
4.0 – ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING, IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

4.1 – LAND USE

This section describes the existing land uses in the City of Rancho Cordova Redevelopment Project Area (Project Area), characterizes surrounding land uses, discusses adopted plans and policies pertinent to the Project Area, and addresses potential impacts to agricultural land uses and operations within the Project Area.

4.1.1. EXISTING SETTING

REGIONAL SETTING

The City of Rancho Cordova is located entirely within Sacramento County, California. Sacramento County is bounded by Placer and Sutter counties to the north, San Joaquin County to the south, Yolo and Solano counties to the west, and El Dorado, and Amador counties to the east. Sacramento County covers approximately 1,015 square miles of land, the majority of which consists of flat grassland and oak woodlands with foothill areas to the west and east of the County line. The land in the surrounding counties varies from flat agricultural lands in Yolo, Solano, and San Joaquin counties, foothill areas in Sutter and Amador counties, to mountain terrains in Placer and El Dorado counties.

LOCAL SETTING

The City of Rancho Cordova is located approximately nine miles east of Downtown Sacramento. The current city limits encompass approximately 20,000 acres. The Redevelopment Project Area is located entirely within the Rancho Cordova City limits and covers approximately 2,578 acres of land. The majority of the Project Area is urbanized, with approximately 50 acres consisting of vacant parcels. This represents approximately 2% of the Project Area. The Project Area includes the following areas:

- i) The Folsom Boulevard commercial corridor between Sunrise Boulevard and Bradshaw Road, including adjacent residential, commercial and industrial areas;
- ii) The Trade Center commercial and industrial area bounded by Sunrise Boulevard on the east, Kilgore Road on the west, and Sun Center Drive on the south, including adjacent parcels;
- iii) The Coloma Boulevard commercial and residential corridor between Sunrise Boulevard and Folsom Boulevard, including adjacent parcels;
- iv) The Zinfandel Drive commercial and residential corridor between Sunrise Boulevard and Folsom Boulevard, including adjacent parcels;
- v) The Lincoln Village residential and commercial area, roughly bounded by Bradshaw Road to the west, Old Placerville Road to the east, Lincoln Village Drive to the south and U.S. 50 to the north, including adjacent parcels; and
- vi) The residential, commercial and industrial area located between Old Placerville Road to the west, International Boulevard to the south, White Rock Road to the east and State Highway 50 to the north, and adjacent parcels.

Immediately adjoining streets within areas (i) through (vi) are also included within the Project Area. **Figure 3.0-3** shows a detailed map of the proposed Project Area.

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EXISTING LAND USE IN THE PROPOSED REDEVELOPMENT PROJECT AREA

The Redevelopment Project Area contains a wide range of urban uses. There are no commercial agricultural operations or lands designated for agricultural use within the Project Area. The acreages of Project Area land use designations, as specified in the proposed Rancho Cordova General Plan, are shown in **Table 4.1-1** below.

**TABLE 4.1-1
REDEVELOPMENT PROJECT AREA LAND USE DESIGNATIONS**

Land Use Designation	Acres	% of Total
Low Density Residential (2.1-6.0 du/acre)	486.58	18.9%
Medium Density Residential (6.1-18.0 du/acre)	78.94	3.1%
High Density Residential (18.1-40.0 du/acre)	44.33	1.7%
Commercial Mixed Use	1.76	<0.1%
Village Commercial Mixed Use	66.12	2.6%
Office Mixed Use	48.2	1.9%
Public/Quasi-Public	230.03	8.9%
Parks and Open Space	153.54	6.0%
Downtown Planning Area	155.85	6.0%
Countryside/Lincoln Village Planning Area	281.12	10.9%
Sunrise Boulevard North Planning Area	83.6	3.2%
Sunrise Boulevard South Planning Area	29.1	1.1%
Folsom Boulevard Planning Area	479.55	18.6%
Roadways (including landscaping and right-of-ways)	439.28	17.0%
Total	2,578	100%

Source: City of Rancho Cordova. February 2006.

The Project Area is characterized by a wide range of existing land uses, including residential developments, commercial/retail/office uses, industrial uses, institutional uses (i.e., churches, schools, etc.), natural features, open space, parks, and vacant land (**Figure 3.0-3**). The majority of the commercial, office and retail uses are located along the Folsom Boulevard corridor. Industrial, manufacturing and distribution facilities within the Project Area are located primarily along Folsom Boulevard. Land Use patterns within the Project Area are established as most of the area has been previously developed and urbanized.

The majority of manufacturing and distribution outlets within the City of Rancho Cordova are located along Bradshaw Road and Sunrise Boulevard, outside of the Project Area. Other notable land uses in the vicinity of the Project Area include the Teichert Mining and Gencorp/Aerojet operations, located south of US 50 and east of Sunrise Boulevard, outside of the Project Area. Another notable land use adjacent to, but outside of the Project Area includes the Mather Airport, formerly the Mather Air Force Base, located south of US 50 and off of Mather Field Road, which now operates as a public cargo airport and includes a corporate campus for various office land uses.

The American River is located north of the Project Area, and in some locations, makes up the Project Area's northern boundary. The American River parkway is an open space greenbelt adjacent to the American River that provides flood protection and recreational opportunities and extends approximately 29 miles from the Folsom Dam to the American River's confluence with the Sacramento River near Discovery Park.

The Project Area is traversed by the Folsom Boulevard commercial corridor, US 50 and the light rail line that extends from Folsom to downtown Sacramento. See Section 4.4, Transportation and Circulation for a more detailed discussion of the transportation infrastructure in the Project Area.

AGRICULTURAL OPERATIONS

As indicated in **Table 4.1-1** above, there is no land designated for agricultural uses within the Redevelopment Project Area. Additionally, there are no active commercial agricultural operations or parcels under a Williamson Act contract within the Project Area. There are no parcels within the Project Area that are designated as Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Local Importance by the California Department of Conservation's (DOC) Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP).

4.1.2 REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

FEDERAL

Farmland Protection Program

The Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) administers the Farmland Protection Program (FPP), which is a voluntary program aimed at keeping productive farmland in agricultural uses. Under the FPP, NRCS provides matching funds to state, local, or tribal government entities and nonprofit organizations with existing farmland protection programs to purchase conservation easements. The goal of the program is to protect between 170,000 and 340,000 acres of farmland per year (U.S. Natural Resources Conservation Service 2002). Participating landowners agree not to convert the land to nonagricultural use and retain all rights to use the property for agriculture. A conservation plan must be developed for all lands enrolled based upon the standards contained in the NRCS Field Office Technical Guide. A minimum of 30 years is required for conservation easements and priority is given to applications with perpetual easements. NRCS provides up to 50% of the fair market value of the easement being conserved (U.S. Natural Resources Conservation Service 2002).

To qualify for a conservation easement, farmland must meet several criteria. The land must be:

- Prime, Unique, or other productive soil, as defined by NRCS based on factors such as water moisture regimes, available water capacity, developed irrigation water supply, soil temperature range, acid-alkali balance, water table, soil sodium content, potential for flooding, erodibility, permeability rate, rock fragment content, and soil rooting depth;
- Included in a pending offer to be managed by a nonprofit organization, state, tribal, or local farmland protection program;
- Privately owned;
- Placed under a conservation plan;

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- Large enough to sustain agricultural production;
- Accessible to markets for the crop that the land produces; and
- Surrounded by parcels of land that can support long-term agricultural production.

In Sacramento County, the FPP is supplemented by the Department of Conservation's (DOC) Important Farmland Inventory System and Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program, which is discussed in further detail below.

STATE

California Department of Conservation

The DOC administers and supports a number of programs, including the Williamson Act, the California Farmland Conservancy Program (CFCP), the Williamson Act Easement Exchange Program (WAEPP) and the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program. These programs are designed to preserve agricultural land and provide data on conversion of agricultural land to urban use. The DOC has authority for the approval of agreements entered into under WAEPP. The population of California is expected to grow from its current 34 million to 50 million by 2025. This population growth and the need for new homes will put strain on the nation's leading agricultural economy. Key DOC tools available for land conservation planning are conservation easement grants, tax incentives to keep land in agriculture or open space, and farmland mapping and monitoring.

