

2.1 PROJECT LOCATION

The North Douglas project site is located within the approved Sunrise Douglas Community Plan and SunRidge Specific Plan (SDCP/SRSP) areas on the northeast corner of Douglas Road and Americanos Boulevard (proposed). The project site is generally bounded by the future Americanos Boulevard to the west, agricultural land to the north and east, and by Douglas Road to the south. **Figure 1** and **Figure 2** show the project location and vicinity in relation to the SunRidge Specific Plan and Sunrise Douglas Community Plan.

2.2 BACKGROUND

The SDCP/SRSP Final EIR (FEIR) was certified by the Sacramento County Board of Supervisors on June 19, 2002 (State Clearinghouse No. 97022055). The FEIR was designated a "Master" EIR, pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21157 (FEIR, Vol. 1, p. 3.10). A Master EIR is intended to provide a detailed environmental review of plans and programs upon which the approval of subsequent related development proposals can be based. A Master EIR must, to the greatest extent feasible, evaluate the cumulative impacts, growth-inducing impacts, and irreversible significant effects on the environment of specific subsequent projects. The review of subsequent projects that have been described in the Master EIR can be limited to the extent that the Master EIR has already reviewed project impacts and set forth mitigation measures (See Public Resources Code Section 21157).

A Master EIR enables a lead agency to perform limited environmental review of subsequent projects proposed within five years of certification of the Master EIR, in accordance with the following requirements:

- The lead agency for the subsequent project is the lead agency or any responsible agency identified in the Master EIR.
- The lead agency prepares an Initial Study that analyzes (1) whether the subsequent project may cause any significant effect on the environment that was not examined in the Master EIR, and (2) whether the subsequent project was described in the Master EIR as being within the scope of the project.
- If the lead agency determines that a subsequent project will have no significant effect on the environment which was not previously identified in the Master EIR and that no new or additional mitigation measures or alternatives may be required, no new environmental document may be required. However, the lead agency must make a written finding that the subsequent project is within the scope of the project covered by the Master EIR, and must incorporate all feasible mitigation measures or feasible alternatives set forth in the Master EIR that are appropriate to the project.
- If the lead agency determines that a subsequent project may have an additional significant effect on the environment that was not identified in the Master EIR, the lead agency must prepare either a mitigated negative declaration, an EIR, or a focused EIR. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21157.1.)

The Sunrise Douglas Community Plan/SunRidge Specific Plan EIR was "tiered" from the Sacramento County General Plan Update EIR and in turn is considered to be the Master EIR upon which the environmental review for future development projects within the planning area, such as the North Douglas project may rely (FEIR, Vol. 1, pp. 3.10–3.11). Subsequent projects expected to be within the scope of the Sunrise Douglas Community Plan/SunRidge Specific Plan

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Master EIR would include future planning/development approvals for properties within the Specific Plan area that are consistent with the SunRidge Specific Plan land use designations and the permissible development densities and intensities established by the Specific Plan, such as the North Douglas project that is the subject of this Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (*Ibid.*).

Public Resources Code Section 21083.3 limits CEQA review of certain projects to environmental effects that are “peculiar” to the parcel or to the project and which were not addressed as significant effects in a prior EIR, or which new information shows will be more significant than described in the prior EIR. The North Douglas project is a qualified project pursuant to Section 21083.3, which provides in pertinent part:

- (a) If a parcel has been zoned to accommodate a particular density of development or has been designated in a community plan to accommodate a particular density of development and an environmental impact report was certified for that zoning or planning action, the application of this division to the approval of any subdivision map or other project that is consistent with the zoning or community plan shall be limited to effects upon the environment which are peculiar to the parcel or to the project and which were not addressed as significant effects in the prior environmental impact report, or which substantial new information shows will be more significant than described in the prior environmental impact report.
- (b) If a development project is consistent with the general plan of a local agency and an environmental impact report was certified with respect to that general plan, the application of this division to the approval of that development project shall be limited to effects on the environment which are peculiar to the parcel or to the project and which were not addressed as significant effects in the prior environmental impact report, or which substantial new information shows will be more significant than described in the prior environmental impact report.

The Sunrise Douglas Community Plan provides “policy direction for development of lands within the entire 6,042-acre Community Plan boundary, but does not assign specific land uses.” (FEIR, Vol. 1, p. 4.12.) The SunRidge Specific Plan “does define specific land uses and a development program for 2,632 acres within the Community Plan boundary.” (*Ibid.*) The Specific Plan land use designations for the North Douglas parcels have RD-4, RD-5, RD-7, RD-10, CMU, and Park zoning designations (See FEIR, Vol.1, p. 4.15a, map of specific plan designations). The proposed project is substantially consistent with the existing allocation of land uses and densities specified in the SDCP and SRSP. However, further analysis is required prior to making a determination of the appropriate environmental document for the processing of the North Douglas project.

CEQA Guidelines Section 15183 provides guidance on the criteria to be used in making a determination as to whether Section 21083.3 will apply. Specifically, CEQA Guideline Section 15183, subdivision (b), provides as follows:

- (b) 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, and

- (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.

