
1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION AND REGULATORY GUIDANCE

This document is an Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) prepared pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) for the proposed Trinity Garden Estates project (hereafter referred to as "the proposed project"). This MND has been prepared in accordance with the CEQA, Public Resources Code Sections 21000 et seq., and the State CEQA Guidelines.

An Initial Study is conducted by a lead agency to determine if a project may have a significant effect on the environment. In accordance with the CEQA Guidelines, Section 15064, an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) must be prepared if the Initial Study indicates that the proposed project under review may have a potentially significant impact on the environment. A Negative Declaration may be prepared instead, if the lead agency prepares a written statement describing the reasons why a proposed project would not have a significant effect on the environment, and, therefore, why it does not require the preparation of an EIR (CEQA Guidelines Section 15371). According to CEQA Guidelines Section 15070, a Negative Declaration shall be prepared for a project subject to CEQA when either:

- (a) The Initial Study shows there is no substantial evidence, in light of the whole record before the agency, that the proposed project may have a significant effect on the environment, or
- (b) The Initial Study identified potentially significant effects, but:
 - (1) Revisions in the project plans or proposals made by or agreed to by the applicant before the proposed negative declaration is released for public review would avoid the effects or mitigate the effects to a point where clearly no significant effects would occur, and
 - (2) There is no substantial evidence, in light of the whole record before the agency, that the proposed project as revised may have a significant effect on the environment.

If revisions are adopted into the proposed project in accordance with the CEQA Guidelines Section 15070(b), a Mitigated Negative Declaration is prepared. This document includes such revisions in the form of mitigation measures. Therefore, this document is a Mitigated Negative Declaration and incorporates all of the elements of an Initial Study. Hereafter this document is referred to as an MND.

1.2 LEAD AGENCY

The lead agency is the public agency with primary responsibility over a proposed project. Where two or more public agencies will be involved with a project, State CEQA Guidelines Section 15051 provides criteria for identifying the lead agency. State CEQA Guidelines 15051(b) states:

- (b) If the project is to be carried out by a nongovernmental person or entity, the lead agency shall be the public agency with the greatest responsibility for supervising or approving the project as a whole.
 - (1) The lead agency will normally be the agency with the general governmental powers, such as a city or county, rather than an agency with a single or limited

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purpose such as an air pollution control district or a district which will provide public serve or public utility to the project.

As the project is to be carried out by a private development company and as the City of Rancho Cordova has general governmental powers over the proposed project, the lead agency for the proposed project is the City of Rancho Cordova.

1.3 PURPOSE AND ORGANIZATION OF THE DOCUMENT

The purpose of this Mitigated Negative Declaration is to evaluate the potential environmental impacts of the proposed project.

This document is divided into the following sections:

- **1.0 Introduction** - Provides an introduction and describes the purpose and organization of this document.
- **2.0 Project Description** - Provides a detailed description of the proposed project.
- **3.0 Environmental Setting, Impacts and Mitigation Measures** - Describes the environmental setting for each of the environmental subject areas (as described in Appendix G of the State CEQA Guidelines), evaluates a range of impacts classified as "no impact," "less than significant impact," or "less than significant impact with mitigation incorporation" in response to the environmental checklist, and provides mitigation measures, where appropriate, to mitigate potentially significant impacts to a less than significant level.
- **4.0 Cumulative Impacts** - Provides a description of the cumulative setting, the area in which cumulative impacts may occur and inside which the effect of the proposed project as well as past, present, and probable future projects may similarly effect the cumulative environment, evaluates a range of impacts classified as "no impact" or "less than cumulatively considerable", and provides mitigation measures, where appropriate, to mitigated cumulative impacts to a "less than cumulatively considerable" level.
- **5.0 Determination** - Provides the environmental determination for the project.
- **6.0 Report Preparation and Consultations** - Identifies staff and consultants responsible for preparation of the document, persons and agencies consulted, and references.
- **7.0 References** – Provides a list of references used to prepare the document.

1.4 REGULATORY FRAMEWORK AND ASSUMPTIONS

The City of Rancho Cordova was incorporated July 1, 2003. At that time, the City adopted Sacramento County's General Plan by reference until the formal adoption of its own General Plan, which is anticipated for June 2006. The City is currently in the process of preparing a Draft General Plan/Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) consistent with the state planning and zoning law and CEQA.

While the General Plan/DEIR process is underway, the City has adopted a Vision Book, Revised Draft Land Use Map Book (adopted as revised on January 17, 2006) , and Circulation Plan. The Vision Book establishes the conceptual vision of the City and reflects the compilation of ideas

from the community on a wide variety of topics related to the future of Rancho Cordova. It includes ideas that relate to specific sites and issues, as well as ideas that are more conceptual in nature. The Circulation Plan describes the basic roadway, bikeway, transit, and pedestrian system that will form the backbone of the City as it develops. The General Plan Land Use Map combines geographical areas of the City with generalized and specific land use designations to guide the City's future development patterns. The intent of the General Plan Land Use Map is to establish a variety of new land use designations that reflect more mixed, and in some cases, a higher density of development envisioned for the City. These mixed-use categories provide for residential, commercial, and office uses all on a single site. Per Government Code §65360(b), new development proposals and actions by the City will be examined for their consistency with these interim policies and standards. The City has subsequently publicly released a draft of the Rancho Cordova General Plan and Rancho Cordova General Plan Draft Environmental Impact Report (State Clearinghouse No. 2005022137).

To the extent the City adopts, notices, publishes or makes available to decision makers and the public new conceptual policies, standards, and proposals, these policies will be deemed to be General Plan proposals under consideration or study consistent with Government Code §65360(b). Proposed projects will be measured against those new proposals rather than inconsistent provisions in other interim City policies and the Sacramento County General Plan (in accordance with Rancho Cordova City Council Resolution No. 89-2005 adopted on July 18, 2005). For the purposes of this document, the term "General Plan" refers to the currently circulated Draft General Plan for the City of Rancho Cordova as well as the adopted Land Use Map Book, Circulation Plan, and Vision Book.