Important Farmland Inventory System and Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program

As discussed above, the Important Farmland Inventory System initiated in 1975 by the U.S. Soil Conservation Service (now NRCS) classifies land based on 10 soil and climatic characteristics. The DOC started another similar system of mapping and monitoring for California in 1980, known as the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP). The DOC system was designed to document how much agricultural land in California was being converted to nonagricultural land or transferred into Williamson Act contracts. To be shown on the FMMP's Important Farmland Maps as Prime Farmland or Farmland of Statewide Importance, a piece of land must meet both of the following criteria:

- *Land Use* –The land must have been used for production of irrigated crops at some time during the 4 years before the Important Farmland Map date, as determined by FMMP staff during examination of current aerial photos, local comment letters, and field verification; and
- *Soil* –The soil must meet the physical and chemical criteria for Prime Farmland or Farmland of Statewide Importance as determined by NRCS.

Williamson Act

The California Land Conservation Act of 1965, commonly referred to as the Williamson Act, is a non-mandated State program, administered by counties and cities to preserve agricultural land, and discourage the premature conversion of agricultural land to urban uses. The Act authorizes local governments and property owners to voluntarily enter into contracts to commit agricultural land to specified uses for ten or more years. Once enforceably restricted, the land is valued for taxation based on its agricultural income rather than unrestricted market value. This results in a

lower tax rate for owners. In return, the owners guarantee that these properties remain under agricultural production for an initial ten-year period. The contract is renewed automatically unless the owner files a notice of non-renewal, thereby maintaining a constant ten-year contract. Currently, approximately 70 percent of the state's prime agricultural land is protected under this act. Prime farmland under Williamson Act includes land that qualifies as Class I and II in the Soil Conservation Service (SCS) classification of land that qualifies for rating 80 to 100 in the Storie index rating. Participation is on a voluntary basis by both landowners and local governments and is implemented through the establishment of Agricultural Preserves and the execution of Williamson Act contracts.

LOCAL

Proposed City of Rancho Cordova General Plan

As discussed in greater detail in Section 3.0, the proposed General Plan has not yet been adopted by the City of Rancho Cordova.

The proposed General Plan Land Use Map reflects an approach that combines specific land use designations in some areas of the City and more general descriptions of land uses in areas planned for future growth—the “Planning Areas” shown on the Land Use Map. The Planning Area concept will require more detailed planning after adoption of the General Plan, such as the adoption of Specific Plans.

A variety of new land use designations are established with the Land Use Map to reflect more mixed, and in many cases, more intense land uses envisioned for the City. These “mixed use” categories provide the opportunity for combining residential, commercial, and office uses on a single site (depending on the designation). In some cases, the mixing may be “horizontal” (for example, residential uses next to commercial uses); in others, the mixing may be “vertical” (residential uses over commercial or office in multi-story buildings). The City anticipates that compact mixed-use developments will be the standard pattern for future development and redevelopment. The Land Use Map also designates the general location of several “Town Centers” of varying size and intensity. The locations are conceptual, but illustrate the City's intent to provide for a variety of shopping, working, and living opportunities throughout the city, and to take advantage of the opportunities provided by Hwy 50, the light rail, and other major means of access to build regionally-oriented commercial centers.

There are 16 individual Planning Areas identified in the proposed General Plan. Land uses within these Planning Areas are described in general and mapped with conceptual land use plans. Five of the sixteen Planning Areas identified in the General Plan are located partially within the Redevelopment Project Area, including the following (see **Figures 4.1-1 through 4.1-5**):

- Countryside/Lincoln Village Planning Area.
- Downtown Planning Area.
- Folsom Boulevard Planning Area.
- Sunrise Boulevard North Planning Area.
- Sunrise Boulevard South Planning Area.

There are also portions of the Redevelopment Project Area that are not within the individual Planning Areas.

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Countryside/Lincoln Village

The Countryside/Lincoln Village Planning Area is almost entirely built out and includes primarily residential development. The area includes a high concentration of low and moderate-income households and has a limited number of roadways providing east-west connectivity. This Planning Area establishes a priority for reinvestment, enhancement, and improved connectivity of this existing community. Within the residential neighborhoods, the goal is to improve property values and maintenance, while encouraging home ownership for a full range of income levels. The community supports the integration of new public and quasi-public uses into the existing park site on Routier. Along Old Placerville Road and Rockingham Drives, target land uses include a variety of office and commercial mixed use developments.

The Land Use Plan for Countryside-Lincoln Village shows a Village Center development on the northeast corner of Bradshaw Road and Old Placerville Road. Further north along Bradshaw Road, there are several commercial mixed use sites intended for smaller, neighborhood serving commercial, office, and residential uses. A new Residential Mixed Use designation is shown along Routier Road surrounding a new school site. At the intersection of Routier Road and Old Placerville Road, a new office mixed use designation will allow for existing and new offices to be developed with commercial and/or residential uses integrated horizontally or vertically. Finally, the commercial mixed use designation along Mather Field Road and Rockingham Drive is intended to expand development opportunities for existing low density commercial and office sites. Approximately 281 acres of this 700-acre Planning Area are located within the Redevelopment Project Area (**Figure 4.1-1**).

Downtown

The Downtown is the center and “heart” of Rancho Cordova. The area provides a significant connection between existing residential and commercial areas in the northern portion of the City with existing employment areas and future residences to the south. This location in the core of the community will serve to link the community both east-west and north-south. Its proximity to Hwy 50 and light rail make it a prime location in the region for locating uses that benefit from that level of visual exposure. It is the City’s intent that the Downtown become a vibrant place to live, work, play, and shop. It is intended to be a walkable area with wide urban sidewalks that connect to plazas and other gathering areas that are part of individual projects. The vision is for a pedestrian-friendly gathering place for both daytime and nighttime activities (e.g., farmers markets, concerts, and sporting events). The tallest buildings in the City will be located in the Downtown. Approximately 156 acres of this 363-acre Planning Area are located within the Redevelopment Project Area (**Figure 4.1-2**).

Folsom Boulevard

The Folsom Boulevard Planning Area will serve as the high-intensity development center of the City. This area encompasses approximately 1,652 acres and may accommodate a residential population of 22,936 people. Target land uses for this area include a series of Transit-Oriented and Regional Town Centers strategically located at light rail stations and freeway interchanges. These designations, along with other commercial nodes along Folsom Boulevard will serve as catalysts for redevelopment of this corridor. Residential and Office Mixed Use designations will provide additional housing opportunities and developments that support transit ridership. The Folsom Boulevard Planning Area is fully urbanized with revitalization efforts required by both the City and private landowners to create a vibrant mixed-use center envisioned by the City. This process may take 10 to 20 years to accomplish and will require significant investment by the

private and public sectors. Approximately 480 acres of this 1,652-acre Planning Area are located within the Redevelopment Project Area (**Figure 4.1-3**).

Sunrise Boulevard North Planning Area

The Sunrise Boulevard North Planning Area is the smallest of the City's planning areas, encompassing approximately 88-acres, directly west of Sunrise Boulevard and north of Highway 50. While currently an older retail area with many existing offices, the City's vision calls for redesign of this area with more intensive mixed-use (retail, office, and residential) activities, including a Village Center serving adjacent neighborhoods to the west. Given the commercial concentration in this area, it is estimated that new residential development in the Planning Area will occur at an average of 14 units per acre. The land use plan for this Planning Area shows a Village Center development on the northwest corner of Coloma and Sunrise. Further south along Sunrise, there is a large commercial mixed use site intended for general merchandise and neighborhood serving uses. Consistent with the existing development patterns, the commercial sites are surrounded by office mixed use and medium density residential. It is expected that revitalization of this area will occur as the City continues to grow. The Sunrise Boulevard Planning Area is located almost entirely within the Redevelopment Project Area (approximately 83.6 acres of this 88-acre Planning Area are within the Redevelopment Project Area, see **Figure 4.1-4**).

Sunrise Boulevard South Planning Area

The Sunrise Boulevard South Planning Area includes several existing commercial and industrial uses along the Sunrise corridor, stretching as far south as Douglas Road. This Planning Area encompasses 916-acres and development could generate over 14,000 jobs. Target uses for this area include industrial, office mixed use, and commercial mixed use. Limited industrial uses will continue to be a viable and appropriate use in some portions of this Planning Area. The City will develop programs/policies to support the natural evolution of this area to ensure the continued economic vitality of this area. Provisions for non-conforming existing uses in this area will allow for the continuation of industrial uses and conditional expansion of industrial uses where development standards and conditions of approval ensure compatibility with the evolving nature of this area. Environmental constraints associated with this Planning Area include, but are not limited to, mine tailings, Mather Airport safety zones, and the Folsom South Canal. This Planning Area is fully developed with revitalization efforts required by both the City and private landowners. Redevelopment and revitalization of this area is anticipated to take between ten and twenty years to accomplish and will require significant investment by the public and private sectors. Approximately 29 acres of this 916-acre Planning Area are located within the Redevelopment Project Area (**Figure 4.1-5**).