This Initial Study is devoted to discussing the basis upon which this partial exemption provided by Section 21083.3 is used for the North Douglas project. Most importantly, it summarizes the findings of Sacramento County relating to the prior SDCP/SRSP Master EIR and how the criteria set forth in CEQA Guidelines section 15183 have been met. Section 15183, subdivision (f), provides guidance as to certain categories of effects that, as a matter of law, are not considered "peculiar" to a project. This provision states in part as follows:

- (f) An effect of a project on the environment shall not be considered peculiar to the project or the parcel for the purposes of this section if uniformly applied development policies or standards have been previously adopted by the city or county with a finding that the development policies or standards will substantially mitigate the environmental effect when applied to future projects, unless substantial new information shows that the policies or standards will not substantially mitigate the environmental effect.

The section entitled "Summary of Impacts and Their Disposition," beginning on page 17.1 of Volume 1 of the SDCP/SRSP Master EIR, provided a summary of the findings leading to the conclusions of significance for each of the categories listed below.

Impacts deemed significant and unavoidable based on both project specific and cumulative impact.

- Wetland impacts
- Special status species impacts
- Certain traffic impacts
- Certain air quality impacts

Impacts deemed less than significant with mitigation incorporation.

- Construction-related impacts
- Land use compatibility
- Rendering plant compatibility
- General Plan consistency
- Transit service
- Sewer service development
- Groundwater Impacts
- Drainage
- Certain traffic impacts
- Certain air quality impacts
- Certain biological impacts
- Traffic noise

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In accordance with Guidelines Section 15183, a discussion of each of those impacts found to be significant in the prior EIR and the relative impact of the subject project in each of those categories is provided in this Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration for the North Douglas project. This Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration hereby incorporates the Master EIR for the SDCP/SRSP planning areas by reference. The SDCP/SRSP project received final approval on July 17, 2002. The Sacramento County Board of Supervisors certified the Sunrise Douglas/SunRidge EIR as adequate and complete on June 19, 2002 and a State of Overriding Consideration was adopted for the significant and unavoidable impacts listed above.

The Mitigated Negative Declaration for the North Douglas project was approved by the Rancho Cordova City Council on June 21, 2004 (State Clearinghouse No. 2004012062). An Addendum to the Mitigated Negative Declaration addressing off-site drainage ditches and road improvements to Americanos Boulevard was adopted on August 1, 2005. This Subsequent Mitigated Negative Declaration incorporates changes made in the Addendum and also addresses the potential environmental effects of changes to the project characteristics (see Section 2.3, below).

2.3 PROJECT CHARACTERISTICS

The North Douglas project is located on an approximate 130-acre site and would include a General Plan Amendment, Specific Plan Amendment, Rezone, Development Agreement, and Tentative Subdivision Map. The site would comprise 77.3 acres of RD-5, 34.6 acres of RD-7, 7.9 acres of RD-10, 9.0 acres of park uses, 0.3 acres of open space, and 1.1 acres for Americanos Boulevard. Development of the proposed project would result in the creation of 666 dwelling units (du). These land uses and units vary slightly from land uses depicted in the SunRidge Specific Plan (See **Figure 3**, Existing and Proposed Land Uses)(See **Figure 4**, Proposed Site Plan). The commercial mixed-use (CMU) designation has been removed and the residential densities have been relocated at the request of City staff. The proposed project also includes minor improvements to Americanos Boulevard and construction of several off-site ditches (See **Figure 5**). Improvements to Americanos Boulevard would include approximately one acre of disturbance not previously analyzed in the original North Douglas MND (June 21, 2004). The proposed off-site ditches would include minor site disturbance not previously analyzed in the original North Douglas MND. Construction of these off-site ditches would require approval and coordination with adjacent property owners. It is important to note that the purpose of these off-site ditches is to keep off-site surface water from coming onto the North Douglas site. The County of Sacramento's Drainage Department has indicated that these ditches are necessary water quality measures to ensure that off-site water flows do not adversely affect soil disturbance on the North Douglas site.

The project also includes improvements to an existing private driveway leading from the northeast corner of the project site to Grant Line Road (See **Figure 6**). A water line and fire hydrants will be extended for a portion of the road at the request of the Metro Fire District. An easement for the roadway alignment has been obtained from the property owner by the project applicant. At the intersection of the secondary access road and Grant Line Road, improvements will be constructed to provide a protected left turn lane off of northbound Grant Line Road onto the secondary access road. The majority of the road and intersection improvements will be limited to the west side of the existing Grant Line Road alignment (see **Figure 7**) Impacts to the east side of Grant Line Road are minor and only involve a slight shift in the roadway alignment and a slight change in the right-of-way.

2.4 REQUIRED PROJECT APPROVALS

In addition to the approval of the proposed project by the City Council of the City of Rancho Cordova, the following agency approvals may be required (depending on the final project design):

- Sacramento County Water Agency (SCWA) Zone 40
- Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District (SMAQMD)

- Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (CVRWQB)
- Sacramento Metropolitan Utility District (SMUD)
- Sacramento Resource Conservation District (SRCD)
- California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG)
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)
- County Sanitation District (CSD-1)