumulative Park and Recreation Demands.** Impact 4.12.7.3: Implementation of the General Plan in combination with other reasonably foreseeable development would require additional park and recreation facilities within the Planning Area boundaries and CRPD's service area boundaries. This would be a less than cumulatively considerable impact.
- **Cumulative Electrical, Telephone, and Cable Services.** Impact 4.12.8.2: Implementation of the General Plan as well as potential development in the surrounding areas (based on Sacramento County General Plan land use projections) would result in cumulative utility service impacts. The General Plan 's contribution would be less than cumulatively considerable.
- **Alteration of Visual Character.** Impact 4.13.3: Implementation of the General Plan will encourage new development and redevelopment activities that could degrade the existing

visual character or quality of the Planning Area. This is considered a potentially significant impact.

- **Cumulative Visual Resources.** Impact 4.13.5: Implementation of the General Plan will encourage new development and redevelopment activities that would contribute to the cumulative alteration of existing landscape characteristics of the region. This impact is cumulatively considerable.

Because the Project does not have any peculiar or unique components that would result in a contribution to cumulative impacts that would be greater than those analyzed for the Project site as part of the General Plan EIR, and because the Project proposes fewer residential units and comparable developed acreage when compared to the assumptions for the Project site evaluated in the General Plan EIR, the Project would not result in increased impacts to the above-listed cumulative topics.

Cumulative Impacts not Addressed by the General Plan EIR

As discussed throughout this EIR, the Project is consistent with the City's General Plan vision for the Project site. The impacts of development of the City's Planning Area, which includes the Project site, are analyzed in the City's General Plan EIR. There is no substantial new information that would indicate that the Project's impacts would be more severe or more adverse. As such, this chapter focuses on cumulative impacts related to the topics that were not analyzed in the Rancho Cordova General Plan EIR, including: greenhouse gases, climate change, and energy; and tribal cultural resources.

METHOD OF ANALYSIS

Although the environmental effects of an individual project may not be significant when that project is considered separately, the combined effects of several projects may be significant when considered collectively. State CEQA Guidelines Section 15130 requires a reasonable analysis of a project's cumulative impacts, which are defined as "two or more individual effects which, when considered together are considerable or which compound or increase other environmental impacts." The cumulative impact that results from several closely related projects is: the change in the environment which results from the incremental impact of the project when added to other closely related past, present, and reasonably foreseeable probable future projects. Cumulative impacts can result from individually minor but collectively significant projects taking place over a period of time (State CEQA Guidelines Section 15355[b]). Consistent with State CEQA Guidelines Section 15130(a), the discussion of cumulative impacts in this Draft EIR focuses on significant and potentially significant cumulative impacts. According to Section 15130(b) of the State CEQA Guidelines, in part, "The discussion of cumulative impacts shall reflect the severity of the impacts and their likelihood of occurrence, but the discussion need not provide as great detail as is provided for the effects attributable to the project alone. The discussion should be guided by the standards of practicality and reasonableness, and should focus on the cumulative impact to which the identified other projects contribute rather than the attributes of other projects which do not contribute to the cumulative impact."

The goal of analysis of cumulative impacts is twofold: first, to determine whether the overall long-term impacts of all such projects would be cumulatively significant; and second, to determine whether the Project itself would cause a “cumulatively considerable” (and thus significant) incremental contribution to any such cumulatively significant impacts. (See State CEQA Guidelines Sections 15130[a]-[b], 15355[b], 15064[h], and 15065[c]; *Communities for a Better Environment v. California Resources Agency* [2002] 103 Cal.App.4th 98, 120.) In other words, the required analysis first creates a broad context in which to assess the project’s incremental contribution to anticipated cumulative impacts, viewed on a geographic scale well beyond the project site itself, and then determines whether the Project’s incremental contribution to any significant cumulative impacts from all projects is itself significant (i.e., “cumulatively considerable”).

There are two approaches to identifying cumulative projects and the associated impacts. The list approach identifies individual projects known to be occurring or proposed in the surrounding area in order to potential cumulative impacts. The projection approach uses a summary of projections in adopted General Plans or related planning documents to identify potential cumulative impacts. This EIR uses the projection approach for the cumulative analysis and considers the development anticipated to occur in the region, including growth associated with the buildout of the Rancho Cordova General Plan, as discussed above under the cumulative setting.

PROJECT ASSUMPTIONS

The Project’s contribution to environmental impacts under cumulative conditions is based on full buildout of the Project. See Chapter 2.0, Project Description, for a complete description of the Project.

CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

Cumulative impacts for tribal cultural resources are not quantifiable and are therefore discussed in qualitative terms as they pertain to development patterns in the surrounding region. As discussed below, the analysis of GHGs and climate change provided in Section 3.9 is within the cumulative context. In consideration of the cumulative scenario described above, the Project may result in the following cumulative impacts.