City of Rancho Cordova Zoning Code

The City adopted the majority of the Sacramento County Zoning Code upon its incorporation. The existing Rancho Cordova Zoning Code will be updated as a subsequent action to the adoption of the new General Plan. The Zoning Code serves as the primary tool for implementing the City's land use policies, and under State planning law requirements, must be consistent with the General Plan. Each General Plan land use category must have one or more corresponding zone districts, and the development standards and land use regulations contained in the Zoning Ordinance must reflect the policies and standards in the General Plan, as well as applicable specific plans. While the General Plan may be somewhat broad in its discussion of permitted land uses and development intensities, zoning provisions identify specific regulations so that property owners and developers can determine how particular properties can be used and developed.

4.1 LAND USE

City of Rancho Cordova Design Guidelines

On September 6, 2005, the Rancho Cordova City Council adopted the City's first comprehensive Design Guidelines. The Design Guidelines reflect the City's desire for quality development and apply to all types of development within the City, including the Redevelopment Project Area. The Design Guidelines were created using input and direction from Urban Design workshops held in the spring/summer of 2004, a visual preference survey and General Plan survey conducted in the summer of 2004, visioning workshops and land use map discussions for the City's General Plan, and the guiding principles of the City's Design Review Ordinance. These provisions provide a framework to evaluate new development projects against the City's adopted vision and are intended to reflect the City's desires relative to land planning, as well as individual site design and architecture.

Other Plans Applicable to the Redevelopment Project Area

Mather Airport Comprehensive Land Use Policy (CLUP)/Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan (ALUP)

Mather Airport is a former Air Force Base that has been converted to civilian use. The airport is now operated by the Sacramento County Airport System. Flight facilities include: two parallel runways, an integrated system of taxiways, aprons, a 24-hour control tower, and parking aprons. Mather Airport is primarily used by air cargo carriers and general aviation (small, private aircraft). Mather Airport is also a major commercial maintenance facility and houses the California Department of Forestry administrative and maintenance facilities. The Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG) serves as the Airport Land Use Commission (ALUC) for Sacramento County. The ALUC has two primary functions: The protection of public health, safety, and welfare through the adoption of land use standards that minimize the public's exposure to safety hazards and excessive noise from nearby airports, and; to prevent the intrusion of incompatible land uses around airports to preserve the utility of the County's airports in the future. SACOG is in the process of updating the Airport Land Use Plan (ALUP) for the Mather Airport ALUPs (formerly known as Comprehensive Land Use Plans [CLUPs]) to establish the planning area boundaries of the airport and provide the land use guidelines on which compatible uses are determined. The Mather Airport CLUP establishes planning boundaries for height, noise and safety around the airport as well as policies that determine the compatibility of new land uses proposed within the planning area boundary. The CLUP determines compatibility of surrounding land uses based upon noise levels associated with the airport operations and exposure of persons to crash hazards associated with aircraft and height restrictions.

The Federal Aviation Regulation (FAR) Part 150 Noise Compatibility Study was established by the Federal Aviation Study and Noise Abatement Act of 1979. A Noise Compatibility Study includes the development of a Noise Exposure Map and a Noise Compatibility Program, which identify appropriate uses for land surrounding airports and include noise mitigation programs to ensure benefits for the surrounding communities. The Noise Compatibility Study for the Mather Airport was updated by SACOG after adoption of the Mather Airport Master Plan (MAMP) by the Sacramento County Board of Supervisors. The Sacramento County Airport System manages the airport's operations and planning functions and is in the process of updating the MAMP in conjunction with the Sacramento County Department of Environmental Review (DERA). The MAMP, which is based on a 20-year planning horizon must be completed prior adoption of the new ALUP, which is generally developed for a 50-year planning period. The Sacramento County Board of Supervisors adopted the Draft Mather Airport Master Plan, which outlines the proposed landside, access, and circulation improvements, cargo facilities upgrades, and other flight track policies to guide the Airport's operation, in February 2004. DERA has issued a Request for

Qualification (RFQ) for consulting services for the Master Plan Final EIR, which is anticipated for completion in 2008 (Takayama, 2005).

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has established Federal Aviation Regulation (FAR) Part 77, which establishes a series of “imaginary surfaces” around an airport above which hazards to aircraft and surrounding land uses may be considered dangerous. Imaginary surfaces are established at radiuses from the end of the primary runway surface outward for varying distances and heights above ground. The furthest extent that these surfaces reach is 14,000 feet. The primary aircraft hazards in the Redevelopment Project Area are electrical transmission lines and towers already existing throughout the area. State Airport Land Use Commission (ALUC) law requires a jurisdiction to amend either its General Plan or other land use regulations to achieve consistency with airport CLUPs adopted by the ALUC.

Imaginary surfaces established by FAR Part 77 serve to identify possible obstructions to air navigation. Any proposed object or structure that would penetrate any of these imaginary surfaces as they apply to the affected airport facilities is considered by the FAA to be an obstruction to air navigation. An obstruction to air navigation may not be a hazard to air navigation, however, the FAA presumes it to be a hazard and treats it as such until an FAA aeronautical study determines that it does not have a substantial adverse effect on the safe use of the navigable airspace by aircraft. The imaginary surfaces the FAA uses to determine whether or not a structure or an object would be an obstruction to air navigation includes the primary surface, approach surface, horizontal surface, conical surface, and transitional surfaces. The entire Redevelopment Project Area is located within the boundaries of the Mather Airport Comprehensive Land Use Plan (CLUP) and the Mather Airport Policy Area (MAPA) (See **Figures 4.1-6 and 4.1-7**).

The Noise and Hazards sections of this EIR (Sections 4.4 and 4.7) address consistency with the Mather ALUP and noise contours.

American River Parkway Plan

The American River Parkway Plan was adopted by Sacramento County in 1985. The vision of the Plan was to manage the Parkway's natural resources; accommodate the demand for passive, unstructured, river oriented recreational pursuits in a natural environment which are not normally provided by other County recreational facilities, in a manner which minimizes the impact on the environment; limit the use of the Parkway to prevent overuse and preserve environmental quality thereby ensuring the availability of the Parkway for future users; coordinate and cooperate in the Parkway planning and management efforts; and balance the preservation of naturalistic open space and habitat within the urban area with the provision of active recreational facilities to serve the recreational needs of the community. Sacramento County is currently working with the Update Citizens Advisory Committee (UCAC) and the general public to update the American River Parkway Plan, focusing on the downstream portion of the Parkway, including three contiguous sites in a 5.5-mile reach of the lower American River (Discovery Park, Woodlake, and Cal Expo). This area includes approximately 1,000 acres. The update is required because the context and usage of the three areas has changed considerably since the Plan was adopted in 1985. The American River Parkway bounds portions of the Project Area to the north.

4.1 LAND USE

4.1.3. IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

STANDARDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

This land use analysis evaluates the consistency of the proposed project with the following standards, which are based on State CEQA Guidelines Appendix G. A land use impact is considered significant if implementation of the project would result in any of the following:

- 1) Physically divide an established community;
- 2) Create substantial incompatibilities between land uses;
- 3) Conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to, the adopted goals and policies of the General Plan, zoning ordinance, or other planning program) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating environmental effects; or,
- 4) Conflict with applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan.
- 5) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance, as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use.
- 6) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract.
- 7) Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland to a non-agricultural use.

METHODOLOGY

An evaluation of the potential land use impacts associated with implementation of the Redevelopment Plan and designation of the Project Area was based on a review of planning documents, including the proposed City of Rancho Cordova General Plan, the City of Rancho Cordova Zoning Code, Rancho Cordova Design Guidelines, and applicable Specific Plans, field reviews of the Project Area and entire City of Rancho Cordova area, and consultation with appropriate agencies. The analysis contained herein is based on buildout conditions for the City of Rancho Cordova within the Project Area and does not assess impacts associated with the phasing of projects, interim improvements, or individual development projects.

The focus of this land use analysis is on land use impacts that would result from the adoption of the proposed Redevelopment Plan and designation of the Project Area. Specific impacts and Plan consistency issues associated with biological resources, visual resources, noise, traffic, public services/utilities, hydrology, and/or geology are addressed in each technical section. The reader is referred to sections 4.2 through 4.12 of this EIR for a detailed analysis of other relevant environmental effects as they relate to a particular issue area.