CULTURAL AND TRIBAL RESOURCES

Impact 4.1: The Project may contribute to cumulative impacts on known and undiscovered tribal cultural resources (Less than Cumulatively Considerable)

The cumulative setting for cultural resources includes the City of Rancho Cordova Planning Area and the surrounding areas of Sacramento County. Cumulative development anticipated in Rancho Cordova and the greater Sacramento County area, including growth projected by adopted general plans, may result in the discovery and removal of cultural resources, including archaeological, historical, and Native American resources and human remains. As discussed in Section 3.4, Cultural and Tribal Resources, the Project site is located in an area known to have historical, archaeological, and tribal cultural resources. However, field surveys of the site have not identified any tribal cultural resources, as described in Section 3.4. As discussed in Section 3.4, tribal representatives were contacted regarding the Project and no resources were identified on the Project site.

However, the potential remains for the discovery of tribal cultural resources as discussed in Section 3.4. Mitigation measures provided in Section 3.4 would require the Project to evaluate any resources discovered during construction activities and ensure that in the event of an unanticipated discovery of tribal cultural resources, the discovered resources would be evaluated, affected tribes would be provided the opportunity to consult on the significance and recommended methods for conservation and preservation, and that adequate measures would be taken to document and address the find. Any significant finds would be required to be preserved, either through relocation or documentation, and the Project is not anticipated to considerably contribute to a significant reduction in tribal cultural resources. Therefore, the Project would have a ***less than cumulatively considerable*** contribution to impacts to cultural resources and no further mitigation is required.

GREENHOUSE GASES, CLIMATE CHANGE, AND ENERGY

Impact 4.2: The Project may contribute to cumulative impacts on greenhouse gases and climate change (Less than Cumulatively Considerable)

The cumulative setting for this issue comprises anthropogenic (i.e., human-made) GHG emissions sources across the globe and no project alone would reasonably be expected to contribute to a noticeable incremental change to the global climate. However, legislation and executive orders on the subject of climate change in California have established a statewide context and process for developing an enforceable statewide cap on GHG emissions. Given the nature of environmental consequences from GHGs and global climate change, CEQA requires that lead agencies consider evaluating the cumulative impacts of GHGs. Small contributions to this cumulative impact (from which significant effects are occurring and are expected to worsen over time) may be potentially considerable and, therefore, significant.

Emissions of GHGs have the potential to adversely affect the environment in a cumulative context. The emissions from a single project will not cause global climate change, however, GHG emissions from multiple projects throughout the world could result in a cumulative impact with respect to global climate change. Therefore, the analysis of GHGs and climate change presented in Section 3.6 is presented in terms of the Project's contribution to cumulative impacts and potential to result in cumulatively considerable impacts related to GHGs and climate change.

The analysis of GHGs and climate change included in Section 3.6 was conducted at the cumulative level, as described in greater detail in that EIR section. As described in Section 3.6, the Project is consistent with statewide, regional, and local planning efforts to reduce GHG emissions. The Project is consistent with the State of California GHG reduction targets (as identified by Assembly Bill 32, Senate Bill 32, and the Scoping Plan), Sacramento Area Council of Governments Metropolitan Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy, Executive Order B-30-15 and the Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District CEQA Guide. Additionally, the Project would ensure that all residential uses either have on-site renewable energy systems or are served through purchased renewable energy, provide energy efficient appliances and lighting, and include comprehensive measures to promote use of electric vehicles. As discussed in Section 3.6, the Project would have a less than significant impact related to the use of inefficient, wasteful, or

unnecessary use of energy, and would not cause a considerable contribution to cumulative impacts associated with the use of energy. Due to the Project's consistency with State and regional plans to address greenhouse gas emissions with implementation of Mitigation Measures 3.2-1 and 3.6-1 as discussed in Section 3.6 of this Draft EIR, the Project would have a ***less than cumulatively considerable*** impact, and no further mitigation is required.

4.2 GROWTH-INDUCING EFFECTS

INTRODUCTION

Section 15126.2(d) of the CEQA Guidelines requires that an EIR evaluate the growth-inducing impacts of a proposed action. A growth-inducing impact is defined by the CEQA Guidelines as:

The way in which a proposed project could foster economic or population growth, or the construction of additional housing, either directly or indirectly, in the surrounding environment. Included in this are projects which would remove obstacles to population growth...It is not assumed that growth in an area is necessarily beneficial, detrimental, or of little significance to the environment.

Section 15126 of the CEQA Guidelines identifies criteria for evaluating the extent to which growth could be induced, accelerated, intensified, or shifted as a result of the Project. Subsection (d) provides the framework for a discussion of these potential growth-inducing impacts, as follows:

- Would the project foster economic or population growth or the construction of additional housing?
- Would the project remove obstacles to population growth?
- Would the project tax existing community facilities?
- Would the project encourage and facilitate other activities that could significantly affect the environment, either individually or cumulatively?