Project-related impacts to areas outside of the Redevelopment Project Area are addressed in this analysis and the cumulative impacts analysis in this EIR. The Sacramento County General Plan, City of Sacramento General Plan, Elk Grove General Plan, Folsom General Plan and Mather Airport Comprehensive Land Use Policy (CLUP)/Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan

(ALUP) were used to analyze the cumulative land use impacts associated with implementing the proposed project.

PROJECT IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

Division of Established Communities

Impact 4.1.1 Implementation of the Redevelopment Plan would include redevelopment of existing urbanized areas and new development in vacant portions of the Project Area consistent with the proposed City of Rancho Cordova General Plan. This would not result in the division of established communities and is considered a **less than significant** impact.

The Redevelopment Project Area is characterized by existing urbanized developments, generally located along Folsom Boulevard and US 50. There are no large-tracts of undeveloped, vacant land within the Project Area. Approximately 50-acres, or less than 2 percent, of the Project Area is vacant and undeveloped. These 50 vacant acres are scattered throughout the Project Area and do not form a large contiguous area of vacant parcels. The majority of the existing residential development within the Project Area is located along Coloma Road, and Zinfandel Drive, north of Folsom Boulevard and also south of Folsom Boulevard, between Folsom and US 50. Other existing residential development includes, but is not limited to, Countryside/Lincoln Village. The existing Lincoln Village development is part of the Countryside/Lincoln Village Planning Area identified in the proposed City of Rancho Cordova General Plan. The priority goals and objectives for this area are reinvestment, enhancement, improved connectivity within the area's established neighborhoods, improve property values, and encourage homeownership for a full range of income levels. Since future development proposed under the Redevelopment Plan must be consistent with the General Plan, it would assist in the enhancement the visual appearance and character of this area and not divide or otherwise adversely affect existing neighborhoods.

The existing residential communities along the Folsom Boulevard corridor are located within the Folsom Boulevard and Downtown Planning Areas, as identified in the General Plan. These residential areas are currently urbanized and are planned for revitalization and redevelopment associated with the General Plan and the Redevelopment Plan. Proposed improvements and land uses will include new residential uses, Office Mixed Use, Commercial Mixed Use, Regional Town Centers and Transit-Oriented Development. Development within the Folsom Boulevard and Downtown Planning Areas will provide housing and employment opportunities that currently don't exist. The General Plan envisions Transit-Oriented developments and Regional Town Centers strategically located at light-rail stations and freeway interchanges. It is expected that some new residential projects would have up to 40 units per acre and an average of 20 units per acre. Redevelopment and new development in this area will be consistent with the General Plan for Folsom Boulevard and the Downtown. Therefore, implementation of the Rancho Cordova Redevelopment Plan will improve the walkability and livability of these areas and will not divide the existing community.

New development, reinvestment and infill proposed under the Redevelopment Plan would not result in adverse environmental impacts or substantially change the character of these communities. There are no proposed activities that would create any physical feature that would divide the existing communities in the Project Area. Additionally, the goals, policies, and actions proposed in the Rancho Cordova Redevelopment Plan seek to enhance and improve these areas; therefore, the proposed project would not result in the division of existing communities and **less than significant** impacts would result.

4.1 LAND USE

Mitigation Measures

None Required.

Incompatibilities between Land Uses

Impact 4.1.2 Implementation of the Redevelopment Plan could result in incompatibilities or conflicts between existing and future land uses within the Redevelopment Project Area. This is considered a **less than significant** impact.

Pursuant to California Redevelopment Law, Health and Safety Code Section 33331, redevelopment plans must be consistent with the general plan of the community. The Redevelopment Plan, therefore, proposes only actions and land uses that would otherwise be permitted under the Rancho Cordova General Plan, as amended from time to time.

The General Plan land use designations will provide an opportunity for combining residential, commercial, and office uses on a single site. In some cases, the mixing of land uses may be "horizontal" and in other cases, the land use mix may be "vertical" (residential units placed over commercial and offices in multi-story buildings). The City anticipates that compact mixed-use development will be the standard pattern of development. However, it should be noted that the "mixing" of land uses would not necessarily locate incompatible uses together. For example, residential uses would not be mixed with industrial uses. In addition, the adopted City of Rancho Cordova Design Guidelines include land use compatibility provisions associated with screening of features that could conflict (visual, noise, traffic, design, etc.) with adjoining land uses. Implementation of the Design Guidelines would occur through subsequent project review as part of the City's design review entitlement process.

Future redevelopment activities within the Redevelopment Project Area consistent with the General Plan will ultimately increase the intensity of land uses in some areas of the Project Area, particularly in the Folsom Boulevard Planning Area and the Downtown Planning Area.

Adoption of the Redevelopment Plan is intended to facilitate redevelopment within the Project Area consistent with the land use patterns and policies identified in the Rancho Cordova General Plan. The adopted Rancho Cordova Design Guidelines and proposed General Plan include provisions that avoid significant land use conflicts. Consistency with the proposed Redevelopment Plan and the adopted City of Rancho Cordova Design Guidelines would ensure that conflicts between existing and future land uses are **less than significant**.

Mitigation Measures

None Required.

Conflicts with Relevant Land Use Plans, Policies or Regulations

Impact 4.1.3 Implementation of the proposed Redevelopment Plan has the potential to conflict with applicable land use plans, policies or regulations of agencies with jurisdiction over parts of the Project Area that provide for environmental protection. This is considered a **potentially significant** impact.

By law, all activities undertaken by a redevelopment agency, including all development activities facilitated by a redevelopment plan, must be consistent with the goals and policies of the community's general plan. The proposed Rancho Cordova General Plan plays a central

planning role in correlating all city land use issues, goals and objectives into one set of development policies.

Implementation of the Redevelopment Plan would facilitate development and redevelopment activities within the Project Area consistent with the proposed General Plan. Agencies with jurisdiction over parts of the Project Area (i.e., Caltrans, SMAQMD, USFWS, USACOE, etc.) would have review authority over proposed activities within the Redevelopment Project Area, thus ensuring that the Redevelopment Plan does not conflict with applicable plans, polices and regulations that provide for environmental protection.

The Redevelopment Plan's consistency with applicable land use plans is detailed below.

City of Rancho Cordova Design Guidelines

The City of Rancho Cordova Design Guidelines implements the land use and urban design policy guidance of the General Plan. All future development and redevelopment within the Redevelopment Project Area would be subject to review for conformity with the Design Guidelines on a project-by-project basis as development is proposed. No conflicts are expected to occur with the Redevelopment Plan.

Rancho Cordova Zoning Code

As previously discussed, the City adopted the existing Sacramento County Zoning Code to ensure the most appropriate and compatible use of land. The Zoning Code implements the General Plan policies and programs and may be used to implement the Redevelopment Plan as well. No conflicts are expected to occur with the Redevelopment Plan.

Mather Airport Comprehensive Land Use Plan Safety Hazard Areas

The Redevelopment Project Area is located entirely within the Mather Airport Comprehensive Land Use Plan (CLUP). The Mather Airport CLUP establishes planning boundaries for height, noise and safety around each airport as well as policies that determine the compatibility of new land uses proposed within each planning area boundary. The CLUP determines compatibility of surrounding land uses based upon noise levels associated with the airport operations and exposure of persons to crash hazards associated with aircraft and height restrictions. Additionally, any proposed object or structure that would penetrate any of the FAR Part 77 imaginary surfaces as they apply to the affected airport facilities is considered by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to be an obstruction to air navigation. An obstruction to air navigation may not be a hazard to air navigation; however, the FAA presumes it to be a hazard and treats it as such until an FAA aeronautical study has determined that it does not have a substantial adverse effect on the safe use of the navigable airspace by aircraft. The imaginary surfaces the FAA uses to determine whether or not a structure or an object would be an obstruction to air navigation includes the primary surface, approach surface, horizontal surface, conical surface, and transitional surfaces. Within 10,000 feet of the Mather runway, the Horizontal Surface begins at 150 feet above the airport elevation. Mather Airport's established elevation is 96 feet. The Conical Surface extends from the outer edge of the Horizontal Surface and slopes upward to 350 feet above the field elevation up at a ratio of 20 to 1 for a horizontal distance of 4,000 feet. Buildings within 14,000 feet of the runways at Mather may require FAA consultation and could potentially face design changes or mitigation in order to prevent hazards to aircraft.

4.1 LAND USE

The Downtown Planning Area, approximately 156 acres of which are located within the Redevelopment Project Area, is anticipated to have the tallest buildings in the City. While the General Plan has not specifically identified a height limit for structures within this land use designation, it is possible that some areas within the Downtown Planning Area portion of the Redevelopment Project Area would be subject to height restrictions in order to comply with the FAR Part 77 map for Mather. All development and redevelopment within the Project Area is required to be consistent with the height restrictions identified in the Mather Airport CLUP, in compliance with FAR Part 77. Future development and redevelopment activities within the Project Area would be subject to review for consistency with the CLUP on a project-by-project basis. Expanded discussions of the proposed project's consistency with the Mather CLUP are in Section 4.4 (Hazards) and Section 4.7 (Noise) of this EIR.

American River Parkway Plan

The American River Parkway Plan includes policies to: preserve, protect, interpret and improve the natural, archeological, historical and recreational resources of the American River Parkway; mitigate adverse effects of activities and facilities adjacent to the Parkway; and provide public safety and protection within and adjacent to the Parkway. A small portion of the Redevelopment Project Area falls within the American River Parkway (Hagan Park). This existing community park is designated as Parks and Open Space by the Rancho Cordova General Plan and is, therefore, consistent with the Parkway Plan. No conflicts are expected to occur with the Redevelopment Plan.

Mitigation Measures

The following mitigation measures will be adopted by the City Council in connection with the adoption of the Redevelopment Plan as measures that will apply to all development in the Project Area until the General Plan is adopted:

- MM 4.1.3a** When considering subsequent redevelopment activities, the Agency shall coordinate with regional planning agencies setting land use and environmental programs, and cooperate in the implementation of these programs within the Project Area.
- MM 4.1.3b** Subsequent redevelopment activities adjacent to or near Mather Airport shall be subject to location, use and height restrictions of the most recent adopted CLUP at the time of development consideration, except when the CLUP is under an update process. In the circumstances of a CLUP update, the Agency shall coordinate with the County in the review of development projects to determine the most appropriate development restrictions for the continued operation of the airport.

Implementation of the above mitigation measures would reduce potential consistency issues with the Mather Airport CLUP and ensure that subsequent redevelopment activities are consistent with other applicable plans and policies. This impact is **less than significant**.

Loss and Conversion of Agricultural Land and Compatibility with Habitat Conservation Plans

- Impact 4.1.4** Implementation of the proposed Redevelopment Plan would not result in the loss of important farmlands (Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, and Farmland of Statewide Importance, Williamson Act Parcels, etc) as designated by the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program. There are no applicable habitat

conservation plans within the Redevelopment Project Area. There is **no impact**.

As discussed above in the Section 4.1.1- Existing Setting, there is no land designated for agricultural uses within the Redevelopment Project Area. Additionally, there are no non-conforming commercial agricultural operations or parcels under a Williamson Act contract within the Project Area. There are no parcels within the Project Area that are designated as Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Local Importance by the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP). There are no applicable habitat conservation plans within the Redevelopment Project Area.

Implementation of the proposed project would not result in any impacts to existing or future agricultural operations or habitat conservation plans in or around the Redevelopment Project Area. There is **no impact**.

Mitigation Measures

None Required.

4.1.4 CUMULATIVE SETTING, IMPACTS, AND MITIGATION MEASURES

CUMULATIVE SETTING

The setting for this cumulative analysis includes existing, proposed, planned and approved projects in the City of Rancho Cordova General Plan Planning Area, which includes the City limits, sphere of influence and the southeastern portion of Sacramento County. The cumulative setting for land use also assumes anticipated and planned development within the City of Sacramento's Sphere of Influence, the City of Folsom's Sphere of Influence, and City of Elk Grove's Sphere of Influence as well as growth planned for under the general plans, community plans and specific plans for Sacramento, El Dorado and Placer counties, cities of Sacramento, Folsom, Elk Grove and Roseville. Future development in the region would change the intensity of land uses in the region and increase housing, employment, shopping and recreational opportunities. The physical effects of providing new housing, employment, shopping and recreation within the Project Area and the region are addressed in other sections of this EIR.

Environmental effects associated with cumulative land use conditions for the region generally consist of the following:

- *Aesthetics* – Further conversion of rural, agricultural and natural open space landscape characteristics to urban conditions.
- *Agricultural Resources* – Continued loss of farmland to urban uses as well as increased conflicts with agricultural operations and urban uses.
- *Air Quality* – Increases in air pollutant emissions potentially conflicting with air quality attainment efforts under state and federal Clean Air Acts. Also increased potential for the exposure to toxic air contaminants.
- *Biological Resources* – Loss of special-status plant and animal species habitats, degradation of habitats and loss of special-status species.

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- *Cultural Resources* – Impacts to known and unknown archaeological and historic resources in the region.
- *Geology and Soils* – Loss of access to known valuable mineral resources.
- *Hydrology and Water Quality* – Additional sources of point and non-point sources of surface water quality pollutants to region waterways. Further demand on groundwater resources and potential overdraft issues.
- *Noise* – Increased transportation noise levels from increased traffic volumes.
- *Public Services and Utilities* – Increased demand for the development and expansion of public services and facilities and associated environmental issues.
- *Traffic* – Increased traffic volumes on the region's highways and regional roadways resulting in deficient levels of service of operation.

CUMULATIVE IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

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 Redevelopment 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.

Implementation of the proposed Redevelopment Plan will assist and facilitate development and redevelopment activities within the Project Area. The Project Area is currently urbanized in nature, and contains very limited natural resources, and no agricultural resources. Implementation of the proposed Redevelopment Plan would assist in minimizing the physical environmental effects of regional growth by implementing the General Plan's vision of dense urban development in the Project Area, consistent with the intent of SACOG's Blueprint Plan. However, this increase in urbanization will contribute to cumulative impacts associated with traffic, air quality, noise and public service demands (such as water supply), which are considered to be cumulatively considerable. The reader is referred to Sections 4.5, 4.6, 4.7, and 4.11 respectively.

Implementation of the mitigation measures identified in this Draft EIR would assist in reducing the environmental effects of the anticipated development under the proposed Redevelopment Plan. However, this impact would still be considered **cumulatively considerable** and a **significant and unavoidable** impact.