The Project would result in the construction of additional housing within the City of Rancho Cordova. As discussed in Section 3.11, Population and Housing, the Project would not result in direct or indirect population growth beyond the City's planned capacity. The Project would not remove any barriers to growth. Growth within the Project area has been anticipated by the City since its incorporation in 2003 and adoption of the General Plan in 2006. 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. Much of the utilities infrastructure that would be extended to serve the Project site is currently developed and stubbed adjacent to the Project site. Additionally, public service providers have anticipated development of the site and adjacent areas. Existing school facilities are located in the vicinity of the site, and a fire station was also constructed west of the site in order to serve the existing and future uses within the Project vicinity. As discussed in Section 3.14, the Project would include sewer improvements that accommodate other approved development projects. This increase in sewer capacity is consistent with the Sacramento Area Sewer District's

service plans and would implement master infrastructure improvements to accommodate planned and approved development.

By providing additional age-restricted housing, non-age restricted housing, commercial uses, and parks uses within the City of Rancho Cordova, the Project would provide areas for seniors and other members of the community to live, shop, and recreate and would accommodate population and employment growth consistent with the vision of the General Plan.

Additionally, as discussed in Section 3.12, Public Services and Recreation, the Project would increase demand for other public facilities within the City of Rancho Cordova, such as libraries and community buildings. However, given that the additional population increase associated with the Project is a small percentage of the population of the City as a whole, significant impacts due to increased demand on libraries and community facilities are not expected and the demand on such services and facilities associated with the Project is consistent with planned growth for the Project area. In addition to the 19.24 acres of park and recreation facilities, the Project includes a 27,000 square-foot community clubhouse in the age-restricted portion of the Project.

As demonstrated throughout this Draft EIR, the Project would not encourage or facilitate other growth-inducing activities, beyond the activities and growth addressed in this Draft EIR, that could significantly affect the environment, either individually or cumulatively.

4.3 SIGNIFICANT IRREVERSIBLE EFFECTS

Legal Considerations

CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.2() and Public Resources Code Sections 21100(b)(2) and 21100.1(a), require that the EIR include a discussion of significant irreversible environmental changes which would be involved in the proposed action should it be implemented. Irreversible environmental effects are described as:

- The project would involve a large commitment of nonrenewable resources;
- The primary and secondary impacts of a project would generally commit future generations to similar uses (e.g., a highway provides access to previously remote area);
- The project involves uses in which irreversible damage could result from any potential environmental accidents associated with the project; or
- The phasing of the proposed consumption of resources is not justified (e.g., the project involves the wasteful use of energy).

Determining whether the Project would result in significant irreversible effects requires a determination of whether key resources would be degraded or destroyed such that there would be little possibility of restoring them. Irrecoverable commitments of resources should be evaluated to assure that such current consumption is justified.

Analysis

Implementation of the Project would result in the development of a residential mixed use Project on 530 acres of unoccupied land that is currently designated Urban Development Area (UDA) by the Rancho Cordova General Plan. This property was previously used for agricultural purposes (cattle grazing). Development of the Project would constitute a long-term commitment to residential uses. It is unlikely that circumstances would arise that would justify the return of the land to its prior condition.

A variety of resources, including land, energy, water, construction materials, and human resources would be irretrievably committed for the Project's initial construction, infrastructure installation, and its continued maintenance. Construction of the Project would require the commitment of a variety of other non-renewable or slowly renewable natural resources such as lumber and other forest products, sand and gravel, asphalt, petrochemicals, and metals.

Additionally, a variety of resources would be committed to the ongoing operation and life of the Project. The introduction of new residential uses to the site will result in an increase in area traffic over existing conditions. Fossil fuels are the principal source of energy and the Project will increase consumption of available supplies, including gasoline and diesel fuel, and natural gas. These energy resource demands relate to initial Project construction, Project operation and site maintenance and the transport of people and goods to and from the Project site. Additional information the estimated energy usage of the Project can be found under Impact 3.6-4 of Section 3.6, Greenhouse Gases, Climate Change, and Energy, of this EIR. This impact concluded that Project implementation would not result in the inefficient, wasteful, or unnecessary use of energy resources as outlined in Section 15126.2 of the CEQA Guidelines.

4.4 SIGNIFICANT AND UNAVOIDABLE IMPACTS

CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.2(c) requires an EIR to discuss unavoidable significant environmental effects, including those that can be mitigated but not reduced to a level of insignificance. The following significant and unavoidable impacts of the Project are discussed in Chapters 3.1 through 3.14 (Project-level) and Chapter 4.0.

- Impact 3.1-1: Project implementation would result in substantial adverse effects on scenic vistas and resources or substantial degradation of visual character
- Impact 3.13-1: Under Existing (2017) Plus Project conditions, Project may conflict with an applicable program, plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system – Roadway Segments and Intersections
- Impact 3.13-2: Under Cumulative (2040) Plus Project conditions, Project may conflict with an applicable program, plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system – Roadway Segments and Intersections

This page left intentionally blank.