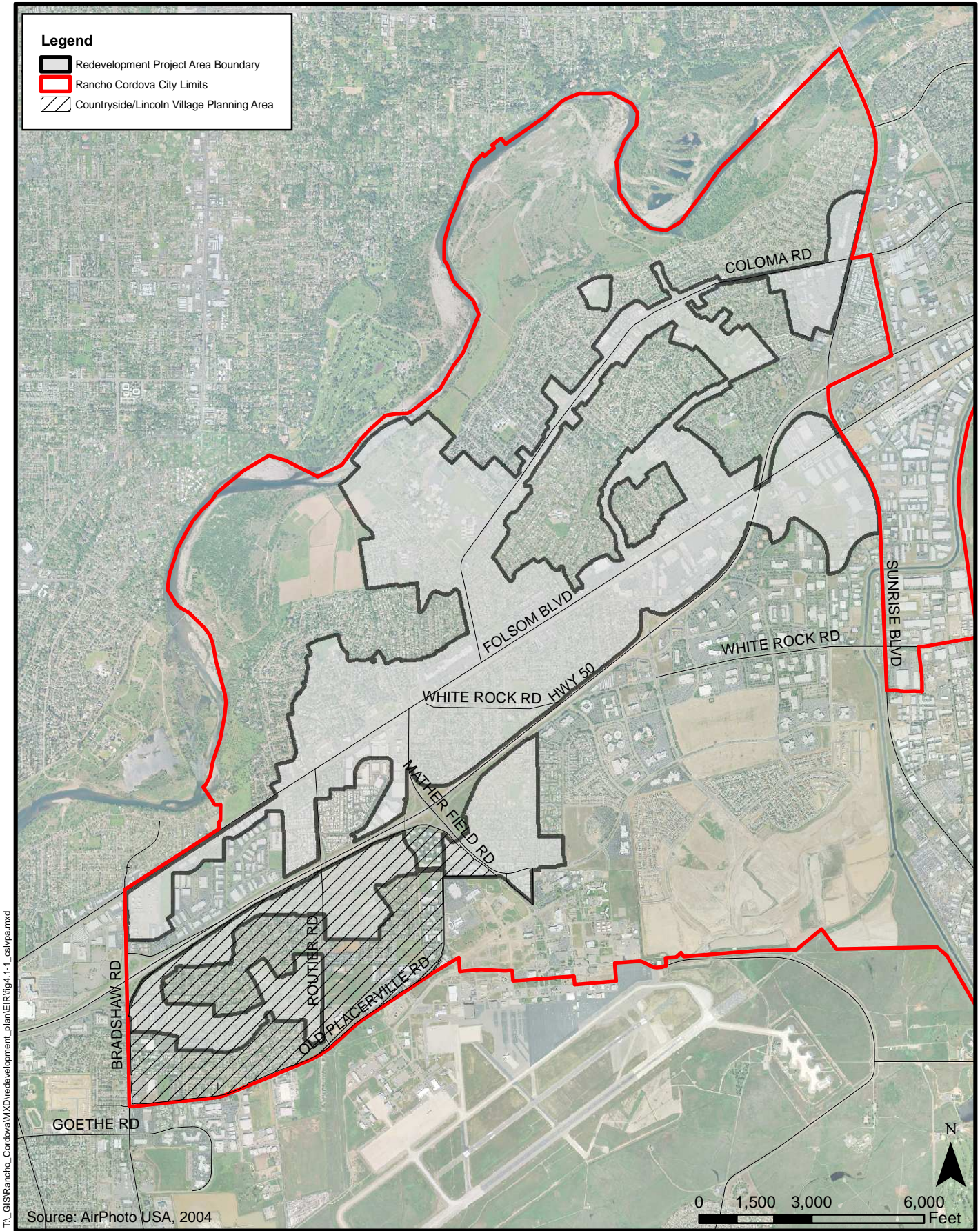
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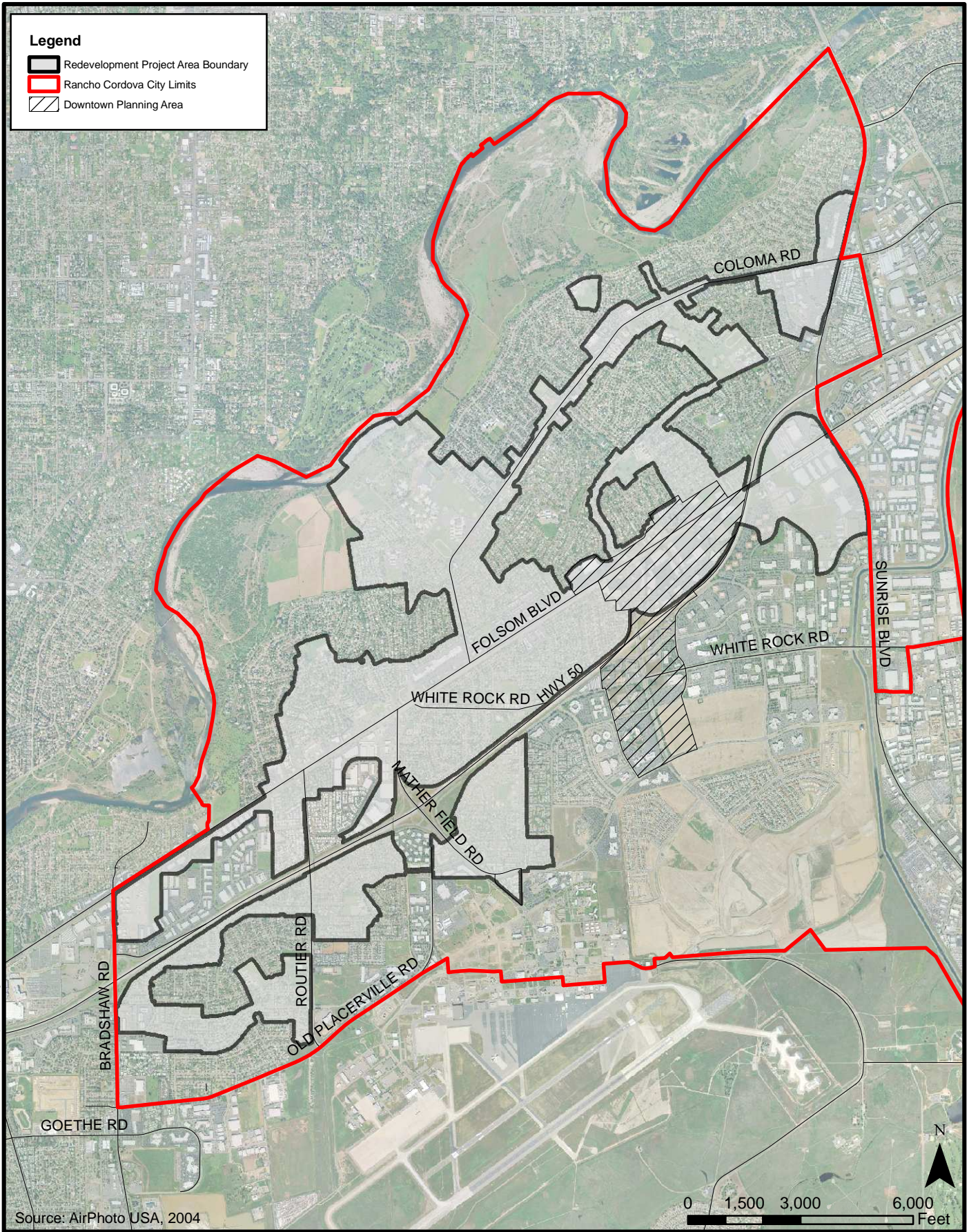
4.1 LAND USE

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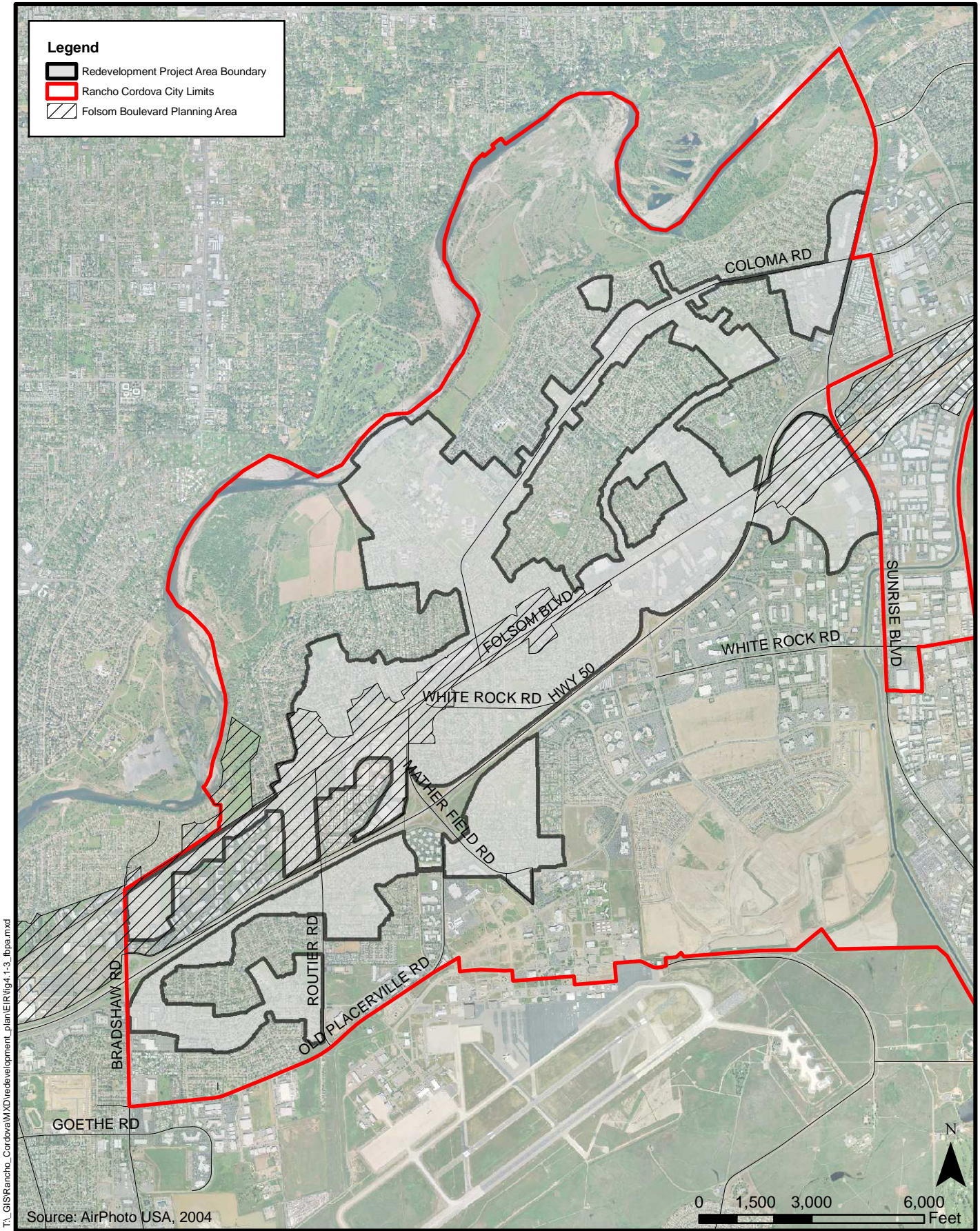
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Source: AirPhoto USA, 2004



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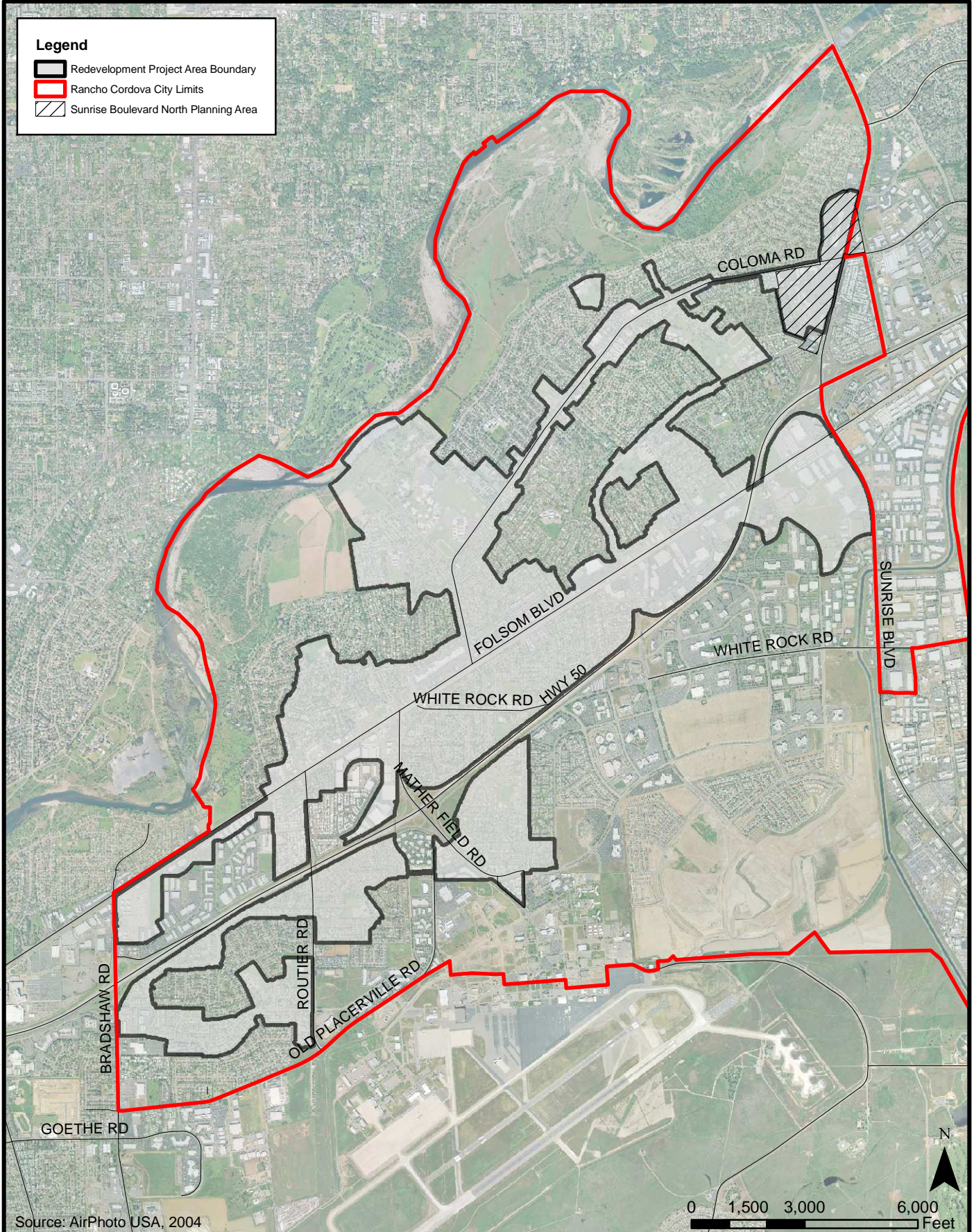
Figure 4.1-2
Downtown Planning Area



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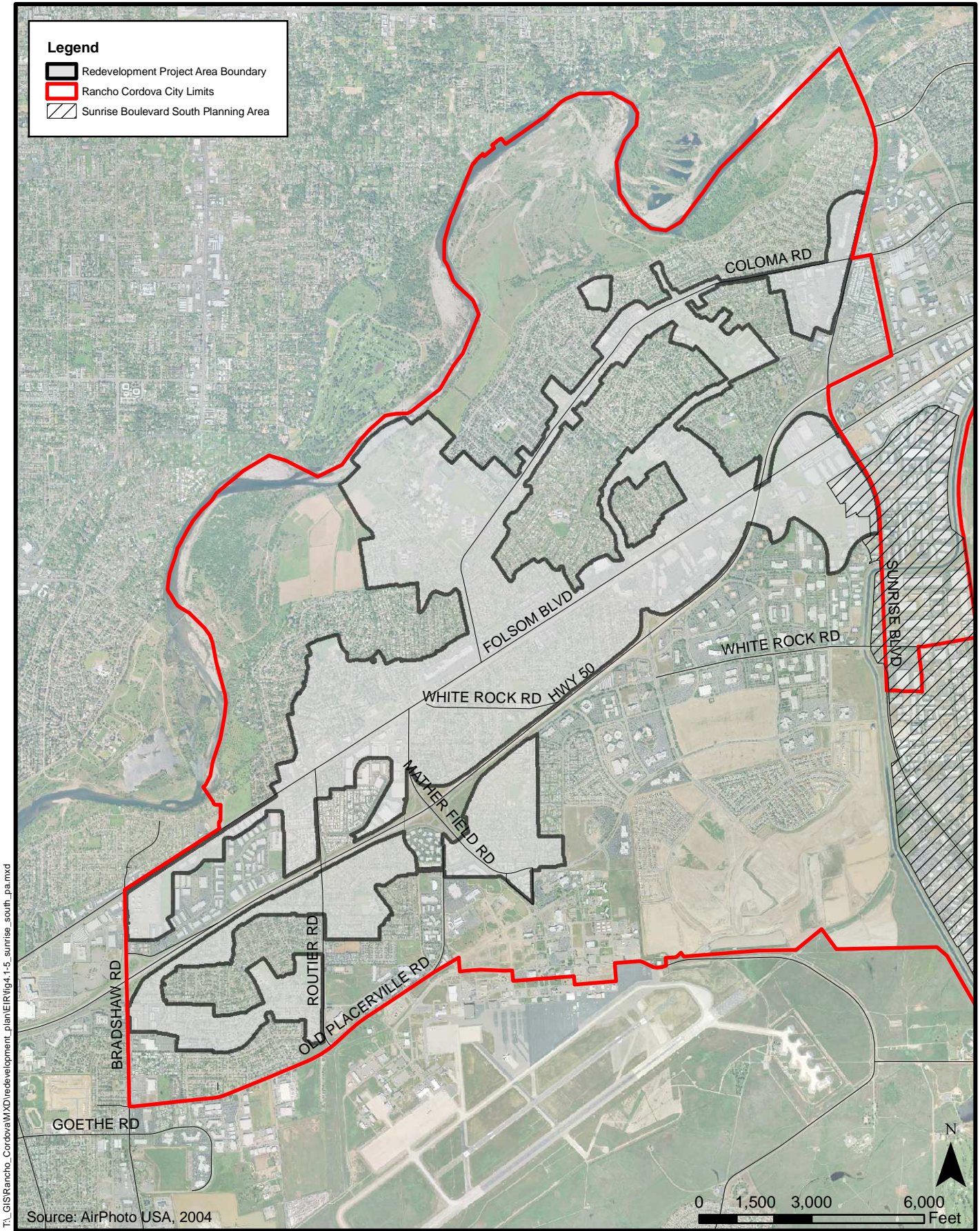
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Folsom Boulevard Planning Area



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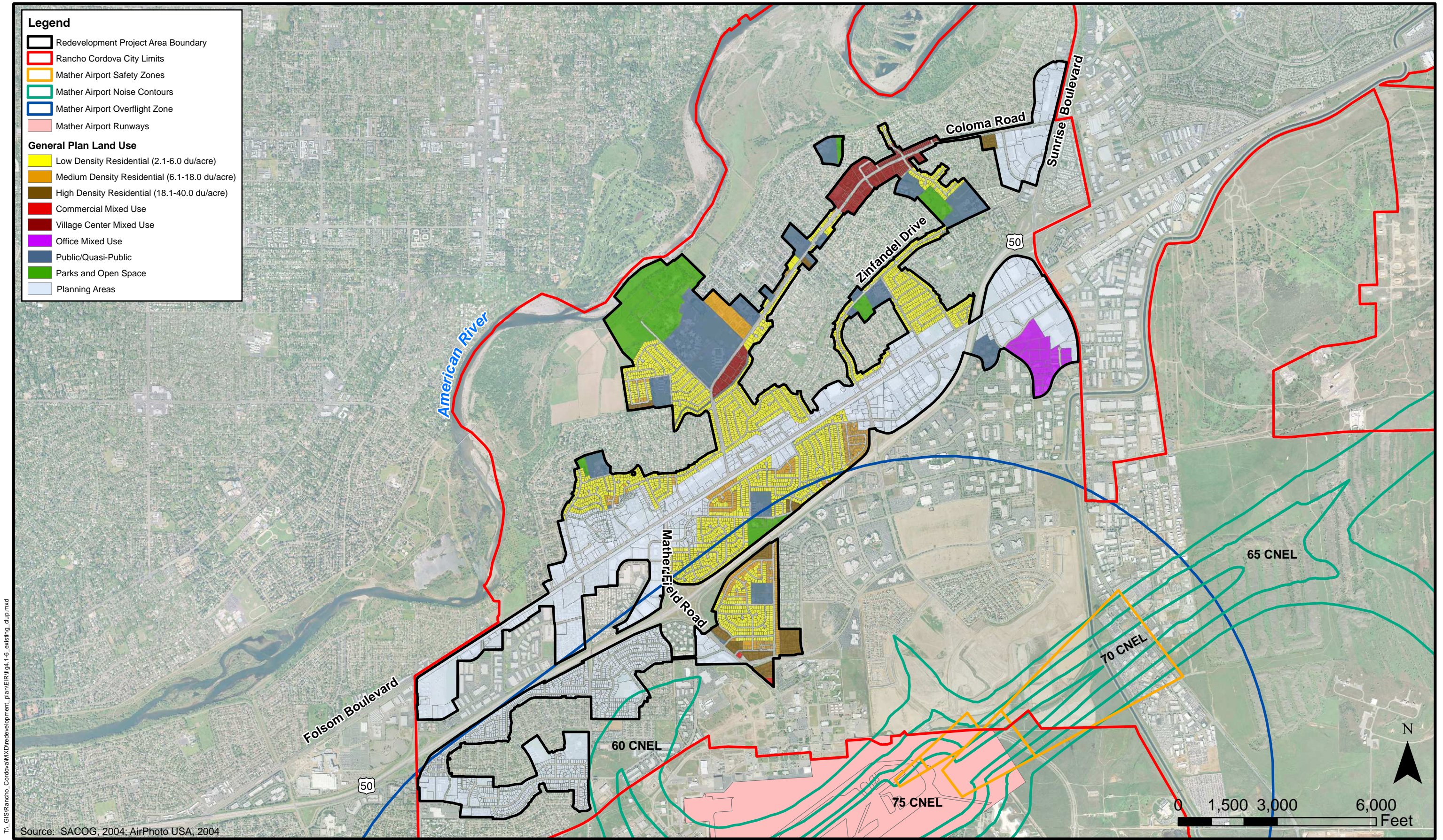


Figure 4.1-4
Sunrise Boulevard North Planning Area



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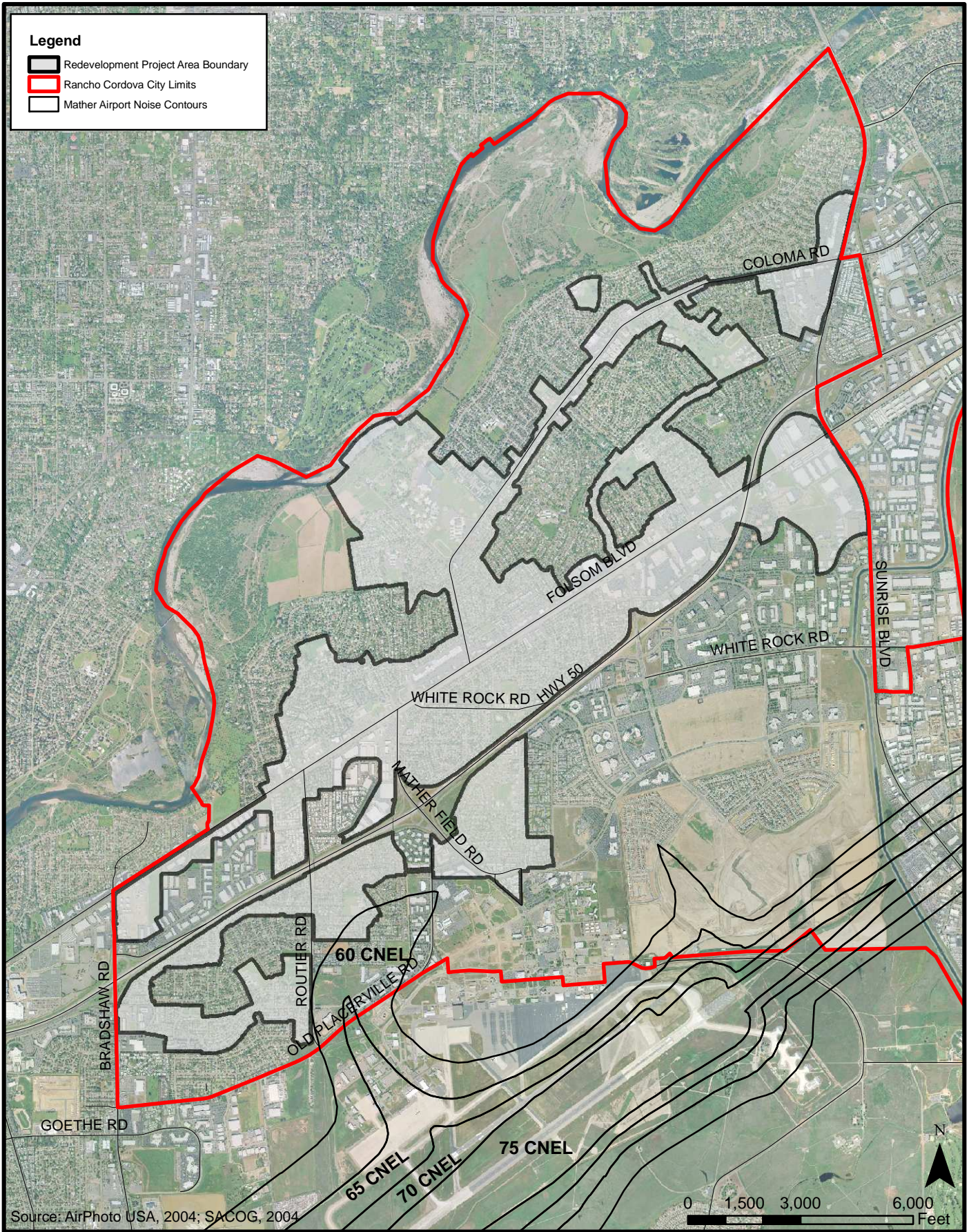
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Source: SACOG, 2004; AirPhoto USA, 2004



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Figure 4.1-6
Existing Mather Airport Comprehensive Land Use Plan Boundaries



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Figure 4.1-7
 Mather Airport Noise Contour Map
 Within the Redevelopment Project Area Vicinity